

State of the City Address
Mayor Lily Mei
City of Fremont
June 8, 2023

Good morning, Fremont!

Or should I say:

早上好,

buenos días,

chào buổi sáng,

magandang umaga,

शुभ प्रभात,

ਸੁਭ ਸਵੇਰ,

శుభోదయం,

and بخير صباح.

Thank you for joining me today.

Over the last year, we've had the opportunity to reconnect following the pandemic.

We're building connections as a City and a community, and I'm pleased our Council meetings are back in person for all to attend.

As a City, we work collectively with our community to help those within achieve healthy and happy lives across our 92 square miles.

Over the past year, we've addressed real, critical problems that brought a new set of challenges to our city.

This is my seventh State of the City address, and I'm appreciative of our Council's support, Fremont's hard-working staff, and our residents and businesses as we continue to shape our City to be a beacon of industry, diversity, safety, and sustainability.

With this in mind, I'd like to acknowledge my colleagues on the Fremont City Council:

Vice Mayor Teresa Cox

And Councilmembers

Teresa Keng

Desrie Campbell

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Jenny Kassan
Yang Shao and
Raj Salwan

In concert with members of the City's Leadership Team, including City Manager Karena Shackelford, who's here with us today, all of our City staff, and of course our host, the Fremont Chamber of Commerce, and all of you.

Together, we are working towards advancing Citywide goals and initiatives. Earlier this year, our Council met with our city leadership team and agreed on continuing to focus efforts on the following three priorities:
Supporting the viability of commercial corridors,
Continuing to address homelessness,
And focusing on public safety.

Our Council's core priorities and services operate on a foundation of fiscal stability that has recently earned our City the Excellence in Financial Reporting and the Distinguished Budget Presentation awards from the Government Finance Officers Association.

This is Fremont's 39th consecutive year receiving the financial reporting recognition and the 26th consecutive year receiving the budget award.

The proposed budget for FY 2023/24 takes advantage of our growing local revenues to not only maintain essential services but also make targeted improvements that focus on Council and community priorities, including hiring additional staff to better expand our services and support public safety.

Additional budget proposals include increasing the ongoing General Fund allocations for street, park, and building maintenance activities.

While currently the local economy is forecasted to continue to grow, our one-time allocations to increase our Budget Uncertainty Reserve will allow us the ability to draw down on those rainy day funds in case of a recession.

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Because of Fremont's prudent fiscal management, we've used one-time monies to pay off City debt, resulting in ongoing savings of 1.3 million dollars per year for 15 years, Accumulating a total of 19.5 million dollars in future years.

And we've established a \$15 million dollar reserve for unfunded accrued leave liabilities for our employees.

Over the past year, the City has committed \$58 million dollars of one-time revenue and savings to fund critical capital projects in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) including replacing park restrooms throughout the City, and landscaping over 5 acres of the Auto Mall Parkway median.

An independent auditor also completed an assessment of the City's purchase card program, and we've begun implementing their recommendations.

Last month our City's upcoming fiscal year 2023/24 proposed operating budget was presented to the Council, and the second hearing and adoption will be next week on June 13.

This year marked the end of the COVID-19 State of Emergency, taking us one step closer to resuming activities we treasured before the pandemic began.

While the City's Small-Scale Commercial Eviction Moratorium has now expired, the City of Fremont was able to assist 130 small businesses with \$750,000 in support from the Fremont Small Business Emergency Grant. We also helped hundreds of small businesses apply for federal, state, and regional funding opportunities, bringing in nearly \$9 million dollars to Fremont small businesses during a very challenging time.

To help our community members, we've added new events such as this year's highly successful Lunar New Year Celebration, Biocom California's Spotlight on Fremont event, and Spring into STEAM that allow for greater connections, celebrate diversity, educate our youth, and support Fremont's booming industries.

And yet the COVID-19 pandemic was not the only challenge our City faced.

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The Great Resignation continued to impact the national labor market – with a total of 4.3 million people in the U.S. quitting their jobs in August 2021 in search of better opportunities.

As such, we're appreciative of our employees and want to make sure they feel valued. In July, we extended a three-year agreement with all our employee groups to ensure stability within our organization.

To further foster economic growth and bring additional employment opportunities to the region, we advanced over a dozen commercial development projects, including the completion of a General Plan Amendment and the rezoning of the 24-acre Scannell Properties commercial site, formerly The Globe Mall, for industrial uses now under construction.

We also worked alongside major employers, including Tesla, Bloom Energy, and other companies to facilitate and permit expansions for new facilities. From an internal standpoint, our City expedited the development process by adding a new position to manage these requests.

One opening garnered the attention of Governor Newsom, who joined us last July to celebrate the ribbon cutting of Bloom Energy's new flagship Fremont manufacturing center, generating hundreds of full-time jobs. And Fremont-based Lam Research received \$18.8 million dollars in incentive grants from the Governor's Office and federal CHIPS Act, with a commitment to generate 560 new local jobs.

Apart from these industry leaders, we've added new up-and-comers to our growing manufacturing ecosystem, including: Our Next Energy, Nitricity, Ultima Genomics, and Alexza Pharmaceuticals, which will be celebrating their grand opening soon. Additionally, we look forward to the grand opening of Papés flagship Fremont Dealership, consolidating three locations in Fremont and now serving as the company's largest investment in its history.

In celebration of our growing manufacturing industry,
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which already boasts the most manufacturing jobs in California as well as more cleantech jobs in Fremont than anywhere in the country, we partnered with California Manufacturing & Technology Association for our 11th annual Manufacturing Week.

Students at Fremont Unified School District, Mission Valley ROP, Ohlone, and Cal State University East Bay attended 11 employer tours and learned more about the Industry as well as the opportunities that come from pursuing a career in manufacturing.

To further cultivate our next generation of manufacturing workforce, we continue to support the Earn and Learn Fremont program, along with Ohlone College and Tesla's Manufacturing Development program.

Both offer paid hands-on experience to encourage careers in advanced manufacturing. Speaking of Tesla, what a manufacturing powerhouse.

They recently exceeded 30,000 employees in Fremont,

while Ohlone is currently developing a new cleantech manufacturing program in partnership with Fremont companies.

To showcase our City's national leadership in the advanced manufacturing sector, we've also hosted multiple delegations, including, GO-Biz, East Bay EDA, and CMTA.

And this momentum in manufacturing is accelerating, with more companies continuing to choose to grow in Fremont.

Other exciting developments in the works include:

- Prologis, on the verge of fully leasing its expansive 4 and a half million-square-foot, 55-building portfolio in Fremont Bayside Technology Park.
- Fremont unicorn, solar manufacturing equipment maker Next-Traker went public on NASDAQ,
- And President Biden's first Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for the cleantech industry has fostered growth for local battery manufacturers and served as a catalyst for Amprius Technologies, who was awarded a \$50 million dollar grant.
- While EnerVenue has begun operating a 64,000-square-foot headquarters and manufacturing facility and is already bursting at their seams.

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In order to make room for this growth, we've repurposed space for all businesses, large and small.

What was once 42 Silicon Valley and DeVry University campus in Fremont's Ardenwood Technology Park has now become home to Personalis, which brings Fremont's total number of life sciences companies to more than 150.

Currently-in-development is the Frontier Elm Business Center, which will provide over 200,000 square feet of modern industrial space along Kato Road, informally dubbed Fremont's "Advanced Manufacturing Row."

Located immediately south of the Fremont Tesla Factory and near leading companies like:

UL,

Zoxx,

and ThermoFisher,

this project will add much needed space for the continued expansion of Fremont's thriving industries.

Additionally, investment from advanced industries continues to be a major driver in Fremont.

I'm pleased to share that Fremont has had record-level investment in our industrial areas, including 2.5 million square feet of new projects.

And there's more to come.

9th Street Partners and Clarion Partners have collaborated on a speculative 6-building advanced manufacturing campus dubbed "Campus @ Bayside" and is finalizing their building permits with a targeted groundbreaking date for this month.

Once completed, the project will add over 400,000 square feet of next generation manufacturing and R&D space to support the growth for many of Fremont's leading companies.

Our industrial segments are not the only ones booming – so are our small businesses.

Only 2 of the 10 retail spaces are still available to rent in the Downtown District.

Some of our new Downtown businesses include:

Fremont Food Hall,

Honest Restaurant,

Pho Lan,

MegaMart,

DEKA Lash,

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and Aura Skin and Beauty.

Also located in our Downtown District will be the new Fremont Bank headquarters, which recently won an architectural award for best small office project in Silicon Valley. We're already counting down the days to toast their grand opening on the project's rooftop bar this summer.

With all this activity, our Economic Development team has been supporting businesses, including partnering with the Fremont Chamber to host our first-ever Fremont Restaurant Week, which attracted over 40 participating local restaurants.

We also launched a multi-faceted Shop Local campaign and established a Small Business Assistance program within Economic Development. We love showcasing our small businesses, and we've commissioned a professional photography service to showcase many family-owned small businesses across Fremont's neighborhood Districts to enhance marketing of our commercial areas. Capturing their stories, our Economic Development team launched a new 'Fremont Shop Small Series, highlighting diverse newly opened small businesses! We're getting a behind-the-scenes look thanks to Aura and Banter Bookshop in Downtown, who helped kick off this series of video vignettes.

It's also why we enhanced the placement of small business resources and programming on several of our City's communication channels to serve as a guide for all upcoming events and news, and our connections keep growing.

To better prepare our businesses for a more connected future, we're proud to have the support of Congressman Ro Khanna and Senator Alex Padilla for our \$1.5-million dollar request to expand Wi-Fi access in Fremont's commercial and historic main street districts, allowing businesses and residents to better connect to Wi-Fi and access the Web.

While focusing on housing efforts, I'd like to recognize everyone who provided feedback in forums, community meetings, and surveys. Thanks to all of you, we're continuing work to establish a new Short Term Rental Ordinance.

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To support community members in need of housing assistance, the City leveraged fees paid by residential and commercial developers to secure a \$5 million dollar Local Housing Trust Fund grant.

This grant was provided by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Additionally, the State passed new legislation permitting residential uses within all commercial districts in California and streamlined development review timelines.

Another direct way we supported our Fremont residents during the pandemic was through our Keep Fremont Housed Program.

During the term of this program, Fremont provided over 17.2 million dollars in assistance serving 1,531 households, which benefited both tenants and property owners.

The remaining funds were transitioned to a Housing Stability program.

This past year we achieved several affordable housing milestones by securing supplemental State and County funding for Bell St. Gardens and completing Granite Ridge apartments, which just held its ribbon cutting last month.

Not to mention, we're on track to complete several additional affordable housing developments.

While I am proud of the work we've done on the affordable housing front, there's always more we can do.

Take our successful Housing Navigation Center, for example,

which secured \$1 million dollars in additional funding and continued capacity expansion.

Our Two-Year Fiscal Year-End Report highlights the HNC's accomplishments to date.

This report is extremely informative in sharing how residents transitioned into housing.

A special thank you to local companies

Lennar,

Scannell Properties,

and Valley Oak Partners,

who donated over \$1 million dollars to support homeless services and programs in Fremont, together with proposed projects approved by the Council.

In addition, Cargill donated \$20,000 dollars in meals to support our Winter Relief Program.

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To better coordinate resources across multiple department's, we've moved our Homeless Manager position into the City Manager's Office. Working with Alameda County Home Together 2026 plan, a strategic study prioritizing funding for effective programs to prevent, address, and end homelessness, our City hired a consultant who will develop a plan that collaborates with regional efforts and aligns with budgeted City resources. Additionally, we're continuing our City's Safe Parking Program in partnership with our faith-based community while also increasing our encampment abatement contract which to date has removed 800 tons of debris annually.

Preventing homelessness can be better achieved by addressing the need for more housing inventory.

Under State law, Fremont is required to plan for the housing needs of our community, also known as RHNA, the Regional Housing Needs allocation.

Our new targets were set at 13,000 new housing units compared to 5,500 units in the previous cycle.

Although these housing unit targets are much higher, Fremont's General Plan approved in 2011 already anticipated new housing through our strategic urban growth framework,

and I'm happy to report the City's Housing Element was recently adopted and certified by the State, making Fremont only 1 of 7 cities in Alameda County to receive certification,

while our Council unanimously voted in May for the City to apply for the third round of funding available through the State's Homekey Program.

If our application is approved by the State, we'll utilize a \$35 million dollar Homekey grant to convert the Motel 6 on Research Avenue into 156 units of permanent affordable apartments.

From housing to helping others in need, thanks to over 1,200 donors, we were able to raise close to half a million dollars for our Afghan Refugee Help Fund.

In September, we celebrated our first Disability Resource Festival that connected our first responders with the disability community, and also honored the passing of our late human relations commissioner, Feda Almaliti, and her beloved son.

It's important to me that we assist every person in our community who needs it,

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regardless of their financial situation, ethnic background, or anything else that makes them unique.

In Fremont, we help,
and more importantly, value everyone.

Taking these actions helps our community live prosperous, happy lives.

Maybe that's why Fremont has topped WalletHub's list as America's Happiest City for the 3rd consecutive year.

And just announced, for the 2nd consecutive year, Fremont is the best place in the nation to raise your family.

These recognitions reflect our City's remarkable ability to assist our community during moments where it counts.

I'm proud of the incredible work completed to lessen the impact of the winter storms that began New Year's Eve 2022.

As a City, we leveraged our storm response plan to quickly initiate clean-up efforts, assess damage across the city, and provide updates in real-time to keep our residents and community safe.

In addition to public safety, we have several groups to thank for helping Fremont weather the storms, especially our Public Works and Park Maintenance teams.

From sandbags to downed trees and abatement concerns, our staff responded within a timely manner to community members during the extraordinary Winter storm season addressing hazards.

And to safeguard our digital data, we continue working to implement best practice solutions in a coordinated manner.

I invite community members to do the same.

On the topic of safe streets,
we adopted the street racing and sideshow ordinance to eliminate unnecessary dangerous driving and hopefully
save lives.

Despite a nationwide policing shortage and recruitment challenges, our Police Department has hired and added new positions.

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Our sworn female personnel now total 21, serving as progress towards our 30 by 30 Initiative to increase the number of women recruits to 30% by 2030.

FPD has also made data-driven decisions including:

- Launching a new data-based resource staffing model to address high service call volume,
- Hiring a new analyst to oversee data and transparency,
- As well as improving our community's access to policies and information through our Transparency Portal.

And using State COPS grant funding, new technology is being used to enhance stolen vehicle recovery and reduce pursuits on our streets.

Which leads me to another great recognition.

Fremont was ranked as the 17th safest city in the nation by WalletHub and was the only large city in California to make their list.

This is possible, thanks to our incredible community partnerships and first responders.

Our Police Department Annual Report highlighted some of FPD's key accomplishments on this slide.

In alignment with Police Chief Sean Washington's goals, the Police Department recently recruited its inaugural group of high school students for the Chief's Youth Advisory Board, which provides an opportunity for students to share their perspectives.

I'm energized by these initiatives that work to educate community members while increasing conversations about how we can further public safety.

And, I'm happy to share that FPD held its first in-person Public Safety Fair last October after several years.

We enjoyed interacting with community members while providing traffic safety and crime prevention tips.

In piloting technology, our Police and Fire Departments jointly launched an initiative to trial a Drone as First Responders program.

We are one of the first agencies in the United States testing this technology that will expedite first-responder deployments.

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And our Fire Department piloted the deployment of the Lucas device for cardiac arrest responses, confirming improved continuity of care for patients.

Recently, we announced the promotion of Fire Chief Zoraida Diaz, who now serves as the highest-ranking woman in the history of the Fremont Fire Department. I look forward to the Chief's leadership.

We also welcomed Deputy Fire Chief, Heather Mozdean, another strong advocate for women in fire.

This new leadership team will be impactful to Fremont Fire and the community we serve.

With Fremont's growing population, the Fire Department added a 14th company with an additional crew of nine firefighters.

and once again, we participated in Girls Camp, an event for high school girls interested in becoming firefighters where participants received hands-on training with firefighting tools and equipment.

Moving into emergency preparedness, we received grant funding to train current Fremont Fire Personnel to become paramedics.

Last year we adopted an evacuation system, Zonehaven, which alerts nearby community members of potential threats such as wildfires. new this year, we've upgraded emergency vehicles with a Hi-Lo siren to notify residents when they must immediately evacuate during an emergency.

And as a member of the FEMA Task Force 4 Urban Search and Rescue, we deployed trained Fire personnel to flooding and mudslide events this past year.

Our firefighters also provided mutual aid locally and statewide as part of a Strike Team with other Alameda County Fire Departments.

Additionally, we worked with Alameda County Fire Chiefs and Labor to address emergency medical services transport deficiencies.

Moving on now.

Starting with our newly-developed Downtown district, in its first year of operation, the Downtown Event Center and Plaza has already hosted over 180 events, with a steady increase in rentals, events, and gatherings.

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And all this community involvement was noticed. We're happy that our Downtown Event Center and Plaza was selected as both Outstanding Facility and Park in the 2023 CPRS District 3 Annual Awards.

Currently, we have multiple projects in the works in Downtown that will transform the Capitol Avenue corridor and surrounding area, representing hundreds of millions in private investment.

And up in Mission San Jose, during Art Month the Olive Hyde Art Gallery held their annual Art Reception in April showcasing local artists.

While last September we partnered with the Better Block Foundation to host an activation event to reimagine what this district could look like. This event's success serves as a guide for future placemaking efforts.

Meanwhile in Warm Springs, last year we hosted the Fremont Innovation District Celebration to recognize the opening of the West Access Bridge, which notably continues to receive awards for its transportation design, along with the Warm Springs Plaza. Also, the former P.F. Chang's at Pacific Commons Shopping Center is becoming an upscale pho and Vietnamese restaurant owned by the Pho Hanoi Restaurant Group.

Exciting things are happening in Niles.

We joined 800-plus attendees to celebrate the reopening and completion of the California Nursery Historical Park.

Making progress is the Niles Canyon Trail project, a 6-mile trail for walking and bicycling, as well as the new farmers market, hosted by the Niles Main Street Association and Foragers Market.

And we're revitalizing a long vacant property to provide much needed housing and a welcoming gateway to Niles,

which in September will host the Niles Canyon Stroll and Roll in honor of the late Supervisor Richard Valle.

Up at Ardenwood, the new 90-acre Dig Deep Farms project opened in August, while around the corner the following week, Meta held its new Fremont campus mixer. Last month, this season's family-friendly campfire program kicked off at East Bay Regional Park District's Dumbarton Quarry Campground on the Bay.

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While in Irvington, we worked with Xfinity and added a Comcast Lift Zone, enabling free Wi-Fi at the Irvington Community Center.

Across the street at Irvington High, Fremont's own Superbowl Champion

Robert Turbin hosted his Charity Alumni Basketball Game supporting local athletes. Also in the district, Mission Peak Village, our city's first co-housing project, on High Street was approved last month by the Planning Commission, bringing 32 units of housing, including 3 affordable units.

And in Centerville, we're revitalizing former businesses.

The former Slapface coffee house is now Renegade by Devout Coffee,

A former carwash on Peralta has reopened as Brothers Car Wash,

And a former used car dealership reopened as Billy Roy's.

And at Artist Walk, we're proud that Momo & Kebab was named by San Jose Mercury News as one of the top 50 Bay Area eateries.

Further contributing to Fremont's restaurant scene will be an upcoming higher-end Asian fusion restaurant in the former Elephant Bar space, at the Fremont Hub.

Thanks to Fremont Creates, a new non-profit focused on performing and visual arts, we are celebrating art beyond our individual districts.

And community collaborations across the city are taking shape with our boxART! Program.

Last month, together with FUSD, we recognized National Children's Mental Health Day. Our Youth and Family Services staff jointly showcased a Youth Art Competition with this year's theme of "My Happy Place."

From big events like our Summer Concert Series, regional sports tournaments, The Chamber's Fremont Street Eats, and more, to smaller ones, such as our Code Enforcement officer working with Compassion Network on a volunteer cleanup for residents with overgrown vegetation, it's incredible to see our community coming together again, in-person at these events.

And in the great outdoors, Fremont's Parks Planning and Design staff works to ensure Fremont residents have well-maintained parks and trails to explore.

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Navigating and overcoming the challenges in front of us, we're developing major new park sites in time for the update of the 5-Year Impact Fee Program in 2024-25 so that the City can continue to maintain our park system.

Plans are in the works to address the community's interest in adding pickle-ball courts and dog parks in more parts of Fremont.

We're allocating \$27 million dollars in City funds towards building and making a new Central Park Community Center a reality.

Yet more funding sources are needed to round out this \$58 million dollar project. We'll be looking for additional support to finish this project.

Thus far, we've received \$8 million dollars from a State grant through Assemblymember Alex Lee's office; and we're hopeful to receive an additional \$6 million dollars in proposed State and Federal grants, leaving a remaining need of \$17 million dollars from other grants and private contributions.

While the pandemic limited our in-person community engagement efforts, our staff got creative while seeking feedback on the development of our Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Our Community Services Department and Parks Planning and Design staff, hit it out of the park, even taking home the Award of Excellence from the California Parks & Recreation Society for our inclusive and innovative approach to community engagement.

Another major initiative that began last year is the resurfacing of eight playgrounds, including a major milestone of surfacing upgrades at Always Dream Playground in Central Park and Sylvester Harvey Park in North Fremont.

We also finalized a lease agreement with East Bay Regional Park District last year, ensuring seamless access to this treasured peak.

As natural resources at Fremont parks are essential to our local ecosystem, we launched a Tree Plotter online tree inventory program to help manage our City's 80,000 public trees.

Building a greener and better community only works when partnering with local agencies, something Fremont embraces

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to ensure the vitality, beauty,
and health of our city.

Our local business efforts matter too; recently Delta Electronics achieved LEED Net Zero Energy certification for its Fremont-based American headquarters.

It's the second facility in the Bay Area to be certified.

Fremont was also proud to be recognized by WalletHub as the fourth greenest city in the nation.

Speaking of green,
this year I shared how Fremont is creating microgrids to provide resiliency during natural disasters.

At the Silicon Valley Business Journals Mayors' Economic Forecast, I discussed how these efforts impact Silicon Valley,
as well as touched upon it at this year's CES.

More recently at Cities Summit of the Americas, I presented Fremont's efforts to transition to clean energy and electrification at the Advancing Equitable Clean Energy session.

These efforts are in line with our Climate Action Plan 2.0, currently being updated and tentatively planned for the June 20 Council meeting.

Our plan aims to reduce 55% of our greenhouse gas emissions
by 2030.

Many of these efforts are thanks to our collaborations with organizations like East Bay Community Energy, with whom we're working to procure solar plus battery storage,

and Bay Area SunShares,
which offered Fremont residents discounts on solar and battery storage systems for their homes.

Once again, we're teaming up with local business Gridscape,
delivering an additional eight new projects at City facilities.

Just last week we launched SolarAPP+ to incentivize automated solar permitting qualifying us for a \$15,000 dollar prize awarded by the Department of Energy.

And we were part of a team awarded 1 million dollars from the ICLEI USA Action Fund for the Home Electrification Equity Project.

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This funding will help cities including Fremont identify best practices to foster equity among underserved communities in access to sustainable solutions.

And that's not all.

Our youth are also getting involved.

Fostering the next generation,

we partnered with Fremont Unified and recently formed a Climate Literacy and Environmental Education Network, connecting teachers and students to opportunities to explore climate action initiatives.

I'm confident in our abilities to address our shared interests while cultivating resiliency to both meet our legislative priorities and move Fremont forward.

In March, the City jointly hosted the Youth Climate Action Summit with a student-led environmental nonprofit called Beyond Terra.

During the Summit, our sustainability manager provided a keynote on City climate action implementation efforts and highlighted specific opportunities for youth engagement, including participation in the Fremont Green Challenge and the Climate Action Plan update.

Seeds of action have grown to be community favorites like

Coastal Cleanup Day,

Earth Day Fair,

and the Walk and Roll to School program,

all encouraging sustainability.

Fremont is reimagining how our community can positively affect the environment moving forward.

Planning for the future, our City has obtained funding to develop various highway, trail, and building projects such as the Sabercat Trail Extension and Irvingtonian Fossil Museum.

We're continually working on Fremont's traffic signal modernization program to ensure smoother traffic flow and less idling at red lights, and working hard to move the Irvington BART Station project forward as well.

And we welcome your community input on new transportation initiatives like our Active Transportation Plan.

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And on July 7, I invite you to the grand opening of Centerville's new Dusterberry Neighborhood Park, featuring play areas, a basketball court, a plaza space, and much more.

Fremont's Skatepark in Central Park recently received major infrastructure maintenance for the first time since opening 10 years ago.

All told, these projects will support the Parks and Recreation Master Plan which includes the City and community's vision.

As we enter the second half of 2023, there's lots to look forward to, including updates to our City's infrastructure made possible by the Capital Improvement Program mentioned earlier.

On the green front, we're advancing Fremont's vehicle electrification program by adding more charging stations and 16 new EVs, more than doubling the size of the City's zero-emission fleet vehicles and evaluating switching even more police vehicles to EV's.

We're also researching the conversion of all sports field lighting in Fremont to LEDs for better energy efficiency and increased cost savings.

We need to balance this while maintaining other long-standing project priorities. I invite our community to join us by adopting this green first mindset with their everyday decisions and actions.

We'll continue to rely heavily on both technology and your feedback. Last summer, we launched MyFremont, a digital community engagement platform and have successfully deployed surveys on upcoming Citywide initiatives.

On the topic of GIS and mapping, we've also launched three new interactive maps that detail the boxART! Program installations, Fremont's addressing policy, and affordable housing opportunities.

If you haven't already, I encourage you to get to know your City Council.

We are all here to serve Fremont's residents and businesses. As such we want you to have timely access.

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One tool to empower you is our Fremont App.

It's helpful in reporting concerns, managing your requests, and allowing for faster and more streamlined service.

In closing, great things get started in Fremont.

And it's been a community-wide effort to work toward our goals and initiatives for this year and the years to come.

Together, with each of these roadmaps, we're laying the building blocks that will strengthen our foundation, driving towards a brighter future.

I thank each and every community member for their continued support as I work with our City Council and staff to address community needs to prepare for an even brighter tomorrow.

Looking ahead, I am excited by the opportunity of growing our partnerships and developing solutions that reflect our values, make people feel welcome in Fremont, and create a more sustainable community.

And to learn more about Fremont's future, please join us on the morning of June 27 at 8:30, as the Silicon Valley Business Journal hosts the Future of Fremont here again at our beautiful Downtown Event Center.

Thank you for your time today and investing right here in the City of Fremont. Because when you do, your money goes toward supporting our local small businesses, the arts, and our programs and services.

Thank you.

Mayor Mei, City of Fremont