

How Lurie spent first year as mayor

Calendar reveals who he spoke to and where he visited most

By Hanna Zakharenko and J.D. Morris
STAFF WRITERS

Between his inescapable Instagram posts and his many public appearances embracing his role as San Francisco's cheerleader in chief, how does Mayor Daniel Lurie actually spend his time?

The Chronicle tried to find out by reviewing Lurie's calendar entries from each day of his first year in office. The calendars, obtained through public records requests, provide a close look at what Lurie was up to in his inaugural year, including who he met with most frequently and which neighborhoods he visited most often.

Among the insights: Lurie spent more than 20 hours doing social media planning and filming, as he made it a point to regularly broadcast his work on Instagram and other platforms. Lurie also spent a lot of his time downtown, which tracks with his focus on reviving the city's beleaguered economic core. He began nearly every morning with a phone call with his top aide and met weekly with the heads of large city agencies.

"That routine, for me, equals accountability," Lurie told the Chronicle in an interview last Monday. He said that when he started as mayor last year, some agency leaders had never met each other — but he makes sure they all gather in the same room every Tuesday.

"If someone's got an issue, they can say it, and they can get buy-in," Lurie said.

The calendar records provided by the mayor's office do not capture every detail about who Lurie spoke to or what he did from morning to night. For example, Lurie's weekly gathering with department heads is listed in the records as "Large Agency

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TOP: Mayor Daniel Lurie records a selfie video on May 15 outside City Hall. The mayor has made it a point to regularly broadcast his work on social media. CENTER: Lurie appears at the 2025 Carnaval San Francisco Grand Parade on May 25 in the Mission District. BOTTOM: Lurie hands a plate of prime rib from House of Prime Rib to a guest at the Christmas Eve Luncheon Celebration at Glide Memorial Church.

Jessica Christian/S.F. Chronicle; Estefany Gonzalez/For the S.F. Chronicle; Manuel Ortega/For the S.F. Chronicle

'Staircase to nowhere' still unfinished

By J.K. Dineen
STAFF WRITER

Align Real Estate has emerged over the last few months as San Francisco's most ambitious residential housing developer — a group proposing to build 3,400 housing units on four Safeway sites, including the eye-catching and contentious waterfront complex proposed for the Marina District.

But while the company is unknown to most city dwellers — Align is so secretive that a password is required to access basic information on its website — it has been at the center of a decades-long fight over an unfinished public stairway meant to connect the city's Dogpatch and Potrero Hill neighborhoods.

The half-completed and

block-long stairway cutting up the steep rugged hillside along 22nd Street between Texas and Missouri streets is a public benefit Align was required to provide as a part of the Landing, a 256-unit apartment complex in Dogpatch. The apartment complex opened in 2019.

During the 2015 approval process for the project the stairway was portrayed as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to knit together the two neighborhoods.

For Dogpatch kids it would mean easier access to Potrero Hill Recreation Center's basketball courts and baseball diamonds, the library and Starr King Elementary School. For Potrero Hill residents it would provide a straight shot to the

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J.R. Eppler, president of the Potrero Boosters Neighborhood Association, walks beyond the top of the incomplete staircase.

Bill is sparking mileage tax fears

Possible study to consider driver fees provokes uproar

By Rachel Swan
STAFF WRITER

The idea of taxing California drivers by the mile has been kicked around for years in transportation circles, and it's still a long way from being implemented.

But try telling that to panicked drivers who are flooding the internet with petitions and sharply worded posts, warning that a "gas mileage tax" is coming.

Much of the confusion appears to stem from Assembly Bill 1421, authored by Assembly Member Lori Wilson, D-Suisun City. The legislation, which passed the Assembly on Jan. 29 and now heads to the Senate, would require the state's Transportation Commission to deliver a report evaluating the possibility of a "road user charge or mileage-based fee system."

Experts in transportation and land use see many reasons to explore such a policy. With new car purchases moving from gas-powered autos to electric vehicles, California stands to lose gas tax revenue that helps fund infrastructure, road repair and transit.

Because EVs are equipped with heavy batteries, they tend to weigh more than their gas counterparts and do more damage to roads. Many politicians believe it's unfair, and impractical, to place that financial burden.

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Mushroom superbloom fuels record poisonings

By Anna Bauman, Catherine Ho and David Hernandez
STAFF WRITERS

Laura Marcelino and her husband were out for a walk in late November with five of their children at Toro Park, a hillside hiking spot near their home in Salinas, when they stumbled upon some mushrooms with yellowish caps.

Thinking they recognized them as an edible variation from their native Mexico, they gathered a handful to bring home.

"We thought it was safe," Marcelino, 36, said in Spanish. "It looked a lot like the ones we picked and ate back in Oaxaca."

The next day, Marcelino washed some of the mushrooms and threw them on the grill, cooking them with a little salt. She and her husband, 39-year-old Carlos Diaz, both ate a small serving. Diaz was dizzy and tired the next day, but Marcelino felt fine, and they ate the mushrooms again, heating them up.

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