



Councilmember Marni von Wilpert and Councilmember Raul Campillo

City of San Diego • District 5 and District 7

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 15, 2023
TO: Mayor Todd Gloria
FROM: Councilmember von Wilpert, District 5 *Marni von Wilpert*
Councilmember Raul Campillo, District 7 *Raul A. Campillo*
SUBJECT: Opioid Settlement Funding

We want to start by thanking staff and the Mayor's office for all your hard work to develop the Fiscal Year 2024 proposed budget. During the recent Budget Review Committee hearings, we have heard compelling testimony about the immense need in many areas throughout all our communities. One area of particular interest to our offices is the allocation of the funds the City is receiving from Opioid Manufacturers who intentionally addicted San Diegans on their drugs for profit and the harmed our City in the process.

On the morning of May 10, our offices, in partnership with City Attorney Mara Elliot as well as representatives from the Mayor's office held our first Opioid Crisis Response Roundtable to continue the conversation about the most impactful ways to spend our limited opioid settlement funds. We want to thank your staff, as well as Office of Government Affairs, for their participation in this productive meeting where we were joined by various regional stakeholders, including representatives from:

- McAlister Project
- People Assisting the Homeless
- Alpha Project
- Father Joes
- San Diego Youth Services
- Armand King and Patricia Alvarez
- UCSD Health's Emergency Medicine/Substance Abuse
- Scripps Health
- San Diego Housing Commission; and
- County Behavioral Health Services

The conversation was productive and identified several opportunities to help enhance and expand our City's efforts to combat the ongoing opioid crisis.

On March 22, 2023, the Office of the Independent Budget Analyst Published their Response to Request for Options to Combat the Illicit Fentanyl Crisis. In their report, the IBA noted that nationally recognized best practices for disbursing the settlement funds encourage the "use [of] dollars to supplement rather than supplant existing funding" to effectively address the opioid crisis. Therefore, we believe the following proposed allocations are in line with best practices as

they do not merely supplant existing funding of existing programs:

- **\$775,771** for the Fire-Rescue Department to purchase vehicles associated to the Resource Access Program.
- **\$761,875** for the Police Department to support the Prosecution and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Services (PLEADS) Program for two years.
- **\$208,444** for the Police Department for Fentanyl Detectors, Spectrometer, and Training for Police Officers on Drug Control Best practices.

This Memorandum serves as our formal request to identify grants or other funding opportunities for the \$2.7 million proposed for the Emergency Harm Reductions Shelter and Safe Haven Shelter in the May Revision. This proposed uses of the Opioid Settlement funds represent a reimbursement to the General Fund and would only support existing levels of service at the two shelters, as identified in the Independent Budget Analyst report on the use of the Opioid Settlement funds.

Like the other proposed allocations, we believe that these \$2.7 million in opioid settlement funds should be redirected and used specifically and directly to enhance and expand existing programs and services, to begin to turn the tide on our local addiction crisis.

Indeed, one of the primary areas of concern raised by participants at the Opioid Response Roundtable was about the lack of any funding for opioid and fentanyl use prevention and education. A second primary concern was the need to increase harm reduction strategies in a variety of areas. Finally, an additional area of concern raised at the Roundtable is the lack of connection and coordination between existing services and treatment options available in the region. Therefore, we propose that the \$2.7 million be redirected from Homeless Services and instead be used to identify programs and partners to achieve the following goals:

- Invest in Opioid prevention and education, including education about the dangers of fentanyl and fentanyl poisoning.
- Invest in further harm reduction strategies, potentially including having our City First Responders dispense Narcan when needed or installing Narcan vending machines.
- Invest in a coordinated system to connect San Diegans to the care and treatment options available for addiction services.

Thank you again for your leadership in issuing an Executive Order to address this critical issue. We look forward to working with you and our Council colleagues to identify new and expanded opportunities to put our limited opioid settlement funds to their best use.

CC: Eric Dargan, Chief Operating Officer
Matt Vespi, Chief Financial Officer
Adrian Granda, Director of Government Affairs
Jessica Lawrence, Director of Policy
Matt Yagyagan, Deputy Director of Policy and Council Affairs