



City of San Diego

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CITY COUNCILMAN, FIFTH DISTRICT

PUBLIC SAFETY

One of the City's primary responsibilities is to protect the life and property of our citizens. In order to fulfill this role, the City must attract and retain high-caliber personnel, provide our first responders with the equipment they need, address challenges creatively, and prepare for disaster *before* it strikes.

According to the most recent five-year plan of the San Diego Police Department (SDPD), the department lost 91 sworn positions and 192 civilian positions from Fiscal Years 2007 to 2012. It is critical that the Council, in partnership with SDPD, delve into the causes of this retention challenge and implement cost-effective strategies to address the situation.

Equally critical as retaining staff in our public safety departments is providing them with the tools to do their jobs. The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System currently used by SDPD is nearly 25 years old and at risk of failure. Replacement, estimated to cost \$8 million, is currently scheduled to occur in Fiscal Year 2017. This implementation timeline is unacceptable for such a vital system. Similarly, the Council has allocated funding for a fire boat to replace one that recently went out of service, and it is imperative that these budgeted funds are processed and the fire boat expeditiously procured. The City must prioritize implementation of critical public safety equipment, such as the CAD system and fire boat. I support measures to streamline these procurements through the Purchasing & Contracting Department.

When the replacement CAD system is selected, one requirement should be the capability for other departments, such as Environmental Services, Public Utilities, and Fire-Rescue, to leverage it for similar needs and communicate across departments. As stewards of taxpayer dollars and public trust, it is incumbent on the Council to think creatively and expend resources efficiently. To that end, I support implementation of a Fast Response Squad (FRS) Pilot Program, which would evaluate this innovative service delivery model and its impact on response times.

I also support community and Intelligence-Led Policing. The SDPD Northeastern Division, which covers more than 100 square miles and has the smallest police force in the City per capita, is able to preserve a strong community presence through maintaining and regularly updating social networking accounts. The Council should analyze the current status of the SDPD's utilization of Community Resource Officers and police storefronts as well as its move into the next generation of policing strategy known as intelligence-led policing, to determine how best to provide for the public's safety in an era of limited resources.

I have called for a full review the City's disaster preparedness strategy and identification of outstanding gaps. The 2003 Cedar Fire and 2007 Witch Creek Fire both significantly affected communities in District Five. During these two incidents alone, within city limits 37,926 acres burned, 700 structures were destroyed, and 17 lives were lost. In 2011, the September blackout left 1.4 million SDG&E users without electricity and resulted in two critical wastewater facility failures. It is imperative that the Council review any recommendations that are not fully implemented or even contained in the after-action reports for the fires and the blackout, to ensure proper disaster preparedness in the event of another major incident. We should also explore how the City can use technology to enhance our response to disasters.

These are just a few of the public safety initiatives I have prioritized for this term. Let me know your thoughts at markkersey@sandiego.gov.