

# 100 DAYS OF PROGRESS

News From Council President Todd Gloria



March 12, 2013

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Sherri Lightner  
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Pro Tem  
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Kevin Faulconer  
Councilmember  
District Two

Open  
Councilmember  
District Four

Mark Kersey  
Councilmember  
District Five

Lorie Zapf  
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Scott Sherman  
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## 100 Days of Progress

By Council President Todd Gloria

One hundred days ago, on December 3, 2012, I was humbled to be selected as San Diego's City Council President. When I was sworn in for my second term as the Councilmember representing the Third District, I laid out my vision through which we would remain fiscally disciplined, focus on infrastructure, end homelessness Downtown in four years, establish parklets and bicycle systems, and develop an appropriate celebration for Balboa Park's 2015 centennial of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition.

I am pleased to present to you this update of my first 100 days in the position and in my second term, which have demonstrated that collaboration and public participation generate results. Much more work is ongoing, and I've highlighted several efforts below that will likely be addressed throughout the course of 2013.

My goals as Council President remain simple: to strengthen the City Council as a legislative body and to work cooperatively to improve the quality of life in San Diego.

As the legislature for the eighth largest city in America, the City Council should play a major role not just considering proposed regulations, but developing and championing new policies and policy revisions to advance the state of our neighborhoods. This role has grown in each of the seven years since the Strong Mayor-Strong Council form of government was put into place.

That trend continues with solid legislative work by my Council colleagues on issues including water and regulatory relief for local businesses.

Since I was first elected in 2008, we have taken great strides to improve efficiency throughout City operations. I believe it is imperative that we continually look at the functions and procedures of the City's governance for streamlining opportunities as well. That was the rationale when I asked Council President Pro Tem Lightner to closely examine the City Council committee structure and work plans. This effort, which I expect to be complete by June, will provide an unprecedented report on the efficacy of this significant piece of the City's legislative process, accompanied by any suggestions to improve it.

Council President Pro Tem Lightner's work with the Water Policy Implementation Task Force, which was recently reauthorized, also highlights the collaborative approach that I hope to be the hallmark of this City Council. By developing strategies to put our Comprehensive Water Policy into effect and meet San Diego's long-term water needs, Council President Pro Tem Lightner's work with the Task Force is critical. After the group wraps up its work this summer, I anticipate recommendations coming





before the Natural Resources and Culture Committee and the full City Council by the end of the year.

I look forward to working with the Natural Resources and Culture Committee Chair, Councilmember David Alvarez, to implement indirect potable reuse (IPR) as part of the City's overall water supply strategy. Through IPR, wastewater is reclaimed and treated for safe use. Since 2009, I have advocated for IPR as one of the few viable and accessible options to pursue. Though the planning and financing of such a system is challenging, moving forward with IPR is much more cost effective than continuing to build a parallel water delivery system for landscape irrigation (purple pipe) or trying to purchase more imported water. I appreciate Councilmember Alvarez's leadership on this issue, and know we will make solid progress this year.

Changing the way we manage our water supply is an obvious need for our coastal desert climate. And creating sensible regulations will help sustain San Diego's business climate. To that end, Councilmembers Lorie Zapf and Kevin Faulconer announced in January their plans to reform the rules restaurants face when trying to expand sidewalk cafes. Currently, restaurant owners face a permitting process that is costly, long and unpredictable. A new proposal, allowing restaurants to keep a row of tables within 4.5 feet of the building, will soon be heard by the City Council. As the representative of almost one third of all restaurants in the City, I look forward to adding more curb cafes next to our sexy streets and sidewalks.

Streets and sidewalks are two key parts of City infrastructure, which also includes our water and sewer systems and public facilities like fire stations, libraries, parks, and recreation centers.

For decades, previous City leaders chose to focus spending on other priorities, and these public assets were not adequately maintained. That has led to a deferred maintenance problem totaling more than one billion dollars citywide. It is common sense that spending money on an ongoing basis to maintain infrastructure is a far wiser decision than waiting for our roads and roofs to fail and require emergency repairs. On February 20, the 102 year old pipe pictured here burst, causing a sinkhole in East Village. While I'm impressed that our City crews were enormously efficient replacing the pipe and repairing the road before the evening commute, I know there is a better way. Getting a handle on the severity of the maintenance backlog and figuring out a way to prioritize projects and pay for them has been a rather daunting task, especially given the financial constraints of the City since I entered office.



Historically, the responsibility for infrastructure has been split between three different City Council committees, I knew a more focused approach was necessary to make substantial progress on repairing our streets and sidewalks. Among my first actions as Council President was to create a standing Infrastructure Committee to oversee all aspects of the complex issue, and asked Councilmember Mark Kersey to lead the effort.

I am impressed by the results of the Infrastructure Committee already. Its ambitious goal of creating a five-year infrastructure plan in time for Fiscal Year 2015 budget, which begins July 1, 2014, is achievable with purposeful, fiscally responsible action. The reallocation of deferred capital projects funds and the development of a public input

process are important initial steps.

One specific aspect of our roadway and transportation network that has gained tremendous traction in the last 100 days is bicycle infrastructure. On February 25, Mayor Bob Filner and I cut the ribbon on the City's newest bike corral, located on Richmond Street just south of University Avenue in Hillcrest. It was originally somewhat controversial to transform an on-street parking space into safe parking for more than 10 bicycles when the first corral was installed on Fifth Avenue. Yet now, it is amazing and gratifying to see local businesses initiate requests for additional corrals.

The need for bike parking demonstrates the reality that San Diegans use bicycles for more than recreation; they are truly a regular mode of transportation. I was excited to hear of Mayor Filner's commitment to create our first ciclovía, CicloSDias, this August 18. CicloSDias will open the streets to folks who want to walk, bike, or mingle in the roadways without concern for vehicle interference. The idea of ciclovía originated in Bogota and has since spread internationally.





As part of a longer term, sustainable active transportation vision, I am working with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), neighbors, and the bicycle community to add safe bikeways along the two regional bike corridors in Council District Three, in Uptown and North Park — Mid-City. San Diegans are heavily and passionately involved in the planning and development of both projects through a well-organized public input process that I kicked off on December 5. Since then, three additional meetings have produced ideas that are now being analyzed to determine potential design and alignments between City Heights and North Park to Uptown and Downtown. I look forward to presenting the alternatives to the community by this summer.



Summer is also when I expect San Diego's new bike sharing program to start. Imagine taking the bus from your apartment in Hillcrest to North Park where you can access a well-maintained bike to ride to your friend's house, which may be too far from the bus stop to walk. Or accessing a bike a few blocks from your condo Downtown and riding to the Embarcadero without having to consider getting in your car or finding a parking space. It's going to happen, San Diego. Modeled after successful programs in other cities (many of which cannot boast of our bike-friendly climate) the City has connected with Deca Bikes to provide this service throughout our central and beach neighborhoods. Beyond being a fun new way to access bicycles, I know this will help fill the gap that many transit riders face getting from the end of a transit line to their desired destination.

Making real progress on active transportation systems has taken considerable effort and time. Similar dedication has been required to address the region's homelessness challenges, and the rewards could not be more worthwhile. As a long time champion of ending homelessness, I could imagine no greater ally than Mayor Filner. He and his fiancée, Bronwyn Ingram, have quickly elevated the level of attention paid to the critical need for shelter, and I could not be more thankful for their compassion.

Yesterday, on March 11, we celebrated the grand opening of Connections Housing, the City's new year-round homeless services center. It was my proudest day as a public servant. Connections, and the collaboration it represents between neighbors, service providers, and civic and business leaders are game changers in how we address homelessness.



We are attacking this challenge in other ways as well. On February 8, ground was broken on Celedon, located at Ninth and Broadway, which will be a high-rise affordable rental development and offer 250 units of affordable housing. The studios and one bedroom units will be available in Spring 2015 for households with incomes ranging from 30% to 60% of the area media income. Also in February, I helped dedicate the restored Mason Hotel, a collaborative project of the County of San Diego, the San Diego Housing Commission, and Civic San Diego. The Mason is a 17 unit development located in the Core district of Downtown San Diego. The Mason will serve very low income adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and will provide supportive services for residents dealing with mental health challenges.

I also continue to work with the Downtown San Diego Partnership to raise awareness of the Movin' Home program, which uses funds contributed through red donation stations to fund move-in kits for people moving off the streets into housing units. Getting people stabilized in their new homes with furniture, kitchen tools, sheets, and other necessities is an essential and often overlooked piece of breaking the cycle of homelessness, and I'm glad the Movin' Home program has provided \$20,000 of assistance so far.

One of the keys to addressing homelessness has been our partnership with Civic San Diego. The City, in partnership with Civic San Diego, continues to make progress revitalizing our neighborhoods, despite the fiscal challenges that resulted from the State of California's decision to dissolve our Redevelopment Agency. Despite the City's loss of this dedicated funding source for neighborhood investment, blight removal and economic development continue throughout thanks largely to Civic San Diego. In the last 100 days, we have made great strides to carry out vital projects that will transform neighborhoods including the affordable



housing projects and Connections Housing just mentioned; City Heights Square Mini-Park; and Mercado del Barrio, which provides 92 units of housing about ground floor retail and parking, a neighborhood market, neighborhood-serving retail, and a public plaza.

The City Council will continue to support and expand the work and services performed by Civic San Diego to allow them to continue the work of the former Redevelopment Agency, support the development of a Public/Private Investment Fund, seek Federal New Market Tax Credits and other innovative financing sources, and expand economic development opportunities throughout the City.

Throughout my time serving San Diego, I have made clear that homelessness will never fall far from the top of my priority list. Its rival for my passion is Balboa Park. As we prepare for the Park's centennial celebration in 2015, I am pleased about the exciting possibilities that are taking shape. I continue to work with my colleagues to ensure that our non-profit partner, Balboa Park Celebration, Inc., has the City's support and seed-funding necessary to plan a world class event that will inspire San Diegans and invite the world back to Balboa Park.

I am disappointed, however, that the celebration will not likely include a fully-reclaimed Plaza de Panama and Plaza de California. The City Council will soon better understand our options related to the future of our crown jewel since a judge determined the pedestrian-focused Plaza de Panama renovation project approved last July cannot move forward. As the City Attorney provides insight on potential alternatives to rectify the conflicts between the law, the Balboa Park Master Plan and Precise Plan, the needs of the park, and the desires of San Diegans, I will ensure public input is an integral part of the decision-making process.

One critical project in Balboa Park is already complete. On February 25, I celebrated the repairs and upgrades at the lily pond, which was damaged last August. The great majority of the costs were covered through donations, which were made by hundreds of caring San Diegans. This is a reflection of how passionate San Diegans are about their park, and also what can be accomplished when this love is translated into the act of giving. It is the kind of phenomenon that we hope to replicate more often through the Balboa Park Conservancy and other stakeholders like the Friends of Balboa Park.



This year will also see attention focused on another major park. I am working with Councilmember Scott Sherman to bring forward the San Diego River Park Master Plan by the end of the year. The Master Plan will be a policy document that encompasses the length of the San Diego River within the limits of the City of San Diego, beginning at our eastern boundary with Santee, winding its way through Mission Trails Regional Park, past the historic Mission de Alcala, through Mission Valley, and finally to the mouth of the river at the Pacific Ocean within Mission Bay Park. Through my work with Councilmember Sherman and my service with the San Diego River Conservancy, I know the Master Plan is needed to provide guidance for land use decisions along the San Diego River through establishment of a vision, principles, recommendations, design guidelines, implementation strategies, and a regulatory framework.

It is clear that the needs of our City and our citizens are many. Fortunately, the team is in place to meet those needs.

As I lead the Council through the annual budget process in the coming months as the Budget and Finance Committee Chair, financial responsibility will remain my focus. When I was elected, the City faced a deficit of almost \$200 million. After tremendous sacrifice by community members and our employees, difficult decisions, and the development and implementation of reforms throughout City operations, costs of service have been reduced, and San Diego's finances are becoming healthier.

For me, this means we have the opportunity to reinvest these savings in the core services we provide. Councilmember Marti Emerald, Chair of the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee, has championed more resources for our first responders. Thanks to her leadership, we have a far clearer idea of the needs of the Fire-Rescue and Police Departments, and what it will take to make those improvements.



On Monday, the City Council allocated \$6.9 million to replaced the 22 year old dispatch system used by the Police Department. The current system is based on 1970s technology and is very difficult to maintain. The City received a reimbursement from the County in November, and those funds are appropriately spent on this public safety necessity.



This month, San Diego will welcome new firefighters, when the first fire academy we've held since 2009 concludes. Also in the foreseeable future, Mission Valley's firefighting crews will be able to move out of the temporary bunkers in the back parking lot of Qualcomm Stadium from which they have operated, and into a new, permanent station, which will also allow for much faster response times throughout the community. I look forward to working with Councilmember Emerald in the coming months to develop a funding strategy for other public safety needs, including those for our hardworking lifeguards.

Public safety is of paramount importance to all neighborhoods, and community members in Council District Four have advocated strongly for greater resources there. I eagerly await the results of the election there, and finding new ways to assist the new Councilmember in serving those important areas.

While we consider restoring some services, like more library hours, we must ensure we can afford the improvements not just for a few months, but on an ongoing basis. We have worked too hard and too many people have sacrificed too much to revert to irresponsible, though perhaps well-meaning, fiscal decision making.

I'd love to repave every street, shelter and assist every homeless person, expand hours at every recreation center, and build every needed new fire station. Unfortunately, vision alone doesn't pay the bills. Our hard work and sacrifice are paying off. Varying from this disciplined strategy cannot happen.

When my colleagues selected me as their Council President, I knew I had big shoes to fill. Former Council President Tony Young helped lead this City with former Mayor Jerry Sanders through arguably some of its most challenging years. By being methodical, hard working, accessible to my neighbors, and always focused on the best interests of the City, I am confident San Diego will remain on the path of progress.

I was born in this City and never want to live anywhere else. Like you, I love San Diego. I show that in the decisions I make, how I represent my neighbors, and the manner in which I lead the City Council. San Diegans deserve a City led and governed with discipline, civility, transparency, and a positive plan for what we can achieve. We can achieve a phenomenal 2015 Centennial in Balboa Park, maintain a balanced budget that is responsive to citizens' needs, develop more diverse water supply options, craft a workable infrastructure investment plan, and be positioned to respond to emergencies and take advantage of opportunities.

I look back at the last 100 days as a tremendous growth and learning experience, and also as a sense of pride. I believe the City's sustained success will require us to look at both our past and future realistically; we must track and celebrate milestones while remaining dedicated to the long term vision of moving San Diego forward.

### **Council President Todd Gloria serves on the following:**

Chair, Budget and Finance Committee  
Land Use and Housing Committee  
San Diego Association of Governments Board (SANDAG)  
San Diego River Conservancy

Chair, SANDAG Transportation Committee  
Metropolitan Transit System Board  
San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau

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