



City of San Diego  
Councilmember Scott Sherman  
Seventh District

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: January 16, 2015  
TO: Andrea Tevlin, Independent Budget Analyst  
FROM: Councilmember Scott Sherman  
RE: Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Priorities

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The following are my budget priorities for Fiscal Year 2016:

**INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS:**

**Dedicate New Revenue to Repairing and Maintaining Existing Infrastructure**

It is significantly less expensive to repair and maintain existing infrastructure than it is to build new infrastructure. We have seen this in the cost difference between a slurry seal and an overlay. The City should continue to dedicate at least 50% of new revenues to the maintenance of existing infrastructure and prioritize streets.

**Invest in Curb Appeal**

San Diego's curb appeal has fallen drastically over the last several years due to budget cuts. We should work to restore funding to programs such as the Park and Recreation Department's Median Maintenance Program, the tree trimming program, and other programs that have resulted in the loss of San Diego's curb appeal.

- Increase shade tree trimming (\$400,000)
- Restore Park and Recreation Median Maintenance (\$575,000)

**Completion of Condition Assessments (\$1,300,000)**

The City will be receiving the first round of several condition assessments in the spring of 2015. The City Council should work with the Infrastructure Committee to analyze these assessments to determine if they provide essential and adequate information that can be utilized by the City. Once we ensure that additional information is not required, the completion of the remainder of the assessments should be a priority.

### **Traffic Signal Optimization (\$400,000)**

We should work to incorporate traffic signal optimization technology into our streets with the highest volume of traffic and major thoroughfares such as Friars Road in Mission Valley. Traffic signal optimization has been found to improve efficiency by up to 20%. In addition, the State recently recognized this technology as having positive climate benefits because it reduces the idling of cars.

### **Street Lighting (\$1,000,000)**

Studies have found one of the easiest ways to reduce crime is by adding lights in high crime areas. The addition of street lights has the added benefit of increasing safety for pedestrians and motorists and encouraging walkability of neighborhoods. Installation savings can be achieved by adding lights to existing power poles in neighborhoods that have not been undergrounded.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS:**

### **Enhance Police Recruitment and Retention Efforts**

I am committed to continue working with the Police Department to develop and maintain a strong police force. This can be accomplished by our continued support of the Police Department's Five-Year Plan which was approved in November 2013. Specifically, we should fund the following priorities in FY 2016.

- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System - \$4,976,000
- Holiday Pay

### **Prioritize Community Plan Updates**

The Mayor and City Council should continue to prioritize community plan updates. This prioritization should consider the areas most likely to grow in the next 10-15 years. One of these communities is Mission Valley. This rapidly developing community needs an updated plan as it transitions from business to residential. The Mission Valley CPU will begin in March of this year. I recommend that the Mayor and City Council commit to funding and expediting this process as much as possible.

- Mission Valley CPU - \$300,000

### **Addition of Two Lifeguard FTE's at Pacific Beach (\$162,000)**

The Pacific Beach Lifeguard Station is currently understaffed. The addition of two FTE's in accordance with the Lifeguard Five-Year Plan would help address the staffing issues at this location.

### **Increase Fire Safety throughout the Wildland-Urban Interface (\$1,000,000)**

San Diego has approximately 500 linear miles of Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The WUI, combined with the ongoing drought and regular Santa Ana winds, has resulted in a sustained fire season. The FY 2015 Budget increased the annual allocation for brush management. However, those funds only covered the increase in cost of service. Additional funding is needed for brush management along the WUI to reduce fire risk and protect our neighborhoods.

## **TECHNOLOGY NEEDS:**

### **Online Permitting and Licensing**

The City should prioritize moving permits and licenses online as quickly as possible. The transfer of these processes will help the City and residents save time and money. By moving these practices online, residents will not need to spend a significant amount of time coming to City Hall and going through the process at DSD or other departments.

### **Revamp the City's Website (\$300,000)**

The current City website is in need of updating in order to improve accessibility and design. The current website design is outdated and is difficult to use when on a phone or tablet. The search function is inadequate and ineffective. The City's website should be user friendly and operable on these devices as more residents are using them on a daily basis.

### **End User App**

The City should develop an end user app for project tracking online. This application would allow residents to review what stage their project is at in the review. It would also allow individuals to upload additional materials to the project online. The development of the application would also provide a central source for communication between City departments and the user which will increase transparency.

### **Performance and Analytics Department (2 FTE's-\$250,000)**

The Performance and Analytics Department was formed in the FY15 Budget. In the last six months they have undertaken a new Open Data policy, a Citywide Strategic Plan, SD Works, and a review of department performance measures. An addition of two FTE's would further expedite these undertakings.

## **DISTRICT 7 BUDGET PRIORITIES:**

### **Mission Valley Fire Station Staffing and Fire Engine (3,046,562)**

The much needed East Mission Valley Fire Station construction is scheduled to be completed in the spring. This station, which is identified in the Citygate report as one of the top priority stations, will serve residents in Mission Valley, Serra Mesa, and Grantville. Twelve FTE's and a new Fire Engine are needed to fully staff the station.

### **Kelly Park in Linda Vista (\$100,000)**

Kelly Park in Linda Vista has been identified by the Resident Leadership Academy through Bayside Community Center as a location greatly in need of additional lighting. The park has a reputation of violence and substance abuse, and is avoided by the community after dark. The addition of up to ten security lights within the park would improve safety and encourage continued usage after sunset.

### **Continued Support for the San Carlos Branch Library**

The San Carlos Branch Library has been a community staple for the last 40 years. Initially planned as the flagship branch for the surrounding neighborhoods, the San Carlos Library has been in planning stages for a new Library for almost 20 years. In January 2014, the San Carlos Library kicked off its year-long 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. The recent

infrastructure bond identified \$1 million in FY 2015 to finalize the design documents for the new San Carlos Library which will complete the last steps in preparation for construction. After the design phase is completed, I request that the Mayor and City Council continue to help prioritize funding for the San Carlos Library.

### **Hex Building in Tierrasanta (\$340,000)**

The Hex Building in Tierrasanta has been a community asset for decades. Unfortunately, over the last 30 years the facility has not been maintained and will sit unoccupied until it is updated. An assessment was done on the building in May 2014 which identified the total cost of repair as \$340,000. The community has made the improvements to this building a priority. By updating this facility, the City would be able to provide needed meeting space in Tierrasanta.

### **GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY:**

#### **Managed Competition/SD Works**

We should work to revise the managed competition process in order to make it efficient and competitive. The execution of reforms from SD Works should also be a top priority for the Mayor and Council. By accomplishing these goals, the City will be able to invest more money back into our streets and infrastructure.

#### **Expand Marketing Partnerships**

A common-sense way to generate funds for the city is to expand marketing partnerships between the city and private entities. Official sponsorship, naming rights, advertising, and exclusive rights are just some of the forms of revenue-generating marketing partnerships available to the city. To its credit, the city already has some marketing partnerships - which have generated over \$16 million cumulatively in revenues. We can further generate revenue by expanding naming rights to places such as the convention center and public meeting spaces.

#### **Implement Zero-Base Budgeting**

Zero-base budgeting is an approach to budgeting which reverses the working process of traditional budgeting. The City of San Diego uses traditional incremental budgeting, whereby department managers justify only variances based upon the assumption that the past years baseline is automatically approved.

Comparatively in zero-base budgeting, every line item of the budget must be approved, rather than only changes. During the budget process, no reference is made to the previous level of expenditure. Zero-base budgeting requires the budget request be re-evaluated thoroughly, starting from the zero-base. This process is independent of whether the total budget or specific line items are increasing or decreasing. Zero-base budgeting has been used in the private and public sectors for decades. I encourage the Financial Management Department, the Mayor and my colleagues on the City Council to consider this new way of developing our budget in future years.

### **Review Park and Recreation Fee Schedule**

The Park and Recreation Fee Schedule was last revised in July 2010. The current fee schedule does not differentiate between a non-profit group and a school-sanctioned group. Also, the fee schedule does not address the issue of teams providing lighting for fields that lack adequate facilities. Park and Recreation recently updated their field and recreation center priority department instruction and it would be appropriate to review and revise the fee schedule alongside this update. Specifically, the charges applied to school groups should be reviewed and waived moving forward as part of a revised fee schedule.

### **Standing Council Charter Review Committee (\$100,000)**

In recent years, the Council has held substantial discussions regarding review of the City Charter, Municipal Code, and Council Policies to improve efficiencies and services, resolve conflicts between State, Federal, and local regulations, and provide the public with better access to their government. While the Council continues work on Municipal Code and Council Policy revisions through the temporary Charter Review Committee, a commitment to long-term oversight through a standing Charter Review Committee, along with funding for a Committee Consultant dedicated to ensuring community input is needed to ensure changes that reflect the demands of the people of San Diego.