



**COUNCILMEMBER BARBARA BRY  
CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
DISTRICT 1**

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: January 22, 2019

TO: Councilmember Monica Montgomery, Chair, Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods

FROM: Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry, Vice Chair, Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods *Barbara Bry*

SUBJECT: Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods 2019 Priorities

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Thank you for seeking my input on the 2019 priorities for the Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods (PS&LN). Public Safety is an imperative and paramount responsibility of local government, and I am honored to serve as vice chair of this committee. I look forward to working alongside the committee and the community to address the public safety needs of our City. I have outlined below several priorities for the PS&LN committee to consider this year.

**Addressing Police Recruitment and Retention**

After City Council voted to offer competitive salaries to Police Officers in order boost recruitment, we have been able to witness its positive effects on our total number of active police officers. But there is still work to be done. Here are the strategies I suggest the committee employ to continue to improve officer recruitment and retention:

- Many SDPD officers live outside of the City, and I would like to explore options such as special vouchers, affordable housing units, and low-cost housing loans to encourage officers to live in the communities that they serve.
- PS&LN should review the SDPD's marketing program and receive periodic reports on both recruitment and retention.
- PS&LN should explore new and effective ways of attracting candidates from diverse backgrounds to apply for police positions.
- The committee should examine civilian staffing deficiencies and consider changing the hiring process to fill vacancies in those roles more quickly.

- During my time on the Council these past two years, I learned of the need for improvements to some of the public safety facilities. The committee should continue to focus on condition assessments of the Traffic Division, Mid City Division, and Northern Division. Our sworn and civilian personnel should be working in facilities that encourage safe and productive work.

### **Fire Fighter Recruitment and Retention**

Climate change has now created a 12-month fire season in San Diego, so a fully staffed fire fighter force is necessary to protect lives, properties and our environment. Similar to Police Officer recruitment, the City must ensure we are addressing the issue of recruiting talented fire fighters and retaining them within our force.

This committee should prioritize exploring and hearing input on ways to increase fire fighter recruitment and retention. This should include supporting a Death and Disability Benefit for fire fighters.

I also request this Committee support the employment of a fire behavioral health clinician in order to evaluate and treat post-traumatic stress injury and be a resource to educate and prevent such injuries within the department. This should result in less turnover.

### **Addressing Homelessness**

Homelessness continues to be a major challenge for our City. We must prioritize gathering the necessary information to form a compassionate, effective, and sustainable funding plan.

The committee should request an update from the Regional Task Force on the Homeless and Regional Continuum of Care Council to learn about forthcoming data from the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and Point In Time Count. These organizations could also provide an update on the status of the implementation of the Coordinated Access and Housing Placement System (CARP).

Continuing to monitor the progress of City-related homeless services to make sure that they are meeting benchmarks and are adhering to the Housing First model should be another priority of our committee.

### **Ensuring the Timely Completion of Fire Stations and Preparing for Updated Citygate and CIP Recommendations**

The City should be prepared for the updated Citygate and CIP fire station recommendations, and PS&LN should identify resources for the proposed priority fire stations and "fast-response squads." PS&LN should conduct an annual progress review of the implementation of these recommendations.

### **Expanding Community Oriented Policing and Empowering *Neighborhood Watch* Programs**

Fostering an amicable, cooperative relationship between the community and the police is critical to advancing our public safety goals as a city. PS&LN should continue to explore opportunities to

work with non-profit organizations, faith communities, and schools to build relationships of trust and respect between police officers and community residents.

Additionally, the committee should discuss youth programming that promotes careers in public safety. The City could expand its existing Cadet Program, which currently accepts people aged 16-21, to include younger children. In addition, the City could adopt its own version of the youth-focused Explorer Program, which is a partnership between the County Sheriff's Department and the Boy Scouts of America. The City's program could include partnerships with San Diego Unified School District, Girl Scouts, and other youth-serving organizations. Introducing young people to public safety careers early on can inspire them to pursue a career in law enforcement.

Engaging community members in the protection of their own neighborhoods through Neighborhood Watch programs has been effective at reducing crime and strengthening police-community relations. PS&LN should develop strategies for expanding Neighborhood Watch programs throughout the City, and providing education, training, and signage for both newly formed and existing groups.

#### **Growing and Expanding the Lifeguard Division**

Our Lifeguard Division must have the necessary resources and organizational structure to protect the lives of our visitors and residents through water, cliff, and boat rescue, as well as marine firefighting, law enforcement, harbor patrol, and communications. This committee should consider the growth and expansion of our Lifeguard Division, so they may continue to protect San Diegans as well as our visitors.

Additional year-round lifeguards are needed, specifically at the Children's Pool and La Jolla Cove. These areas are unique because of their rocky geography, which leaves large portions of coastline out of view from the lifeguard stations. Additional lifeguards would allow for more frequent vehicle patrols to these out-of-sight areas to ensure water safety, and emergency response. Also, an additional Lifeguard III is required for the Boating Safety Unit.

Re-opening of the 18-year Lifeguard Vessel Replacement Plan is also a priority. Doing so will help our lifeguards plan and purchase necessary vessels including lifeguard fire boats, bay patrol boats and surf rescue boats, to replace older, expired vessels.

#### **Exploring a Community Paramedics Program**

Community paramedicine is an innovative model of community-based healthcare designed to provide effective and efficient services where access to healthcare is limited or when short-term intervention is needed. Community paramedicine allows paramedics to function outside their traditional emergency response and transport role to help facilitate more appropriate use of emergency care resources while enhancing access to primary care for medically underserved populations.

A well-organized program can help the City by: providing more effective, efficient and timely healthcare; avoiding unnecessary transports to hospital emergency departments; relieving hospital emergency department overcrowding; reducing hospital readmissions, and; lowering healthcare costs.

### **Identifying and Implementing New Public Safety Technology**

PS&LN should investigate whether there are improvements or upgrades in technology that can be made to help Police, Fire-Rescue and Lifeguards respond to residents more efficiently and ensure that the rights and privacy of residents are protected.

PS&LN should also focus on making sure that SDPD has the technology it needs to adhere to AB 953, a bill that requires police officers to collect and report demographic data on the individuals that they stop. This committee should also schedule to hear reports from SDPD to review local stop data.

### **Monitoring Marijuana and Implementing Responsible Advertisement Policies**

The PS&LN committee should continue to receive consistent staff updates on the status of legal marijuana businesses in the City of San Diego. In 2019, this committee should consider implementing responsible marketing regulations, to restrict how cannabis advertisements are displayed around the City. I would also like for this committee to begin exploring how the City can improve its permitting program to become more equitable and fair to those who have been disproportionately affected by the war on drugs. I look forward to having discussions focused on incorporating social equity principles into our cannabis business permitting program.

Additionally, the PS&LN committee shall receive informative updates from the City Attorney's office and the San Diego Police department on the collaborative efforts to enforce the current regulations relating to illegal marijuana delivery services.

### **Expanding Traffic Signal Optimization**

PS&LN should recognize the areas that have experienced the positive effects of traffic signal optimization and continue to implement well-engineered signal optimization in the most heavily congested roadways. PS&LN should explore the feasibility of signal optimization on major thoroughfares, such as Genessee Avenue, El Camino Real and La Jolla Village Drive.

### **Monitoring Emergency Response Times**

I propose that we continue to evaluate 9-1-1 response times on a monthly basis to ensure that San Diego is continuing to meet or surpass the national standard of 90% of calls answered within 10 seconds. There should also be a consistent review by PS&LN of wait times for non-emergency calls.

Additionally, I propose that we continue to evaluate the operations of American Medical Response (AMR) to ensure that they are adequately serving residents.

### **Combating Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking is a thriving industry in San Diego. A recent study done by the University of San Diego and Point Loma Nazarene University estimated that the total trafficking industry in San Diego generated \$810 million in revenue in 2013 and stated that the average age of a trafficked victim is just 16 years old. PS&LN should continue to work to promote collaboration between City Council, SDPD, the City Attorney, District Attorney and federal agencies to strengthen efforts to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes.

**Additional Programs For Review**

- SDPD 5-year plan implementation
- Lifeguard 5-year plan
- Graffiti Tracker Program
- Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention
- Police body-worn cameras
- Citizens' Review Board on Police Practices
- SDPD Beach Team
- Parking District Advisory Board
- Youth Commission
- Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP)

Thank you for your consideration of the priorities I have outlined here. If you have questions, please reach out to my Chief of Staff, Jamie Fox, at [jfox@saniego.gov](mailto:jfox@saniego.gov) or (619) 236-6611.