



**COUNCILMEMBER CHRIS CATE
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
SIXTH DISTRICT**

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 27, 2017
TO: Councilmember David Alvarez, Chair, Environment Committee
FROM: Councilmember Chris Cate 
SUBJECT: 2017 Environment Committee Priorities

I appreciate the opportunity to share my Environment Committee priorities for 2017. As Vice Chair, I look forward to addressing San Diego's critical environmental issues to ensure local resources are protected for the enjoyment of future generations.

WATER AND WASTEWATER

Weather Based Irrigation Controllers

One of the recommendations in the Climate Action Plan is to create an Outdoor Landscaping Ordinance that would require the use of Weather-Based Irrigation Controllers (WBIC). A commercial grade WBIC has been confirmed by the Environmental Protection Agency to save approximately 134,511 gallons of water per year. Prior to moving forward with this recommendation, the City should evaluate its own use of this technology. Currently, the City utilizes WBICs in Balboa and Mission Bay Parks, however, 85 to 90 percent of the parks in the Community Parks II Division are still in need. The Committee should receive an update from the Park and Recreation Department regarding which City parks currently have this technology, including a cost-benefit analysis detailing anticipated installation costs corresponding with expected water savings. The cost-benefit analysis should reflect Executive Order B-37-16 with regard to potential penalties that may result from exceeding rationing allotments.

Explore Opportunities for Alternative Compliance to the Municipal Stormwater Permit

The City must spend nearly \$4 billion on stormwater systems and enforcement in order to maintain compliance with the stipulations of the Regional Board's Municipal Stormwater Permit. In light of the pressing demands for infrastructure investment, homeless services, and the retention of police officers, the City must realize its budgetary capacity is limited. In November 2015, my office released a memorandum detailing the critical need to move

forward with an alternative compliance feasibility study that will not only provide certainty to the business community, but help identify and analyze potential sites that could be utilized for stormwater capture, filtration, and repurposing. Since the release of that memo, the City has assembled a group of industry professionals, environmental experts, and City staff to discuss the logistics of a robust Alternative Compliance program. The Committee should receive an update on this effort, provide feedback, and offer support to expeditiously finalize a program that will protect our waterways and provide certainty to the development community.

Implement Amendments to the 2015 Cost of Service Study

During the review process of the 2015 Cost of Service Study (COSS), my office submitted several amendments that will require the posting of capital projects funded by the COSS for ratepayer review and funding for a Rate Reform analysis. This analysis will outline a variety of options to ensure the protection of revenue for the operations of the Public Utilities Department (PUD) during times of drought, while incentivizing ratepayers to conserve water. This analysis will be presented concurrently with the COSS financial review in July of this year. This review of funds should be prioritized in order to reach the July deadline. The Committee should partner with PUD to ensure projects are displayed openly for the public's review and that the Rate Reform analysis is conducted effectively and expeditiously.

Monitor Statewide Drought Regulations

The City of San Diego has invested heavily to develop a locally-controlled and sustainable water supply through the Carlsbad Desalination Plant and its Pure Water program. These investments have and will continue to provide flexibility to the City, especially during times of drought. As the State conducts its public input process for Executive Order B-37-16, which proposes to institute rationing policies for water suppliers statewide, it is imperative that the City advocates strongly for the ability to make independent determinations with regard to its own water operations. The Committee should work with PUD, Mayor's office, and the City's State lobbyists to advocate on behalf of San Diego ratepayers.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Monitor the Implementation of Climate Action Plan

In 2015, the City Council unanimously approved a bipartisan and historic Climate Action Plan (CAP) that seeks to achieve 100 percent renewable energy by 2035. A crucial component of the adopted CAP mandates is that a cost-benefit analysis be conducted before any action is taken by the City Council. It is imperative that these analyses are done in a timely manner to provide the committee with more than sufficient time to review the respective ordinances. This review process is vital to ensuring the goals of the CAP are met while providing complete information and flexibility.

Advance Zero Waste Strategy Goals

In accordance with the goals outlined within the City's Zero Waste Plan, the Environmental Services Department (ESD) recently received authorization from the City Council to open

a CIP for two projects: a Resource Recovery Facility and Organics Diversion Facility. Both facilities are strategic in helping the City achieve its 2040 goal of 100 percent diversion. These facilities will play an important role in diverting organics away from the landfill, opening the possibility of producing renewable energy from the captured methane. Given the high concentration of breweries in District 6, these projects will provide this industry the ability to safely recycle organic waste without negatively impacting the landfill and surrounding environment. The Committee should hear an update on this item and provide any necessary support to move these projects forward.

Consider a Street Cleanliness Assessment

Since taking office in 2014, my office has consistently received concerns regarding the cleanliness of streets and neighborhoods in the city of San Diego. These community concerns often involve illegal dumping, graffiti, and litter. To date, the City has not conducted a comprehensive assessment of the cleanliness of its public right-of-way, streets, and storm drains. In partnership with the Transportation and Storm Water and Environmental Services Departments, I request the Committee docket for discussion the implementation of a Clean Streets Assessment to map, monitor, and better maintain City streets on a proactive basis.

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Review Organics Diversion Strategies

As the City moves forward with implementing its Zero Waste Strategy, cooperative and micro-enterprise organics diversion groups have begun to emerge. These entities are interested in providing organics waste recovery services to a variety of uses and establishments across San Diego. These groups divert organics to community gardens, urban farmers, and resource recovery areas. Currently, the City's Municipal Code is vague with regard to the permissiveness of these operations. The Committee should work with Neighborhood Compliance and Environmental Services staff to bring clarity to this issue.

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