



Council President Georgette Gómez

Special Issue: 2019 Accomplishments and Highlights

Mission: To engage, empower, and advocate for our diverse communities

Vision: An equitable and welcoming community with a high quality of life where all are represented and treated with dignity and respect.

Dear District Nine Residents,

2020 will be my fourth year representing you and my second year as Council President. It is an honor to serve and work hand-in-hand with you every day.

For far too long, neighborhoods such as ours have been left behind. I became your Councilmember to make sure that changed and your voices were heard at City Hall.

I am very proud to represent you, District Nine! We have made great progress toward our goals but there is still more to do.

In this newsletter, I'd like to share a few of the many things we accomplished in 2019.

Together, we took on the challenges of:

- Addressing our housing crisis;
- Protecting our environment and our communities from climate change;
- Investing in the things that improve quality of life in our neighborhoods.

We took on these challenges and we created real change.

Everyday, with my staff, we get stop signs installed where they are needed, help residents get angled parking on their street, get a new street light installed or get a street light fixed, get brush and graffiti abated, and coordinate cleanups in the community to help clear out yards, garages, and prevent illegal dumping, and so much more.

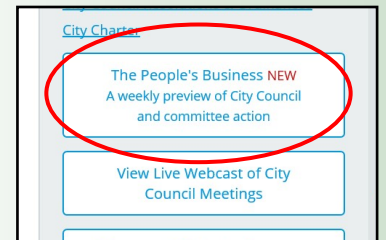
A new way to stay informed about what is being heard at Council and Committees

- I also created a new, quick, and easy way for you to stay informed about what is coming to the City Council and Council Committees: The People's Business. Find it via my Facebook and Twitter, on the City Council webpage in the bottom right corner, or by going directly to the webpage where you can also sign up to get it delivered to your inbox: <https://www.sandiego.gov/citycouncil/the-peoples-business>.

We've done this together. I am proud to represent you and together we will continue to fight for social, economic, and environmental justice for our communities whose voices have been ignored for far too long. I look forward to doing the work with you in 2020! I am here with you committed to have the best year yet!

I invite you to reach out to me via email, phone, and your Council Representatives. We will also continue to hold office hours, coffees, and cleanups in the community.

In Solidarity,



Find The People's Business on the City Council webpage, <https://www.sandiego.gov/>

Addressing the Housing Crisis

Families in District Nine and throughout the City need housing they can afford. In 2019, I continued to pass policies to address our housing crisis and saw the effects of policies I passed in previous year. My policies stimulate development of new housing, preserve existing affordable housing, and provide protections to renters.

City Council Says Yes to Inclusionary Housing Regulation Update

Broad Coalition Led by Gómez Delivers for San Diegans

In December, the City Council approved my update to the City's Inclusionary Housing regulations. The update amends the City of San Diego's Inclusionary Housing regulations to increase development of affordable housing citywide.

The regulations require that all new housing or mixed-use developments build units that are affordable to more San Diegans. From now on, when developers build any housing, they will be creating more affordable housing.

"To address the housing crisis, we need to use every tool we can. I'm glad that I've been able to bring together a diverse coalition of community, labor and business to support this update to a critical policy that will help build housing that San Diegans can afford," said Council President Georgette Gómez.

The proposed revisions are the result of over a year of engagement with a broad set of stakeholders from the community, business, labor, developers, and San Diego City and Housing Commission staff.



Above: Coalition members standing with Council President Gómez before the City Council meeting on Inclusionary Housing.

Right: The past and present leaders of Inclusionary Housing: San Diego Housing Federation Executive Director Stephen Russell, Senate Speaker Pro Tem Toni Atkins, Council President Georgette Gómez, and Chief of Policy Lara Gates. The original Inclusionary Housing regulations were passed in to law in 2003 under the leadership of California Senate Speaker Pro Tem Toni Atkins, then a councilmember. Stephen Russell was her staff lead in 2003; Lara Gates was the staff lead for the 2019 update.

Building More Affordable Housing

In fall of 2018, as Chair of the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), I brought forward a proposal to prioritize partnerships to build affordable housing at trolley stops. It was approved by the MTS Board and new housing is on its way at the following:

Location	Number of units
Palm Avenue Trolley Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none">150 low-income units (30% - 60% area median income - for example, an individual earning \$20,350 - \$40,920 per year)(100 middle-income units (80% - 120% area median income - for example, an individual earning \$54,500 - \$85,875 per year)
12th & Imperial Trolley Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none">960 homes (20% affordable units) in East Village
Grantville Trolley Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none">185 affordable units + 240 student units in Grantville

Addressing the Housing Crisis

Preserving Housing, Protecting Renters

Housing Preservation Coordinator Hired, Report Coming to Council in Early 2020

Preserving the affordable housing we already have is one of the most effective ways to address the housing crisis in our region. However, not all affordable housing is permanently affordable. Much of our affordable housing units are only affordable for 55 years from the time they are built unless we take action. However, the City does not have a list of units or when their affordability expires.

The City Council approved my policy to create a Housing Preservation Coordinator and in 2019, they were hired. In early 2020, the Housing Preservation Coordinator will deliver their report on the list of affordable units and when their affordability expires. Once we have an understanding of the scope of the need, the City Council in its role as the Housing Authority, can create a plan to preserve existing affordable housing by extending affordability or purchasing the housing.

Source of Income Discrimination Ordinance Goes Into Effect

Renters told me that it was difficult to find housing because landlords could turn them down for how they paid their rent. In 2019, my Source of Income Discrimination Ordinance went into effect. This ordinance requires landlords to treat all applicants equally, barring them from rejecting applicants for rental housing because they use rental subsidies, like Section 8.

City Council Approves Financing to Preserve District Nine Senior Housing

In April 2019, the City Council approved bond financing to renovate both the interior and exterior of the Wesley Terrace Apartments in Talmadge.

Wesley Terrace has been home to low-income seniors since its construction in 1973. This decision by the City Council preserves the affordability of these 161 apartments for another 55 years.



City and Community Leaders Launch New Homeless Outreach Coordinator for Mid-City Communities to Connect Residents to Services

In 2019, a homeless outreach coordinator was hired to help our unsheltered residents in the Mid-City communities of City Heights and North Park connect with the resources they need to help get them back into housing such as connecting them to social security or medical benefits, housing vouchers, mental health services, and more. The homeless outreach coordinator visits the same areas over and over, becoming known and trusted to our unsheltered residents who then work with him to navigate the network of available resources. The coordinator offers expertise in understanding the system and how to advocate to get assistance.

I am happy to help provide funding for this partnership with Councilmember Chris Ward, North Park Main Street, City Heights Business Association, City Heights Community Development Corporation, former-Supervisor Ron Roberts' office, and Price Philanthropies.

Based on these successes shown to the right, the program is being expanded in 2020 to add another outreach coordinator to connect more of our unsheltered neighbors.

PATH Outreach, By the Numbers*

193 TOTAL UNIQUE CLIENTS SERVED

46 PEOPLE HOUSED

23% positive exit rate for all clients,

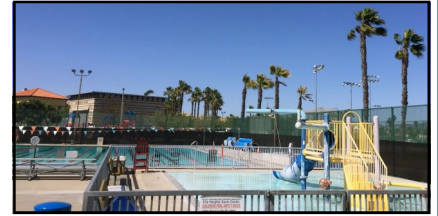
* Mid-City Outreach Program, Jan-Sep 2019

Building Stronger Communities: Parks

Like many of our older neighborhoods in San Diego, District Nine needs more park space and opportunities for residents to enjoy the outdoors. I have strongly advocated for parks in District Nine in every budget and funding allocation discussion since day one. I'm excited that many of our parks received more funding and resources in 2019.

City Heights Swim Center - \$6,748,502

The City Heights Swim Center will be receiving the final funding needed for the comprehensive repairs it needs and is expected to be open in time for everyone to enjoy this summer.



Willie Henderson Sports Complex - \$350,185

The members of the Willie Henderson Rec Council and neighbors identified improvements to the park that they want to see. I am happy to share that the Willie Henderson Sports Complex will receive funding necessary to complete the design work needed to install lighting, replace the playground/tot lot, and improve separation between the park and the I-805 freeway.



Chollas Triangle Park - \$400,000

In 2015, the Mid-City Community Plan was amended to include a 5-acre park and the restoration of Chollas Creek adjacent to the park.

The next step to move forward is to evaluate the space for the future park and the options for its future amenities like space for games and sports, picnics, bikeways, landscaping, and more.

"Chollas Triangle Park is an important improvement in quality of life for El Cerrito neighbors," Council President Georgette Gomez said. "It has been a priority of mine in every city budget discussion since I was elected. I'm pleased that funding to take the next step is moving forward but we aren't done. I will continue to work hard until all the pieces from the community plan are in place from the completed park to the bikeway to housing and more."



Improvements to Clay Park

In 2019, I convened the Mayor's Office, Parks & Rec Dept., San Diego Police Dept., Environmental Services Dept., and other organizations to listen to Rolando Village to discuss improvements to Clay Park.

The San Diego Unified School District installed perimeter fencing around the joint-use field, and further improvements identified by the Colina del Sol Recreation Advisory Group will be completed in early 2020.



Harriet Tubman Village Charter School Joint-Use Field

I am very excited to have helped facilitate the process to bring the joint-use field at Harriet Tubman Village Charter School to fruition.

When complete, the park will be used by the students during school hours and will be open as a public park to the community after school, on weekends, and during school breaks.



Building Stronger Communities

City Council Approves Joint Use Agreement for College-Rolando Library Parking

When the College-Rolando Branch Library, located at 6600 Montezuma Road, opened in September 2005, it replaced the outdated College Heights library which was built in 1955.



However, the Library property was not large enough to construct more than a dozen parking spaces for its patrons. Fortunately, the College Lutheran Church, which owned the adjacent property, agreed to enter into an agreement with the City to allow the Library the use of parking spaces on their property along with access rights on the driveway off of Montezuma Road. That agreement ended when the church sold their property so a new agreement was needed.

In 2019, I ensured that the community has been heard and their concerns addressed. In November, the City Council approved a new Joint Use Agreement allowing the driveway access and up to 25 parking spaces on the Property for a period of 20 years with two additional terms of 5 years each.

Kensington Mini Park Tree Holiday Lights Are Lit

Over the past year, my office has worked closely with City staff and the Adams Avenue Business Association (AABA) to help negotiate an agreement to make the holiday lights in the tree in the Kensington Mini Park at the corner of Adams Avenue and Marlborough Drive a permanent Kensington tradition. I am excited that in September, the Adams Avenue Business Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding to sponsor the holiday lights every year.

I want to thank the AABA, Kensington Talmadge Community Association, City staff, and all the community residents who have helped with this effort.



Above: Council President Gómez, AABA Executive Director Scott Kessler, & Ken-Tal Community Association President Marge Cole.



Reducing Barriers at Boards, Commissions, & Planning Groups

At the Rules Committee meeting in November, I brought forward proposed amendments to the Municipal Code sections and Council Policies that govern the City's advisory boards and commissions. The proposed amendments are recommended in order to increase transparency and accountability in the application and nomination process as well as in the functioning of the advisory boards and commissions, and reduce/remove barriers to participation.

The amendments are based on recommendations from the City Auditor, community organizations that prepare residents from historically neglected neighborhoods to serve on boards and commissions, and former and current boards and commissions members.



Above: Representatives and graduates of the Center on Policy Initiatives and Mid-City CAN Boards & Commissions Leadership Institutes at the Nov. 13, 2019 Rules Committee hearing.

The proposed amendments passed unanimously and will be coming to the full Council for consideration in early 2020.

Translation Services for Community Planning Groups

For many years, District Nine residents have been advocating for translation services for Community Planning Group meetings so that language is no longer a barrier to participation in decision-making.

I secured this funding in the budget and now, if a resident requests translation in advance of the meeting, there is equipment and a budget for a translator.

Protecting Our Environment, Improving Our Communities

San Diego Says Yes to Community Choice Energy

City Leads Joint Effort to Protect our Communities and Our Environment

In 2019, we created something new in the San Diego region: San Diego Community Power.

First identified in the City's Climate Action Plan as an important step to meeting our greenhouse gas emissions targets, the City of San Diego led the way in creating a new energy utility. Last fall, the cities of San Diego, Chula Vista, Encinitas, Imperial Beach, and La Mesa voted to join together to create San Diego Community Power.

Residents will soon have a choice in how they power their homes. We will be able to choose to use more renewables and lower our greenhouse gas emissions.

The San Diego Community Power is incredibly different than how things have always been done.

The priorities include:

- The new utility needs to be based in equity.
- Residents should have a voice in the decisions made by our power company.
- Our bills should be lower.
- We should have an ever-increasing use of renewable energy so that our air is cleaner and our climate protected.
- The benefits of our energy bills should be returned to us in the form of programs to invest in making our homes more energy efficient.
- The energy that powers our region should have local economic benefits and be developed and delivered by local residents receiving family-sustaining wages and benefits.

With San Diego Community Power, we now have place to buy the energy that powers our homes and businesses that is equitable, inclusive, accountable, and transparent.

Regreening and Revitalizing Chollas Creek

Chollas Creek begins in City Heights, runs through the heart of the southern communities of District Nine, and is home to many species protected under Federal law. While this makes Chollas Creek special, it also presents challenges to maintaining it. My office has brought various groups together to address maintaining, regreening, and revitalizing Chollas Creek and progress is being made, as can be seen in the photos from September 2018 and December 2019.

In 2019, the efforts to regreen and revitalize Chollas Creek received significant assistance.

- The City Council approved \$400,000 for the next steps in creating the Chollas Triangle Park near the intersection of 54th and Chollas Parkway.
- Groundwork San Diego has received a \$3.5 million grant from the California Natural Resources Agency to bring water quality, climate action, and active transportation benefits to Chollas Creek Watershed communities. The project will focus on removing concrete from the creek, habitat restoration, planting native shade trees, and trail construction along Federal Blvd. and Home Ave.

"Chollas Creek is a key natural asset for communities but has historically been neglected. This funding represents the local, state, and federal partnerships helping to restore the creek according to the vision of the residents. Chollas Creek has been a priority of mine from the beginning and I am excited to see this investment in its future," said Council President Georgette Gómez.



Before: September 2018



After: December 2019

Increasing and Enhancing Walkability and Mobility

Council Approves Activation of I-15/Mid-City Bridge Decks

Agreements Bring Increased Economic Vitality, Walkability

In October, the City Council approved (9-0) agreements with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) that will allow small businesses to rent space at the El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue transit plazas (or bridge decks) above Interstate 15.

The City Heights community has been eager to activate this area that spans the I-15 between North Park and Mid-City. This vote will allow local businesses to set up shop on the bridge decks to not only increase their economic return but also walkability along the transit routes. The Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking vendors is open now and closes April 1. The RFP can be found at <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/bridgedeckkiosks2020.pdf>.

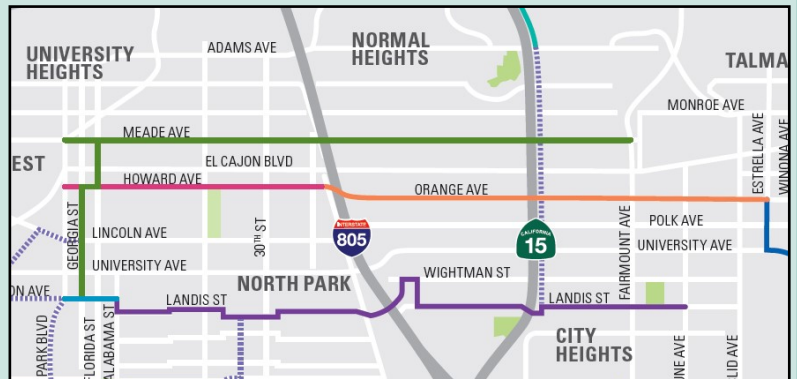


Council President Georgette Gómez said, "The ability to activate the El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue bridge decks for both residents and transit commuters is an exciting opportunity to bring even more economic vitality and walkability to this vibrant area. This is an example of strong local and state partnerships to strengthen our communities."

Improving Biking, Walking, and Mobility Through Investments in Orange Avenue and Central Avenue Bikeways

Together, with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), we are increasing the walkability and bikeability of our communities with improvements going along Central and Orange Avenues this year and next year, including protected bike lanes, more visible and raised crosswalks, and more.

These changes will make it easier, safer, and more enjoyable to choose to get out of our cars, experience our neighborhoods, and get where we want to go.



MTS Launches Region's First Zero-Emissions Bus Program

As Chair of the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), one of my many priorities was help the system meet the region's goals to address climate change.



I'm excited that MTS is has launched a pilot program of six Zero-Emissions Buses (ZEB) that run on electric battery power. The vehicles are first-of-their-kind in the region and their use cuts tailpipe emissions by 100 percent, immediately improving air quality and helping our region achieve climate action goals.

Bus-Only Lane Pilot Reduces Commute Time and Addresses Climate Change

In January 2019, I partnered with Councilmember Chris Ward in calling for a bus-only lane pilot to connect Mid-City communities along El Cajon Boulevard.



The El Cajon Boulevard bus-only lane is an important public transit expansion that will give more San Diegans a real choice in how to get around town. Many San Diegans rely on transit. I'm very glad to have been able to bring this pilot to our communities. This paves the way for future action to reduce commute times, improve quality of life and address climate change throughout the region and it's just the beginning.

Keeping Our Communities Beautiful

Every year, maintaining and expanding funding for keeping our communities beautiful is a priority. In 2019, my office led or assisted with 23 cleanups throughout District Nine communities. Below are a few photos of a few of the many cleanup events.

Thank you to all the residents who have volunteered their time helping keep District Nine vibrant!



Auburn Creek Community Cleanup with Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, and San Diego County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher.



Castle Neighborhood Community Cleanup.



Talmadge Community Cleanup.



Southcrest Trails Park cleanup.



City Heights cleanup at Rosa Parks Elementary.



College Area cleanup with SDSU Associated Students Campus Community Commission.

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