



**COUNCILMEMBER STEPHEN WHITBURN
THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT
M E M O R A N D U M**

DATE: January 9, 2026

TO: Charles Modica, Independent Budget Analyst

FROM: Councilmember Stephen Whitburn, District 3 *Stephen Whitburn*

SUBJECT: Updated Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Priorities

As we begin the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget process, my top priorities are increasing affordability, reducing homelessness, ensuring neighborhoods are clean and safe, and improving streets, sidewalks, and other critical infrastructure.

I want to thank the District 3 residents and organizations who have engaged with my office to share their input and perspectives. Based on these conversations, prioritizing affordability, homelessness reduction, housing, safety, and basic services consistently emerge as the most effective ways to improve quality of life and strengthen public services citywide.

FY 2027 is likely to mirror FY 2026, with continued structural budget challenges. Economic conditions remain uncertain as consumer spending slows, and inflation and unemployment remain elevated. If revenues come in higher than anticipated or new revenue sources are identified, repealing paid parking at Balboa Park should be a priority.

As the Councilmember for District 3, my constituents are my highest priority. They have been clear about the pressures of rising costs, unsafe conditions, and aging infrastructure, while also expressing strong support for continued progress in reducing homelessness, expanding affordable housing, enhancing public safety, and investing in neighborhood infrastructure.

I respectfully request the following priorities to be included in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget:

I. FY 2027 BUDGET PRIORITIES:

1. Homelessness Solutions and Affordable Housing

San Diego is grappling with an urgent housing affordability crisis, which is driving an increasing number of residents into homelessness, especially seniors on a fixed income. In November 2025 alone, 1,051 people in San Diego became newly homeless. I am committed to ensuring that the Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Budget reflects the critical need to address the situation on our streets.

Safe Sleeping

Fully fund and expand the Safe Sleeping Program. Safe sleeping sites provide a safe place for people to stay in new tents with cots. The sites give people access to restrooms, showers, laundry, meals, healthcare, and connections to supportive services and housing options.

Shelter Options

Funding for additional shelter beds in the City to address the current crisis.

Expand Veteran's Village San Diego (VVSD)

Use \$2,100,000 from opioid settlement funds to expand VVSD by 77 new shelter beds.

Harm Reduction and Shelters with Behavioral Health Services

Add shelter and treatment for people experiencing homelessness with mental health and substance use disorder. We should build on programs like Community HARM Reduction shelter and the collaboration with NAMI at the Old Downtown San Diego Library Site.

Family Reunification Program

Increase funding for the Family Reunification program, which connects people experiencing homelessness in San Diego with family. One of the fastest growing groups of people facing homelessness is seniors. In many cases this program helps people move closer to family in locations where they not only get better care and support, but their social security check can go a lot further. This offers the opportunity for a higher quality of life for many seniors.

LGBTQ+ Stay Safe Housing Program

The LGBTQ+ Safe Stay program creates an affirming space for LGBTQ+ unhoused folks at two locations. The program provides housing and services for 45 people at a time. Services, such as mental and behavioral health services, job placement, and substance abuse recovery services, provide these youth with access to vital resources.

2. Clean and Safe Neighborhoods

San Diego Police Department

Continue to fill vacant sworn positions in SDPD. SDPD remains understaffed with over one hundred officers set to retire before the end of FY 2027. Currently SDPD is down over a hundred sworn positions. The staffing crisis has led to high response times.

Enhanced Policing in High Crime Corridors Downtown

Increase dedicated walking SDPD patrols in high call-volume corridors, including but not limited to 5th Avenue, C Street, Imperial Avenue, and J Street and increase resources to expand the narcotics division.

Brush and Weed Abatement

Increase funding to address the City canyon brush management backlog. San Diego has a history of wildfires and the presence of homeless encampments in some areas heighten the risk of fires. It is important that we provide adequate resources needed to take preventative approaches in the following areas throughout the year: regional parks, open space parks and canyon lands.

Arts and Culture

Creativity and the arts play an important role in creating jobs, educational opportunities and help enhance San Diego's neighborhoods. Our region's ability to attract and retain our workforce and tourists to our beautiful city will be increased through our vital arts and culture funding.

Parks and Recreation

The City of San Diego Park system provides healthy, sustainable, and enriching environments for all its residents and tourists. Funding for facility improvements at Balboa Park, neighborhood parks, and recreation centers are critical to improving the quality of life of our communities. With the increased focus on outdoor activities, it is more important than ever that we maintain adequate funding

3. Streets, Sidewalks, and Other Infrastructure

Fix San Diego's Most Dangerous Fatal 15 Intersections

The City should continue its work fixing the most dangerous intersections according to the Systemic Safety Analysis Report Program. These improvements should include effective, low- cost measures like lead pedestrian interval blank-out signs, audible pedestrian signals, countdown timers, and high visibility crosswalks. The City should increase funding and prioritize the most dangerous intersections, including:

- G St and 14th St
- Texas St and El Cajon Blvd
- University Ave and Alabama St

Add funding for Red Curb Markings for AB 413 Compliance

Assembly Bill 413 updated California law to prohibit vehicle parking within 20 feet of the approach side of a crosswalk. While this change improves visibility and safety for vulnerable road users and motorists, unclear curb markings have caused confusion about where parking is prohibited, leading to frustration among residents. Painting red curbs would clearly indicate no-parking zones and help prevent unintentional violations and citations.

Slow Speeds in School Zones

With the completion of the Speed Management Plan later this year, Assembly Bill 43, allows the City to set speed limits of 15 mph within 500 ft of a school and speed limits of 25 mph when between 500 and 1,000 feet from a school.

Streetlights

Repair or install streetlights, including upgrading to LED when appropriate.

Sidewalks

Sidewalk infrastructure, maintenance and repair projects must be funded in a wide variety of locations. A safe network of sidewalks is essential to walkable neighborhoods and the City should set a goal of a minimum of two miles per year. The current backlog of sidewalks and ADA projects need to be addressed and a proactive program to inspect, evaluate, and notify property owners about needed repairs should be implemented.

Street Improvements

The City must maintain its focus on resurfacing, slurry sealing, and paving our City streets.

Traffic Calming and Safe Streets

Fund traffic calming infrastructure improvements where traffic fatalities, speeding, and crashes have taken place. Utilize AB 43 to lower speed limits across the city's business and residential corridors, prioritizing those that have experienced high levels of traffic fatalities, speeding, crashes, and areas with highly concentrated vulnerable pedestrian groups such as bicyclists, children, seniors, persons with disabilities, users of personal assistive mobility devices, and the unhoused.

II. COMMUNITY PARKING DISTRICT PRIORITY PROJECTS

At the October 27, 2026 City Council meeting, the Council voted to temporarily waive Council Policy 100-18 (Community Parking Districts) for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027, through June 30, 2027. This action allows the City to allocate all street parking meter revenues for eligible expenditures through the annual budget process, rather than through Community Parking Districts. The City currently has four parking meter zones: Downtown, Uptown, Mid-City, and Pacific Beach. Under state law, street parking meter revenues must be spent within the zone in which they are collected and must support parking- and transportation-related purposes. As a result, the priorities outlined below are made possible only because parking meters are installed in these areas and generate dedicated revenue for enhanced services. These requests reflect eligible uses of parking meter funds.

Downtown (City Center, Little Italy, East Village, Ballpark District, and Gaslamp):

- Enhancing Downtown Mobility Through Micro-Mobility Restoration
- Crosswalk locations:
 - Ash Street & Eighth Avenue/Ninth Avenue
 - Columbia Street & B Street

City Center:

- B Street Sidewalk Project

Little Italy:

- W. Date St between Kettner Cul de Sac & Front St: Install New Removable Bollards – Spaces as Places Pedestrian Promenade
- W. Grape St: Freeway Underpass Light Repair
- W. Hawthorn St: Freeway Underpass Light Repair
- W. State St: Freeway Underpass Light Repair
- 1445 India St: Missing Light Pole
- 1469 India St: Missing Light Pole
- 1565 India St: Missing Parts on Light Pole

- 1747 India St: Missing Parts on Light Pole
- 606 W. Date St: Restriping to Head-In Parking
- W. First St between India and Columbia St: Restriping to Head-In Parking
- India St: Replace Gravel with Porous Pave, not Steel Tree Grate
- 1608 India St: Sidewalk and access repair
- 1629 Columbia St: Sidewalk and Curb Repair
- 1601 India St, #106: Sidewalk Repair
- 1747 India St: Sidewalk Repair
- 1827 India St: Sidewalk Repair
- 1845 India St: Sidewalk Repair
- 1953 India St: Sidewalk Repair
- W. First St between India and Columbia St: Sidewalk Repair
- Under Little Italy Sign: Roadway & Curb Repair
- 1655 India St: Remove Vacated Driveway
- 1741 Columbia St: Sidewalk and Driveway Repair
- W. Date between India St and Kettner Blvd: Add Pedestrian Single Acorn Lights
- NE and SE Corners on W. Grape St: Add New Bulb Outs – Traffic calming measure
- NE and SE Corners on Columbia St Sides: Add New Bulb Outs – Traffic calming measure

East Village:

- 100 Park Plaza (Corner of Park Blvd. & Imperial Ave.): Utilize Box Remounting
- 605 8th St: Sidewalk/Curb Repair
- 554 Park Blvd: Exposed Utility Wiring
- 877 Market St: Streetlight Replacement
- 701 7th Ave: Curb Repair
- 660 G St: Curb Repair
- 695 6th Ave: Streetlight Replacement
- 744 8th Ave: Sidewalk/Curb
- 765 10th Ave: Curb Repair
- 710 13th St: Curb Repair
- 1466 F St: Sidewalk Repair
- 1411 E St: Streetlight Replacement
- 1401 Broadway: Curb Repair
- 1633 Market St: Curb Repair
- 1566 G St: Curb/Gutter Repair
- 465 7th St: Sidewalk Replacement
- 405 17th St: Curb/Gutter
- 31 17th St: Utility Box Remounting
- 33 16th St: Curb Repair
- 9 17th St: Sidewalk/Curb Repair
- 1323 J St: Curb Repair

- 403 13th St: Curb Repair
- 1245 J St: Curb Repair
- 1050 11th Ave: Curb Repair

Ballpark District:

- 101 16th St: Sidewalk/Curb Replacement
- 200 – 270 17th St: Sidewalk Repair/Replacement
- 1402 K St: Drainage/Flooding Issue
- Tailgate Park: Backup, Flooding, & Drainage Issues
- Bay to Park Link: Repair of Pedestrian Bridge Elevator & Regular Cleaning/Maintenance
- 350 10th Ave: Streetlight Replacement

Gaslamp:

- Streetlight operations and pedestrian safety
- Sidewalk and brick infrastructure improvements

Uptown:

- \$250,000 dedicated to feasibility study on multi modal mobility system for Uptown, Downtown, North Park, and Golden Hill to determine the feasibility of additional high quality frequent transit options.

Hillcrest:

- Streetlight repairs: along University Ave between Park Blvd and First Ave, and Fifth and Fourth Aves between Upas St and Washington St.
- Curb and sidewalk repairs along University Ave between First and Eighth Ave.
- Curb repainting, especially in compliance with AB 413.
- Balboa Park Streetcar long term planning.
- Park Blvd and Washington St intersection.
- New parking meters at:
 - 1500 and 1600 Harvey Milk Street on both sides.
 - 1800 and 3900 Cleveland Ave. both sides of the street.
 - 3900 Richmond St. (between University Ave. and Washington) both sides of the street.
 - 1400 Lincoln Ave (between Washington and Normal) both sides of the street.
 - 3900 Park Blvd. both sides of the street.
 - 3900 Eighth Ave. both sides of the street.
 - 3900 Ninth Ave. both sides of the street.
 - 3700 Sixth Ave. on the east side of the street.

Mid-City:**North Park**

- Fund Mid City Go Program with Via San Diego
- Street lighting repair and enhancements near 30th St and University Ave
- Sidewalk repair
- Bus stop improvements

III. ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES SUBJECT TO FUNDING AVAILABILITY**Repeal Paid Parking at Balboa Park**

The City should prioritize ending paid parking at Balboa Park.

Restore Sunday Library Hours

Restore Sunday library hours within the City.

Lifeguard

Addition of one Marine Safety Captain FTE.

Accessibility Advisory Board

Allocate funding for backlog of ADA Facility Transition Plan projects and Complaint projects.

Expand Housing Instability Prevention Program (HIPP)

Maintain the current funding of \$5,800,000 and add \$1,500,000 to assist an additional 75 to 100 households for total HIPP funding of \$7,300,000. HIPP helps pay rent for up to 24 months and other housing-related expenses for households in the City of San Diego with low-income who are experiencing a housing crisis and at risk of homelessness.

Expand Diversion and Prevention Resources

The program is currently budgeted in FY26 at \$3,180,000 through the City's Affordable Housing Fund. The program expects to serve 170 households with diversion resources and 195 households with prevention resources. The need for prevention resources far exceeds the number of available resources. Additional funding will allow SDHC to serve an additional 225 households with prevention resources.

Eviction Prevention Program (EPP)

EPP provides education and legal services for low-income renters facing eviction for nonpayment of rent.

Continued Funding Allocation to Preservation

SDHC and the City have identified funding sources that are required to be spent within defined regions within the City. Each fund, by itself, is insufficient to fully fund the construction of new affordable units.

Maintain Affordable Housing Fund

The Affordable Housing Fund is a permanent and annually renewable source of revenue to meet, in part, the housing needs of the City's very low, low, and median income households. This fund provides the essential gap financing that makes the production of new affordable housing possible and should be preserved.

Wage Theft Ordinance

The City should consider implementing a Wage Theft Ordinance, and including funding for enforcement.

Deputized Senior Engineer in Parks & Rec

Fund a Deputized Senior Engineer role within the Parks and Recreation Department to accelerate small capital improvements.

Class IV

Fund Class IV bicycle lane for a portion of Camino Del Rio South from Texas to Mission Center Rd.

City Employee: Recruitment and Retention Progress

After decades, the City is finally making progress with the recruitment and retention of highly qualified employees. Services must be protected, and a balanced approach should be the guiding philosophy.

Office of the City Auditor

Restore FY26 one-time cuts and \$54,910 in other non-personnel reductions be made only on a one-time basis.

IV. POTENTIAL REVENUE/COST RECOVERY OPPORTUNITIES**TOT Increase (Measure C) Implementation**

Measure C was a 2020 citizens' initiative that would raise the Transient Occupancy Tax. Implementing Measure C will fund homeless service funding gaps.

Suspend Reserve Contributions

In the budget crisis, we should consider suspending reserve contributions.

Pursue Grant Opportunities

Explore federal and state grant opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my budget priorities for this upcoming fiscal year.

Should you have any further questions, please free to contact Jordan Latchford in my office at (619) 236-6374 or JLatchford@san Diego.gov.