



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 11, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor Todd Gloria, City of San Diego

FROM: Henry L. Foster III, Councilmember, City of San Diego, ~~Fourth District~~ 

SUBJECT: Request for El Niño Preparedness Presentation in Council District Four

This memorandum formally requests that the Office of Emergency Services (OES), in coordination with the appropriate City of San Diego (City) departments, provide an El Niño preparedness presentation in Council District Four.

On January 22, 2024, San Diego experienced a significant flooding event that resulted in extensive property damage and resident displacement due to the storm, which produced 2.73 inches of rain in 24 hours and caused widespread flooding and significant damage to homes and businesses.¹ Based on prior data, the County of San Diego recorded over 2,600 initial reports of property damage or storm impacts, with 431 residential locations classified as majorly damaged.² This flood event highlights the need for targeted, preventative communication measures to protect vulnerable areas and ensure resident safety in District Four. Thus, as the rainy season begins in the San Diego region, it is essential to take proactive steps to prepare for potential heavy rainfall and flooding.

Additionally, the 2025 Performance Audit of the City's Disaster Response (Performance Audit) provided by the Office of the City Auditor further underscores the need to strengthen preparedness for future disasters. The Performance Audit found that the City lacked clear plans to meet residents' needs when recovery extended beyond its previous responsibilities and that emergency communications suffered. Data from the City's Climate Equity Index states that communities in the heavily flooded areas have a higher percentage of households without internet access and a higher percentage of household with limited English proficiency than average in San Diego. See pages 42 and 43 of the Performance Audit.³

¹ Resolution of the Council of the City of San Diego Ratifying the Mayor's January 22, 2024, Proclamation of a Local Emergency Related to a Severe Winter Storm – February 6, 2024:

https://docs.sandiego.gov/council_reso_ordinance/rao2024/R-315327.pdf

² 2024 Winter Storm Emergency - Weekly Temporary Lodging Summary - City of San Diego:

https://www.alertsandiego.org/content/dam/alertsandiego/recovery/en/EOC%20Exec%20Brief%20Report_06172024%202.pdf

³ 2025 Performance Audit of the City's Disaster Response – Office of the City Auditor – June 2025 – OCA-25-10 -

<https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/performance-audit-of-the-city-s-disaster-response.pdf>

This underscores the importance of providing in-person, accessible preparedness information before an emergency occurs, particularly in communities that have experienced disproportionate impacts from flooding. These lessons are especially relevant to District Four, where several communities such as Encanto, Jamacha, Mountainview, and portions of Southcrest, experienced significant impacts from the January 2024 flooding.

As the City prepares for future severe weather, residents need clear, accessible information about flood risks, emergency and stormwater preparedness, evacuation procedures, communication resources, sandbags, flood insurance, and what to do before, during, and after a major storm.

Accordingly, I request that OES and the appropriate City departments schedule and provide an El Niño preparedness presentation in Council District Four and coordinate with the District Four office on the location, date, and outreach strategy. Given the history of flooding in our communities, preparedness cannot begin after the water starts rising. The City has an obligation to ensure residents have the information and resources they need before the next major storm.

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