

From: "Councilmember Joe LaCava" <cd1news@sandiego.gov>  
Subject: LaCava's Column: 2021 in Review

**LACAVA'S COLUMN**

Your District 1 News Update

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## Friends,

On December 10, 2020, I started my term with an email thanking you, my constituents, for honoring me to represent you on City Council. As the New Year rolls around once again, I want to take a moment to share some of my biggest achievements and hardest lessons.

Entering office, I had two priorities:

1. Work with and be responsive to my district.
2. Get. Things. Done.

While much has changed this past year, these priorities have not.

In 2022, my goal is to continue to fulfill those priorities, holding my core values, and work with you and my council colleagues to ensure that every San Diegan in every community has the opportunity to enjoy what our great city has to offer.

While we will return to our usual newsletter format in January 2022, I invite you to reflect with me on what a momentous year 2021 was for both District 1 and the City of San Diego.

## Happy holidays,



**Councilmember Joe LaCava**  
[joelacava@sandiego.gov](mailto:joelacava@sandiego.gov)

# Environmental Policies

Climate change, and its subsequent repercussions, are the single biggest problem facing our generation. Sea level rise, increased risk of fire and flooding, and other extreme weather threatens our economy and way of life.

## 2021 Local Legislative Victories

- Initiated and funded a public power feasibility study;
- Required items docketed for Council action are measured against meeting our city's climate action goals;
- Elected to “opt-up” all San Diego municipal accounts to 100% renewable energy;
- Approved Phase I of the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon restoration to improve coastal habitat and mitigate flooding;
- Divested all city investments in fossil fuel companies;
- Passed Climate Resilient SD, the City's plan to prepare for the impacts of climate change, like extreme heat, wildfires, flooding, drought, and sea level rise;
- Reviewed the Mayor's draft update to the Climate Action Plan, which establishes a community-wide goal of net zero emissions by 2035, committing San Diego to an accelerated trajectory for greenhouse gas reductions;
- Closed Point La Jolla during sea lion pupping season to protect visitors and wildlife alike while incorporating community input on preserving ocean access.
- Voted no on the gas and electric franchise agreements with SDG&E. A 10-year term with automatic renewal for another 10 years is too long. I advocated for shorter terms to better hold SDG&E accountable and keep our options open for better, greener alternatives.

## 2022 Chair of Environment Committee

In 2022, I will serve as the Chair of the City Council Environment Committee, an honor and a responsibility I take seriously. As Chair, I will work with my colleagues to equitably achieve San Diego's climate goals.

The committee's first task is to set the work plan for the year. You can help inform that work plan by completing [this survey](#) or by emailing Brian Elliott, the committee consultant, at [belliott@sandiego.gov](mailto:belliott@sandiego.gov).

# Community Policies

## Short-Term Vacation Rentals

In February this year, Council considered legalizing short-term vacation rentals. The new ordinance—not yet effective in the coastal zone—would grant unlimited licenses for renting out a bedroom or no more than 20 days per year for whole-home rentals. The number of homes that can obtain a Tier 3 license—more than 21 days per year of whole-home rental—would be capped at 1% of the city's housing stock (currently about 5,400.) The ordinance also includes good neighbor policies and effective city enforcement.

At Council I offered four amendments, including:

- Lock whole-home cap at 1% of current housing stock to ensure new construction helps address our housing shortage;
- License terms limited to 6 years;
- Platform accountability expressly provided;

- An affordable housing preservation fee for whole-home licenses.

None of my amendments were accepted and the vote passed 8-1 with me being the sole “no” vote.

This issue is personal to many residents in San Diego, and especially in District 1. I stand by my decision to vote “no.” Now that this ordinance has been adopted, my efforts turn to ensuring the city and the rental platforms deliver on the promises made in distribution of licenses and effective code enforcement.

## **2022 Goal: Community Planning Group Update**

Community Planning Groups (CPGs) are fundamental to public input in San Diego and have participated in City land use and infrastructure decisions for more than 55 years. Multiple assessments of CPG operations in recent years have demonstrated that changes are warranted, including compliance with the City Charter, our local constitution.

As a long-time CPG leader and advocate, I am proposing to update the council’s policy on CPGs to comply with the City Charter, recognize the work of the 500+ volunteers who serve the City, preserve CPG’s recognition by the City Council as advisory bodies, while allowing for an effective use of City resources.

In early 2022, I will be bringing this proposal forward to the City Council Land Use and Housing Committee, followed by a hearing by the full Council. I invite you to participate and share your feedback as we move through the legislative process.

Learn more about my proposal [here](#).

## **TENTATIVE TIMELINE** *CPG Reform*



### **January 2022**

Ordinance changes presented to  
Planning Commission

### **February 2022**

Proposed measures presented to City’s Land  
Use & Housing Committee

### **March 2022**

Proposed changes presented to City Council  
for final approval

### **6-7 Months After Full Council**

Updated CPG organizational documents due

### **Fall 2022**

CPGs seek City Council recognition

# Transparency and Accountability

## *My \$13 Million Catch*

On March 18, 2021, the City's Environment Committee deliberated on an item that would have authorized a five-year, \$16,300,000 agreement with Smart Energy Water (SEW) for the MyWaterSD Utility web portal and mobile app.

Before voting, I engaged in a line of questioning and learned that staff only presented an option in which PUD would have to absorb credit card fees associated with on-line payments, potentially reaching up to \$14.5 million over the contract's five-year term. This discovery was critical as the new system could easily be modified to assess a convenience fee while ensuring payers could access several no-fee options for on-line payments.

Despite this information, the item passed committee three to one with me casting the sole "no" vote.

At the April 6, 2021 city council hearing, I pulled the item from the Consent Agenda to propose an alternate motion for a convenience fee model for credit card users. The alternate motion passed unanimously, 9-0.

**Because of my action, the City of San Diego will save between \$13 and \$14.5 million.**

## *2021 Voting Record*

Legislators have the public's confidence when we operate with accountability and transparency. I am proud of my first year in office and what my council colleagues and I have accomplished. There is much more work to do in 2022, but **see [here](#) for a sampling of my 2021 voting record.**

Minutes and results of all City Council actions are available at <http://bit.ly/SDCCresults>

# District 1 Gets it Done

## *Get it Done with Get It Done*

Get It Done is the City's premiere platform for connecting residents directly to City services. From trash collection to encampments, residents can report issues and track resolutions here.

In the past year, District 1....

- Filed 18,567 Get It Done reports
  - 8,402 in La Jolla
  - 4,048 in University City
  - 3,310 in Carmel Valley
  - 1,298 in Torrey Pines
  - 674 in Pacific Highlands Ranch
  - 355 in Torrey Hills
  - 91 in Del Mar Mesa

Of those reports, District 1's top 5 most common requests were:

1. Missed Trash Collection (3611 reports)
2. Parking (2640 reports)
3. Pothole (1434 reports)
4. Tree Maintenance (966 reports)
5. Street Light Maintenance (958 reports)

Thank you to all the residents who reported an incident on the Get it Done app or website. As residents, you are the City's eyes and ears; your vigilance makes San Diego a better place to live.

## ***Thank You All Around!***

Thank you to my community representatives, Kaitlyn, Ricky, Steve, and Brian, for your good work. Their commitment to public service and getting you the answers is what a council office is all about.

Most of all, thank you to all the residents and business owners who have contacted my office this past year. You are the eyes and ears of the community and none of this is possible without your willingness to connect with us and ensure we deliver the city services that meet your community's needs.



## **Stay Connected with District 1**

To stay up to date on all district news and updates, make sure to follow me on Twitter, ([@JoeLaCavaD1](#)) Facebook, ([@JoeLaCavaD1](#)) and Instagram ([@joelacava\\_d1](#)) and invite your neighbors to sign up [here](#) to receive email updates like this one!

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