




**COUNCILMEMBER JENNIFER CAMPBELL
COUNCIL DISTRICT TWO**

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: January 6, 2023

TO: Councilmember Joe LaCava, Chair, Environment Committee

FROM: Councilmember Jennifer Campbell 

SUBJECT: 2023 Environment Committee Priorities

This memorandum is in response to your request for 2023 priorities for the Environment Committee. I look forward to working with you and the rest of the committee members in taking actions that contribute to a cleaner, greener, and more environmentally friendly San Diego.

Continuing the Implementation of the 2022 Climate Action Plan

The 2022 Climate Action Plan was passed by the City Council and signed into law by Mayor Todd Gloria. I look forward to continuing discussions of its implementation at the Environment Committee in 2023. I would like the committee to be updated regularly about our progress, including metrics, throughout the coming year.

A key part of our City's 2022 Climate Action Plan is to achieve a community-wide goal of lowering our Green House Gas emission to net zero by 2035. This will be a difficult goal to reach given our lack of a city-wide mass transit system at this time. Our MTS Trolley system needs a plan for routes into the heavily trafficked areas of the City, so we must monitor SANDAG plans for this progress. Our MTS bus routes also need to be studied and upgraded to where and how often they are run if our mass transit is to be a reality. Updates from MTS staff to our committee would be very welcome as we cannot meet our Green House Gas reductions without this progress.

Continuing the Implementation of Climate Resilient SD

Approved by the full council in 2021, the Climate Resilient SD plan is a vital city initiative to ensure we are preparing for a changing climate. With projects spread out across city departments, the committee should have periodic updates from applicable city staff on the progress of the various projects that make up the plan to ensure we are on schedule with these important improvements.

Tree Canopy

Across San Diego, residents everywhere are ready to see more trees in their neighborhoods. Trees help out climate change by the process of photosynthesis which takes in CO₂ and releases O₂. They provide shade during hot days, decreasing temperature up to 10 degrees compared with the unshaded areas and create additional wildlife habitat. This committee should focus on how we can foster public-private partnerships and provide our City Forester the resources to ensure that everyone in San Diego is educated on the need for more tree canopy.

Impacts of Sea Level Rise

San Diego is vulnerable to climate change in countless ways. From increased wildfires to drought and more, we know that the coming decades will be a challenge for all of us. Part of that challenge will be dealing with rising sea levels, impacting nearly every sector of our daily lives here in San Diego. This committee should hear from experts about the effects of sea-level rise on crucial infrastructure, land-use decisions, our economy, and more.

Think Blue San Diego and Regional Water Quality

The city's budget deficit relating to our stormwater infrastructure is an ongoing crisis. Stormwater now is not recaptured and thus falls into the ocean, causing erosion and pollution of the ocean. Our stormwater system needs to be part of the Pure Water system. This committee could dedicate time during an upcoming meeting to hear about this and other initiatives needed to improve our storm water and other aspects of our water system that is of vital importance to San Diego's future. As we make up for the infrastructure for storm water that has not been updated in decades, we should be sure it goes into the Pure Water system and not into the ocean.

Implementation of SB 1383

Reducing emissions from food waste is a pillar of our climate action plan as well as the impetus behind SB 1383. This will also provide more methane gas recovery to be used as energy and provide revenue for the City by selling the good soil that comes from this recycling of organic waste. Once San Diego comes into compliance with this new composting law, keeping this committee up to speed on benchmarks, such as the roll out of the waste recycling services in 2023 is key.

DeAnza Cove Revitalization Project

One of our most important land-use projects is happening in the northeast corner of Mission Bay Park. Home to some of the last remaining wetlands in coastal San Diego, DeAnza Cove's future is of

importance to fight climate change in our city. This committee will need appropriate updates on what the plan options are for DeAnza Cove. A balance between recreational use and climate progress must be found.

San Diego's Pesticide Policy

San Diego is responsible for maintaining parks, beaches, and over 20,000 acres of open space. With that responsibility comes pest management over vital habitats for a diverse set of flora and fauna. Updating this committee if any pesticides are still being used, processes for public notification, and non-toxic alternatives that are less detrimental to vulnerable species should be a priority.

Tobacco Waste and San Diego's Environment

The negative impacts of tobacco products on San Diego continue to be felt throughout our city. From the health consequences, the environmental impacts, and the litter left behind, San Diego is ready for a more serious conversation about what the future of tobacco products is in our city. In 2019 this committee talked about potential options for this vexing issue. In 2021, along with our colleague, Councilmember Marni von Wilpert, we passed an ordinance banning all flavored tobacco products in San Diego. We should look into the possibility of banning all tobacco products from our City. The San Diego State University's 2022 Center for Tobacco and Environment could present to the committee on this topic.

Wildfire Preparedness

While San Diego has been lucky over the last few years when it comes to raging wildfires, we must be ever vigilant about this potential threat. This committee should hear from experts from outside organizations, fire resources providers, and City Fire Department staff about how we're preparing to take this threat head-on as we face longer and more intense fire seasons in the future.

Gas and Electric Franchise Updates

Transparency around our gas and electric franchise agreements with San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) is vital to ensure public trust and accountability. Representatives from SDG&E should be invited to the committee to update members on where the company stands on reaching agreed-upon metrics before they present to the City Council as required by the agreement.

San Diego Community Power Update

With cleaner and greener options for providing power to residents and businesses, including a 100% clean energy option, San Diego Community Power - which I brought to fruition in 2019 as Chair of this committee - is a shining example of what we can do to decrease carbon pollution. Hearing from representatives of San Diego Community Power about ways we can help them reach their ambitious goals should be a priority.

Discussion of Styrofoam Ban Roll Out

Banning styrofoam waste was a decisive council action taken to decrease pollution in San Diego. Though it was banned in 2019, the ordinance was put on hold due to the pandemic and litigation. With the litigation settled, and the expected roll out date by Spring 2023, this committee should discuss the roll out process for this policy and formulate education and outreach strategies with the department responsible for this enforcing ordinance.

Improved Air Quality with the Completion of Otay Mesa East Port of Entry

It is important that this committee receive regular updates on the construction of the new port of entry in Otay Mesa. The purpose of this project is not only to assist with the reduction of wait times for passengers crossing the US-Mexico border, but also reduce the air pollutants causing climate change and degrading the quality of life for San Diegans. The air pollutants are said to originate in part from two existing border crossings in the region, San Ysidro and Otay Mesa, which causes a combination of smog and haze adding to the creation of the blanket of bad air over San Diego.

Vision Zero Progress

This committee should discuss ways to incentivize the reduction of car usage by looking into more ways to make the San Diego MTS Trolley safer, more accessible, and reliable to all San Diegans. This committee should also look into additional opportunities to incentivize biking by ensuring existing bike lanes are safe and by continuing to partner with SANDAG to create more bike lanes completely separate from traffic across San Diego.

Tijuana River Valley Clean-Up Solutions

With the allocation of \$300 million of federal funding, designated for long term solutions, this committee should be regularly updated on the progress of this project. With the Memorandum of Understanding signed by both Mayor Todd Gloria and Mayor Montserrat Caballero (Tijuana) in 2022, we must work together to guarantee that this river and neighboring areas are cleaned up accordingly to ensure our beaches are clean, accessible for all, and free from pollutants. The Southern portion of our City, part of Council District 8, is included in this area and this problem continues to affect all parts of our City.

Monitoring of the New Beach Fire Regulations

This committee should follow closely and receive updates from the San Diego Lifeguards regarding prohibited beach fires as new regulations were enacted by Council in 2022. This will ensure our beaches are maintained as clean and safe as possible, decreasing the amount of waste entering the ocean, and keeping beach goers safe from burn injuries.

Inclusion of STVRs in Trash Pick-Up Studies

Ensuring that trash pick-up for Short Term Vacation Rentals is included in studies to allow for new possible fees for City trash pick-up is important.

Increased Monitoring of Trash Pollution/Litter throughout the City

An increase in monitoring and enforcement of trash pollution and litter, especially at City beaches and parks will ensure such areas are kept clean, safe, and improve beautification for residents and visitors.

International Monarch Butterfly Pledge

In 2020 the City of San Diego joined this important pledge when the Environment Committee, which I chaired, led the way. As the number of pollinating species, especially Monarch butterflies and bees was going down drastically, it was realized that growing milkweed could help the butterflies survive as these are the plants on which they lay eggs. These species are responsible for pollinating at least one third of food production on our planet. At that time the city gave milk weed plants to interested citizens to grow in their yards. Doing this all over the world has resulted in a revival of these species but we need to continue with this effort.

Thank you for your consideration of these priorities and I look forward to making progress on all of our environmental issues.