



**COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM
STEPHEN WHITBURN
THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT**

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: January 6, 2020
TO: Andrea Tevlin, Independent Budget Analyst
FROM: Council President Pro Tem Stephen Whitburn, District 3
SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Priorities

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Whitburn", written over the "FROM:" line.

We begin the Fiscal Year 2022 budget process amid an unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic which has ravaged our City, State and Nation. The pandemic has left our City with a budget deficit of over \$124.1 million. As our City slowly recovers from the current pandemic, we have tough decisions to make on how to maintain city services while still planning for a vibrant post-pandemic future.

As City revenues and as Transit Occupancy Taxes begin to recover over this next year – and recover they will – our budgeting plan must make our City more efficient, transparent and responsive to our residents. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the existing inequities in our communities. We see these inequities in housing, behavioral health, public safety, and access to essential city services.

The District 3 budget priorities focus on core functions of government, maintaining essential services and continuing with previously slated capital improvement projects. The priorities fall into the following overarching categories: Homelessness and Housing, Arts and Culture, Climate Action Plan, Clean Communities, Parks and Recreation, Public Safety and Capital Improvement Projects.

This year's budget may require reductions of budgets at all levels, and those reductions will not be felt equally among San Diego's residents. It is our collective responsibility to create an equitable budget that protects all communities and I look forward to working with my fellow Councilmembers to help balance the general fund budget.

Homelessness and Housing

In October of 2019, after many years of community coordination the San Diego City Council unanimously approved the City's Community Action Plan. The plan's vision is "By working creatively and collaboratively, the City of San Diego will build a client-centered homeless assistance system that aims to prevent homelessness, and that quickly creates a path to safe and affordable housing and services for people who experience homelessness in our community."

The City now needs strong leadership and collaboration from all the stakeholders involved to successfully implement the City's Community Action Plan. The City must continue funding to maintain and expand existing homelessness programs. We must help get our unsheltered off the street. Addressing homelessness requires significant investments in both short-term and long-term goals, but they must both be funded.

Improved Outreach

Unsheltered homeless outreach is essential to reaching individuals on the street and connecting them to housing and services. The City's Community Action Plan lists outreach as a "key item for immediate consideration" noting that the frontline of the homeless response system should be led by outreach workers.

Funding must be provided to better coordinate a range of homeless outreach efforts through programs like civilian outreach teams. Which are supported with rapid-response teams and social workers that can respond to the unsheltered person immediately and on-site. This support includes housing placement and resources but also includes services like obtaining identification or food services. These teams must be deployed throughout the city in a way that aligns with the goals of the Community Action Plan.

Diversion & Prevention

Allocate funding to support diversion and prevention efforts for youth, veteran, and senior homeless individuals, as specified in the Community Action Plan. We must continue to expand access to homeless court and to allow more people living in vehicles to address parking tickets through the program. No one should have their vehicle taken due to unpaid parking tickets.

Permanent Supportive Housing

The City must make significant investments in permanent solutions, including housing creation, subsidies, supportive housing, low-income housing and rapid re-housing to meet the City's needs. Permanent housing must focus on both individuals and families and provide them with consistency, flexibility and extended duration wraparound services.

Project Homekey

This past year the San Diego City Council approved the purchase of two former hotel properties to create 332 permanent units for more than 400 San Diegans currently experiencing homelessness with some funding coming from Project Homekey. The city also contracted to include mental and behavioral health assistance, health care services, substance use services, case management, life skills training, education services, and employment assistance to this housing units. The City must continue to work with California Department of Housing and Community Development to secure additional funding to support our regional supportive and permanent housing needs.

Employee Retention

The City of San Diego must remain competitive in the recruitment, retention and hiring of city employees. In order to achieve this goal, it is critical that the Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) for this fiscal year remain in place. Many current city employees have seen their paychecks continue to fall further behind

other local jurisdictions. The City currently has hundreds of vacant positions which are not occupied, these positions should be looked at and the savings redirected towards employee retention. Along with a very high vacancy rate, the City is struggling to provide current services to the public. Even during this tough pandemic times, the residents of San Diego must continue to receive the critical services that affect their daily routines and lives. If the need arises and the City found it necessary to contract out any additional City work, the City should maintain the same worker protections and jurisdictional representation that the City employees currently receive.

Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement

The City should consolidate the administration and enforcement of Minimum Wage, Earned Sick Days, Living Wage, Prevailing Wage, and Equal Opportunity Contracting Programs into one overarching department.

Arts and Culture

Creativity and the arts play an important role in enhancing the quality of life in San Diego. It enhances our region's capability to attract and retain our workforce and tourists to our beautiful City. Over the past few years the Arts and Culture budget has seen drastic cuts due to the significant loss of Transit Occupancy Tax (TOT) associated to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As the TOT taxes begin to rebound this year the City should reinvest in Arts and Culture and bring funding back to pre-pandemic levels.

Penny for the Arts

The City has made little progress toward its Penny for the Arts goal and has never met the annual funding goals. The goals set by the City Council in 2012 aimed to ultimately have 9.52% of TOT dedicated to arts and culture programs that enhance San Diegans quality of life by making our neighborhoods more vibrant, celebrate our culture, improve educational outcomes and bolster the local economy. The City should be committed to reaching the goal within five years by this year funding the Organizational Support Program and Creative Communities San Diego grants at of 5.52% of TOT, then increasing the percentage by 1 point over the next four fiscal years to reach the 9.52% of TOT to fulfill the Penny for the Arts goal by FY 2026.

Climate Action Plan (CAP)

The updating and full funding of the City's Climate Action Plan is a critical priority to addressing our climate emergency.

Climate Equity Fund

The City of San Diego needs a separate and dedicated fund for equitable climate mitigation, adaptation and resiliency projects and planning (including the City's new CAP Update and Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan) to support neighborhoods most vulnerable to the climate crisis. These funds should be allocated to low opportunity areas identified in the City's Climate Equity Index. Sustainability and equity must go hand in hand, and a Climate Equity Fund can better leverage and deploy City resources to fight the climate crisis.

Fund a Grant Writer for Climate Grants

With various County, State and Federal programs offering financial grants to support a healthier, cleaner and safer environment hiring a grant writer will pay for itself. Funding a grant writer that secures funds to achieve the CAP goals and the Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan with outside funding will help alleviate the general fund shortfalls.

Maintain and Allocate Funds to the Sustainability Department

For the Sustainability Department to finish developing an equitable, zero carbon Climate Action Plan Update ("San Diego Green New Deal CAP") in consultation with the community as well as maintain

other basic operations and projects, it is imperative that the Sustainability Department maintain the modest budget they have received in the FY 21 Budget. If feasible, additional funds should be added to begin implementation of the equitable zero carbon CAP update. It is critical that the Sustainability Department develop citywide policies in consultation with key stakeholders, including communities of concern and workers, that help us reduce our largest source of emissions and promote environmental and climate justice.

Tree Planting and Maintenance

Allocate funding to increase tree planting, pruning and maintenance programs that safeguard and increase our urban forest canopy. The City should maintain its tree planting budget from last year. Those funds help with the purchase and planting of “free” street trees. Residents and businesses can request that a tree be planted in the parkway or street right-of-way next to their property and agree to water it. The City’s certified arborists respond to “get it done” reports, code noncompliance, and community concerns and are key partners in keeping our neighborhoods safe and clean.

Clean and Safe Communities

Clean SD

Program to help with graffiti abatement, weed abatement, the addition of public trash receptacles increasing the number of curbside community clean-ups, and continuing funding for Clean SD services such as waste and litter removal and sidewalk sanitation.

Community Oriented Policing

San Diego neighborhoods have different needs and ideas on what public safety means to them. Police should partner with community stakeholders around the City and should develop solutions collaboratively in solving community needs. It is important that our budget invest resources in policing alternatives that focus on using less force in order to build trust within our communities and to provide a feeling of safety to all San Diegans. We must diversify and strengthen City public safety through community organizations and non-law enforcement trauma-informed first responders. We must also support prevention programs that work with youth and young adults in our neighborhoods to transition them out of the system and that decriminalize low-level and non-violent drug offenses.

Commission on Police Practices

San Diego City voters approved Measure B in the November election creating the Commission on Police Practices. The City must fund and implement the independent process for investigating complaints regarding police misconduct. The new community-led Commission on Police Practices will create an independent process for holding officers to the highest standards required of those who protect public safety.

Code Compliance

San Diego’s Code Compliance Department protects the public’s health, safety, welfare, and property value by enforcing the City, State and Federal land use, zoning, neighborhood ordinances and public nuisance concerns. The Code Compliance Department should receive the funding needed to be fully staffed. The use and enjoyment of all San Diego neighborhoods are affected by violations and violators should be held accountable to fix the health and safety hazards.

Brush Abatement and Weed Abatement

The City canyon brush management backlog represents an immediate danger to our neighborhoods. San Diego has a history of wildfires; 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, canyon lands, etc.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Ensure funding for the Public Services portion of CDBG is not removed or redirected. Continuing to underfund the Public Services portion of CDBG funds will have large negative effects, compounded this year due to the pandemic, on community non-profits and service providers ability to provide critical services to communities in need.

Rental Relief

Invest in rental assistance for all San Diegans, regardless of immigration status. As eviction protections granted to tenants by the state and federal governments are set to expire in 2021, this investment is critical to staving off a wave of evictions during a public health crisis. Conduct a feasibility study to analyze both the costs of establishing a rent registry funded through an associated fee and how the City may benefit from implementing a vacancy tax to fund rental assistance, legal services, and tenant outreach.

Community Equity Fund

The City must fund the Office of Race and Equity, which will help develop an action plan and work to implement race equity in City operations. It is time for the City to invest in a way that will create systemic change by partnering with organizations to create sustainability and recurring funding sources. The fund will be critical to invest in job opportunities and training to our underserved communities, and create economic development in the neighborhoods that need it most.

Housing Education & Access

Allocate funds for Community Based Organizations to conduct housing education, counseling, provide services and/or referrals, and outreach to tenants and landlords in every community and in a variety of different languages with-in San Diego to ensure all residents are aware of new assistance programs and new policies affecting tenant and housing rights.

Small Business Relief

The City should create a Small Business Relief Fund and work with the County, State and Federal governments to bring additional funding in support of small businesses. The City should partner with community-based organizations (non-profits) to support small businesses in the application process and help eliminate some of the barriers associated with the small business funding.

Public Banking

Many jurisdictions across the nation have looked at Public Banking to fund community projects, lower city cost and interest, with those savings to reinvest into our communities. The City needs to look at how the public banking business plan can help San Diego lower the City's expenditures and create additional revenue.

San Diego Public Library

The San Diego Public Library provides online tutoring to support families with distance learning, virtual STEAM, college admission test preparation courses, adult literacy programs, free internet at outdoor computer labs, contactless pick-up services, as well as the opportunity to earn an accredited high school diploma free through Career Online High School. The popularity of these services increased during the ongoing pandemic and has created unprecedented demand in our communities. The City should maintain the current budget allocation to the Library's budget.

25th Street Tree Lighting and Banners

In 2020, a limited number of tree lights and banners were installed along 25th street, Golden Hill's busiest business corridor. The lights and banners have been a complete hit, with residents and businesses enjoying the safety that it provides to pedestrians, as well as the welcome atmosphere it provides for

people to walk through and visit the shops along that corridor. The City should work to provide funding to extend the lights and banners to the end of 25th street to E street near Dark Horse. Extending the lights to complete the 25th street corridor will increase foot traffic and improve public safety to help our struggling businesses along 25th street. If additional funding were to become available adding tree lights and banners to the 28th street corridor would also help with neighborhood activation and safety.

Public Trash Receptacles

Residents and businesses have asked for more public trash cans to be placed around the neighborhood. To help with the future ongoing cost associated with collection of additional trash cans, many local businesses are willing to adopt them much like the South Park Business Group, which has been a success.

Ward Canyon Park Improvements

Ward Canyon Park provides the community with a gathering space and the much need public outdoor recreational area. Many in the community, including the business group, the park & rec council, and neighborhood associations all support the completion of construction of a dog park, community garden and recreational center. The community also supports additional security measures, including security cameras, lights and personal around Normal Heights Elementary School adjacent to the park.

Normal Street Promenade

The promenade will provide community space for events, movies, concerts, art, street fairs, the farmers market and San Diego Pride. The City should continue to collaborate with SANDAG and the Uptown Community Parking District in moving this project forward.

Vermont Street Bridge

The Vermont Street Pedestrian Bridge is a 420 ft. long steel and concrete pedestrian bridge spanning a canyon and connecting two distinct San Diego communities. Currently the bridge needs a circuit repair and some lighting rehabilitation to improve safety and increase visibility.

The Little Spot

The City should work to create a pocket park in the small fenced off space at 9th & University. This small patch of land adjacent to the 163-Freeway Bridge along University Avenue was long a mystery as to who held ownership of this parcel, but it has been determined that CalTrans has transferred the land to the City. The Hillcrest Business Association would like to be granted maintenance responsibility for this small space.

El Cajon Boulevard

The City needs to provide tactical transit and enhanced safety crosswalks along El Cajon Blvd. El Cajon Blvd. is a large thoroughfare with many dangerous pedestrian crossings in need of additional signage, slower traffic elements, painted crosswalks. The City should also evaluate and study the feasibility of a traffic reorganization project at the intersection of El Cajon Blvd, Park Blvd, and Normal Street. Residents have called my office regarding traffic calming measures to make this unique intersection safer for residents, drivers, pedestrians and cyclist.

Washington Street Improvements

The Washington Street median from Vermont Street Bridge to Cleveland Street is dilapidated and in need of improvement. The medians along Washington Street do not reflect the character of the neighborhood as they are just plain asphalt and often covered with weeds and debris. This request would provide for safety and aesthetic improvements to the medians.

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 is critical to improving the quality of life of our communities. With the increased focus on outdoor activities and social distancing it is more important than ever that we maintain adequate funding for the park system.

San Diego Office Of Child and Youth Success

For San Diego to thrive as a city, it needs to be a place where every child, youth, and family is safe, healthy, and empowered. San Diego's children, youth and families are suffering terribly during the pandemic, perhaps more than any other demographic, with schools, socialization and play opportunities limited; parents stressed by job losses or juggling work and distance learning; youth struggling to stay engaged and on-track via zoom school; youth suicides and overdoses spiking; and child care capacity limited by closures. The San Diego City government provides many services and supports for children, youth, and their families across its multiple departments. The new office will provide linkages across those functions, establish a vision and plan, and facilitate connections with school districts and community-based organizations to launch initiatives and win philanthropic and federal/state funding. The Office should be advised by a Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families, which will include youth members, parents of young children, and child and youth-serving businesses and nonprofit organizations, including childcare providers. There should be intentional recruitment from historically under-resourced neighborhoods, and Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and People of Color. By establishing an Office of Child and Youth Success, the City of San Diego can leverage its leadership and its assets to make San Diego a great place to grow up and raise a family.

Transportation Safety and Mobility

Safe and equitable transit for all (City of SD and MTS)

The City along with MTS should provide no-cost transit passes for youth 24 and under through the Youth Opportunity Pass program. Both parties should also work to decriminalize fare evasion, guarantee services and routes while prioritizing electric buses in transit-dependent communities and provide access to bathrooms and appropriate amenities near bus stops.

Downtown Mobility Plan

The City should continue to fully fund the phased approach to the Downtown Mobility Plan, specifically phase two and three. The development of active transportation facilities will increase safety and mobility for pedestrians, cyclists and scooters riders. Downtown is unique compared to other communities; its characteristics create travel demands not experienced elsewhere in the region, supporting the need for a "complete streets" approach to mobility planning that accommodates and balances all travel modes.

Bicycling Facilities

The city has made much progress but must continue funding protected, separated bike lanes citywide to fill network gaps, expand the protected bike lane network, and improve safety at high crash and crash prone areas. Selection of these facilities can be coordinated with repaving efforts and should be prioritized in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

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 City should set a goal of a minimum of two miles per year. The current backlog needs to be addressed and proactive program to inspect, evaluate, and notify property owners about needed repairs should be implemented.

Streets

The City must maintain focus on resurfacing, slurry sealing and paving our City streets, throughout all Council Districts. In order to help offset some of the cost, the City should look to apply for funds allocated by the State of California's Senate Bill 1. SB 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, has generated millions of dollars for fixing neighborhood streets, freeways, and bridges in San Diego. Though these funds have generally been used for basic road maintenance and rehabilitation, they may also be used for complete streets elements, including active transportation, bike, and pedestrian safety projects.

Continued Funding for ongoing Capital Improvement Projects

Convention Center Phase III Expansion / S12022

This project provides for the expansion of the existing San Diego Convention Center. The expansion will increase the existing leasable space by approximately 225,000 square feet of exhibit hall, 101,000 square feet of meeting rooms, and 80,000 square feet of ballrooms for an approximate total of 406,000 square feet. The existing facility cannot accommodate some of the larger major events, which leads to the loss of events to other venues. The expansion is expected to increase the attendance and numbers of events held at the facility and provide significant economic benefits to the region.

Police 911 Call Manager / S15024

The Police 9-1-1 Call Manager is the phone system used by the Police Department to receive 9-1-1 and *non-emergency calls* from the public. Many residents have called my office worried that the non-emergency calls have been going unanswered and or ignored after being answered. The non-emergency line is an important asset and tool to keep our neighborhoods safe and should receive adequate funding.

Balboa Park West Mesa Comfort Station Replacement / S15036

This project provides for the design and construction of two replacement comfort stations on the West Mesa of Balboa Park, one north of the children's play area and one near the intersection of 6th Avenue and Nutmeg Street. The project also includes the demolition of the existing comfort stations at these locations and associated path of travel improvements. It is anticipated the new comfort stations will be pre-fabricated buildings. The improvements will bring the park into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), federal and State accessibility requirements, making these park facilities available to users with disabilities.

Golf Course Drive Improvements / S15040

This project provides for the design and construction of a paved pedestrian pathway and bike facility along Golf Course Drive. This project will provide needed pedestrian/bike access along Golf Course Drive, connecting the existing Golden Hill Recreation Center to 28th Street. Many residents in Golden Hill have reached out to my office and voiced their concerns that the current design does not have adequately protected bike lanes. While I support this project, I would like to see additional design elements meet the community's expectations for safety.

Balboa Park Botanical Bldg Improvements / S20005

This project provides for the design and construction of improvements to the Botanical Building in Balboa Park. Improvements may include: the recreation of the historic arcades on either side of the entrance, the illumination of both the interior and exterior by installing energy-efficient, thematic color lighting, the installation of a state-of-the-art irrigation system, and the repair and enhancement of the building structure and architectural elements (wood lath, cupola, plaster/concrete, and wood and steel beams). The project is needed to bring the building into compliance with current building standards.

Children's Park Improvements / S16013

This project provides for the design and construction of improvements to the existing Children's Park that could include large multi-purpose lawn areas, a comfort station, children's play area, interactive water fountain, and vendor's building. This project implements the Downtown Community Plan Policy which implements a program to reclaim open spaces that have deteriorated, have design features that provide use opportunities, and/or are in need of activity and revitalization.

East Village Green Phase 1 / S16012

This project provides for the design and construction for Phase 1 of the East Village Green Park. Phase 1 park amenities could include a recreation center, comfort station, below-grade parking, an off-leash dog park, children's play area, outdoor seating, and landscaping. This project will contribute to satisfying population-based park acreage requirements set forth in the City's General Plan to serve residents in this park-deficient community.

Museum of US Seismic Retrofit / L12003

This project provides for the seismic retrofit of the historic California Tower and Museum of Us within Balboa Park. As part of the tower seismic retrofit, the plan requires the structural reinforcements of the walls of the electrical room located at the bottom floor of the tower. This room presently hosts the San Diego Gas and Electric and the Museum of US electrical transformers and control panels. Phase I of this project provides for the relocation of these electrical systems. Phase II of this project provides for the seismic system upgrade of the tower. Phase III of this project provides for the seismic retrofit for the Museum of US building. The California Tower and Museum of Us were built in 1914. The last seismic upgrade was conducted in 1975. This additional seismic upgrade is required to bring the museum and tower structure up-to-date with the current California Building Code.

North Park Mini Park / S10050

This project provides for the construction of an approximately 0.50 useable acre urban mini-park located behind the recently renovated North Park Theatre. The community is currently deficient in population-based park requirements set forth in the City's General Plan. This project will add population-based park acreage to the community, contributing toward the City's population-based park requirements.

Olive St Park Acquisition and Development / S10051

This project provides for the acquisition, design, and construction of approximately 0.36 acres of unimproved property contiguous with the south end of the existing Olive Street Park. The project will expand useable park acreage in the Uptown Community. Amenities will include multi-purpose turf areas, children's play area, AIDS Memorial, seating, walkways, landscaping, and security lighting. This project will contribute to satisfying population-based park acreage requirements set forth in the City's General Plan in a community currently deficient in population-based parks per General Plan guidelines.

University Heights Reservoir Rehabilitation / S20002

Install Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and instruments, install valves, update the Valve Building, install mixing appurtenance, and fix structural issues with reservoir. The Reservoir needs repairs to remain in service, the yard-piping needs to be reconfigured to connect to the proposed Otay 1st and 2nd Pipelines West of Highland Avenue Project, and address water quality issues.

University Heights Water Tower Seismic Retrofit / S17006

This project will replace the exterior structural elements which includes replacing the corroded anchor bolt washers, extending of column footing foundation, removing and replacing existing tie-rods with new tie-rods, and installing new gusset plates and pin connectors, lead coating abatement, and recoating of lower portions of the columns. This project is being driven by the need to repair and retrofit the existing

historical University Heights Water Tower to maintain the current state of structural elements and allow for safer performance during seismic events.

Maple Canyon Storm Drain Upgrade / S20003

Project aims to realign and upgrade approximately 3,000 feet of existing drainage system between the San Diego Airport, a private industrial Facility, and Pacific Highway. The existing alignment of the pipes prevents maintenance and repairs from occurring because a large portion of the system flows underneath a private property. The system is significantly undersized to convey the flow and sediment coming from the large connected tributary Maple Canyon watershed located upstream of the project which historically caused severe flooding in the project area resulting in significant property damage.

Park Boulevard At-Grade Crossing / S15045

This project provides for the extension of Park Boulevard to Harbor Drive and for the widening of Tony Gwynn Way. The project will construct new pavement, curb and gutter, sidewalks, pedestrian ramps, railroad track, railroad signals and signage, storm drain, and other various infrastructure adjacent to the project. This project will open Park Boulevard to Harbor Drive, as part of the Ballpark Infrastructure Design/Build Agreement which closed the 8th Avenue crossing to Harbor Drive.

University Avenue Mobility / S00915

The major elements of the University Avenue Mobility Project are restriping to provide painted medians and construction of raised medians, left turn pockets and improved lane widths, installation of enhanced pedestrian crosswalks, repainting of existing crosswalks, removal of parallel on-street parking, and restriping select side streets to provide angled and head-in parking. This project will significantly improve safety and mobility along the corridor for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and automobile traffic.

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 Jacob O'Neill in my office at (619)236-6633 or jmoneill@sandiego.gov.