



**COUNCILMEMBER
STEPHEN WHITBURN
THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT**

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: May 26, 2023
TO: Charles Modica, Independent Budget Analyst
FROM: Councilmember Stephen Whitburn, District 3
SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Priorities

On behalf of the residents in District 3, I want to thank the Mayor for his thoughtful consideration of our priorities in the Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Annual Budget. I was pleased to see that many of the items I have been championing for the community have been incorporated, including the increased investments in homelessness solutions like Safe Sleeping.

After further meetings with residents, local leaders, and other stakeholders, I believe it is important for us to make the following investments: 1) additional housing and homelessness solutions, 2) park and neighborhood enhancements, 3) library funding and upgrades, and 4) improved labor standards, recruitment and retention practices.

As we continue to work on the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, I look forward to developing a balanced budget to include the following items which are important to the residents of District 3.

Homelessness and Housing

The City must continue to make significant investments in housing creation, subsidies, supportive housing, low-income housing, and rapid re-housing to meet the City's needs. We must focus on our youth, seniors, veterans, LGBTQ residents and families to provide them with consistency, flexibility, and extended wraparound services.

Safe Sleeping: \$5M

Maintain allocation of \$5 million to the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) for Safe Sleeping (also known as Safe Camping) serving the Downtown community. Safe sleeping spaces would provide living accommodations, access to sanitation resources, meals, and connections to supportive services in an environment that is safer than our streets and sidewalks. Additional funding will help address the short-term needs of our unsheltered population while continuing to advance our long-term goals.

LGBTQ-Affirming Non-Congregate Shelter with Services: \$1,500,000

Allocate funding for additional LGBTQ-affirming shelter beds and wrap-around services through the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC). Of the youth currently experiencing homelessness, 40% identify as part of the LGBTQ community. SDHC recently put out an RFP for LGBTQ non-congregate shelter and I would like to see ongoing funding.

Opioid and Fentanyl Education and Prevention Outreach

The City has no specific funding allocations to combat the opioid and fentanyl epidemic facing our most vulnerable populations. The City should begin an outreach and prevention program to help stop additional overdoses and deaths.

Tenant Protection Ordinance Eviction Notice Registry: \$500,000

Fund start-up costs and staffing to support the administration of the Eviction Notice Registry for the Just Cause Notice within the Tenant Protection Ordinance. The ordinance includes a website and portal to collect landlord information and copies of termination notices, customer service, and quarterly and annual reporting to the City of San Diego.

Housing Instability Prevention Program (HIPP)

This fund was created in FY 2023 and helps pay rent and other housing-related expenses for up to 24 months for families with low income and unstable housing situations. The current allocated funds will support approximately 300 families. However, there are over 42,000 families who make 25% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI) and are identified as needing housing assistance by the City of San Diego. The City should look to allocate additional funding to support more hard-working San Diego families.

Affordable Housing Preservation Fund Creation:

In May 2020, the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) published “Preserving Affordable Housing in the City of San Diego,” which analyzed the City of San Diego’s housing preservation needs. The report’s recommendations included the creation of an Interagency Preservation Working Group, which consisted of entities responsible for the production and preservation of affordable housing. \$5.9 million to support the creation of a Preservation Fund would meet the 20% annual set-aside, plus future growth, of the city’s RPTTF, as outlined in SDHC’s preservation study and IBA Report 20-15. This funding would also help establish a dedicated funding source, crucial to starting these affordable housing preservation programs.

Eviction Prevention Program (EPP) Extension:

The contract for operations of this program expires June 30, 2023. Since December 2021, the EPP has provided critical outreach, education, and legal services to City of San Diego tenants to prevent evictions and homelessness. San Diego tenants with low income will need education and legal representation to avail themselves of the protections of the City’s new Tenant Protection Ordinance. Funding would provide support for direct legal assistance, outreach and education and housing stability financial assistance.

Middle-Income First-Time Homebuyer Program Creation: \$6,000,000

\$6 million to create a Middle-Income First-Time Homebuyer Pilot Program for residents with income from 80% to 150% of San Diego's Area Median Income (AMI). The San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) has studied the feasibility of this program. The Land Use and Housing Committee on November 17, 2022, unanimously approved a request for SDHC to finalize the program design for a pilot program to assist first-time homebuyers in the City with income of 80% to 150% of AMI, subject to funding being identified for the proposed program. This City program would provide down-payment and closing cost assistance to qualifying residents.

Clean and Safe Neighborhood Enhancements

Arts and Culture

The City has begun making progress toward its Penny for the Arts goal set by the City Council in 2012, aimed to ultimately dedicate 9.52% of TOT to arts and culture programs. This program enhances the quality of life for San Diegans by making our neighborhoods more vibrant, celebrating our culture, improving educational outcomes, and bolstering the local economy. The City should continue its commitment to reaching the goal by FY 2026.

Sustainability Department Increased Funding: \$200,000

Add 1 FTE to the Sustainability and Mobility Department

The City of San Diego should allocate funds to hire a senior level Program Manager and provide resources to lead and accelerate CAP Strategy 1 Decarbonization of the Built Environment. 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.

Installation of new streetlights: \$325,000

Streetlight repair and installation priority projects are:

- Flashing lights at the crosswalk of 30th, Upas and Ray Street
- January Place and Excalibur Way
- India Street from Ash Street to Broadway
- January Place and Sherlock Court
- Broadway from State Street to Park Blvd
- Montrose Way and Excalibur Way
- Pacific Highway from E Street to G street

STAT Team: \$2,700,000

The STAT team's current goal is to build 9 miles of quick-build bikeways per year to meet CAP and Vision Zero goals. Funding should be doubled to increase our FY 2024 goals to at least 18 miles of quick-build projects.

Otay Mesa Road Pedestrian Crosswalk: \$100,000

Project Description: The Transportation Department completed in May 2022 an evaluation for a marked crosswalk at the entrance to San Ysidro Middle School located at 4350 Otay Mesa Road. The location qualifies for a marked crosswalk with pedestrian activated flashing beacons and a streetlight, two curb ramps, and a small length of sidewalk are required for the safety of students, parents, and staff members. The FY23 Budget allocated \$250,000 for this project. It is currently in the preliminary design stage, which will include an environmental assessment, ADA review, and a survey of the site. This project was approved for creation at CIPRAC in March, however, the current estimate for project completion is \$350,000. The FY24 budget should allocate an additional \$100k to complete the project.

Mobility Master Plan: \$350,000

Not only do public transportation and bike infrastructure help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but they also contribute to a higher quality of life by bringing communities together, reducing traffic, and increasing healthy physical activity. The City must provide more complete bus stops with shade and protected bike lanes that intersect with public transportation to encourage more San Diegans to be less car dependent.

Complete Updated Bicycle Master Plan: \$500,000

The City's Bicycle Master Plan has not been updated since 2013, when the safest, Class IV classification of bikeways was not used. The City should fund and complete an updated bicycle master plan to put San Diego on the right track toward its CAP mobility goals.

Fix San Diego's Most Dangerous 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. In FY 2023, the City improved 10 intersections at a cost of \$3,910,850. The proposed budget includes only 7 intersections, at a cost of \$3.7 million. Additional funding should be allocated to increase the number of intersections improved.

Install Physical Protection for All New Full-build Class IV Bikeways

Almost all recent Class IV bikeway projects in San Diego have used flexible bollards to separate bikeways from travel lanes. While flexible bollards are useful for demarcating space for bicyclists, they do not have any stopping power to prevent drivers from hitting bicyclists. All new full-build Class IV bikeways should use physical protection such as concrete curbs or inflexible bollards to separate bikeways from traffic lanes. This item would require increasing the Transportation Department's budget for each new Class IV bikeway.

Barrio Logan Truck Route Traffic Calming Infrastructure

Project Description: The FY24 budget should include additional funding to install street-calming infrastructure on Beardsley St. (from Logan Ave. to Harbor Dr.) and Boston Ave. (from 28th St. to 32nd St.) to divert toxic air from Barrio Logan and enforce the Barrio Logan Truck Route. These traffic calming measures are greatly needed to prevent large semi-trucks from driving through residential neighborhoods, which impacts air quality. Staff has identified roundabouts at Newton Ave. & Beardsley St., and Boston Ave. & South 30th Street as appropriate traffic calming measures and is in the process of creating some conceptual drawings to share with the community. Work must continue on this project and the FY24 budget should include funding to design, conduct community outreach and build the proposed traffic calming measures.

Small Business Enhancement Program \$500,000

With the large number of applicable small businesses, the program needs additional funding from the proposed FY 2024 budget.

Community Projects, Programs and Services CPPS Funds \$200,000

Allocated to Council offices to ensure each district office has a minimum of \$200,000 each for community projects, programs, and services.

Brush Management and Weed Abatement \$600,000

The City's transportation and parks departments need additional funding for canyon brush management backlogs creating 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.

Youth Commission Civic Education and Engagement Program: \$100,000

The City should create a Civic Education and Engagement Program for Youth Commissioners with a starting allocation of \$100,000. This funding will empower young people to be successful on the Youth Commission and in other civic engagement activities.

World Design Capital 2024: \$3,000,000

The World Design Capital program (WDC) promotes and encourages the use of design to further the economic, social, cultural, and environmental development of the world's cities. Designated every two years, WDC is a year-long promotional program to showcase the accomplishments of cities that are effectively leveraging design to improve the lives of their citizens. The City should allocate \$3 million to WDC 2024.

City of San Diego Cannabis Program: \$1,000,000

Staffing positions for the SEED project. 1 Amin Aide-SEED Project and grant processing
2 Development Project Managers-SEED applicant project processing. 2 CDS IV's (EDD)-SEED grant expenditures for property leasing and other expenses.

Convoy Gateway Sign: \$500,000

This project will install a custom 30-foot illuminated sign, welcoming visitors to the Convoy District. It is managed by the Asian Business Association Foundation through a compensation agreement with the City. It is consistent with applicable community plans and is conformance with the City's General Plan. Funds were allocated for it in FY23, but additional funds are necessary to complete its installation.

San Diego Public Library

The San Diego Library system consists of the Central Library and 35 branch libraries. These provide online tutoring to support families with distance learning, virtual STEAM, college admission test preparation courses, adult literacy programs, free internet at outdoor computer labs and contactless pick-up services, as well as the opportunity to earn an accredited high school diploma free through Career Online High School.

University Heights and North Park Library Upgrades

I am requesting the funds needed to design upgraded facilities at both the University Heights and North Park library facilities in the FY 2024 budget.

Increase the Library Materials Budget: \$250,000

The additional investments we made to the materials budget in FY 2023 was long overdue. Even with these additions, the Library's materials budget is still lagging. The San Diego Library's collection is too small to meet the community's interests, particularly for materials in multiple languages. The City must add additional materials funding to maintain the digital databases, online tutoring programs, and eBooks needed to build the capacity for the future.

Library's Maintenance Budget: \$500,000

The additional investments we made to the maintenance budget in FY 2023 was a good first step. However, with over \$50 million in deferred maintenance needs at San Diego Libraries, many locations are in poor condition, including University Heights. We must meet the ever-growing list of basic deferred maintenance needs.

Youth Services Librarians: \$792,000

Ensure every branch has a full-time Youth Service Librarian (YSL). The Oak Park, Mountain View/Beckwourth, Paradise Hills, North Clairemont, Allied Gardens/ Benjamin, San Carlos, Tierrasanta, and Kensington-Normal Heights branches have part-time YSLs. YSLs nurture young learners and prepare children to succeed in school. Communities without a full-time YSL have fewer learning programs and less robust Do Your Homework @ the Library outreach.

Park Enhancements

The City of San Diego park and mobility systems provide healthy, sustainable, and enriching environments for all our residents and tourists. Funding for facility improvements is critical to improving the quality of life of our communities.

North Park Recreation Center and Park Improvements: \$500,000

Enhance the Main and back-office areas. Repair the roof of the Gym. Upgrade the ceiling, windows, and lighting in the multi-purpose room. Replace the cabinets in the Craft Room and repair the ceiling. Apply resurfacing to the tennis courts, install new netting, and replace benches. Construct a pickleball court adjacent to the basketball court. Install new playground equipment for children.

Paradise Hills Community Park Trail: \$600,000

Project will add a trail within the canyon west of, and adjacent to, Paradise Hills Community Park. The project will involve clearing, grubbing, grading, or other disturbance of vegetated or unpaved areas to create a trail, enabling open space and walkability in the Skyline Paradise Hills Community Planning Area.

Rancho Bernardo Community Park Improvements \$500,000

Rancho Bernardo Community Park serves 41,000 residents and is the only developed park in the area. This additional funding is to expand hours and increase capacity to meet this expanding communities need.

Mission Beach Sea Wall

In preparation of continued sea-level rise, structural repair and/or replacement of the Mission Beach Sea Wall from South Mission Beach Jetty along Ocean Front Walk to Pacific Beach Drive is long overdue.

Parks and Recreation Department Security: \$3,000,000

The Parks and Recreation Department has observed an increase in security issues at several park locations, jeopardizing the safety of park employees, patrons, and City property. In response to these issues, the Department has utilized unbudgeted security guard services at certain park facilities.

Enhancing Workforce Recruitment, Retention and Labor Standards

The City of San Diego must remain competitive in the recruitment, retention and hiring of city employees. The City should also enhance the administration and enforcement of labor standards, and I respectfully request the following positions be reinstated and added to our budget.

Office of the City Clerk: \$200,000

Add funding for four additional cubicles and reorganization to create a safer working environment that would promote operational efficiencies between divisions and sections, as well as accommodate all budgeted staff for the Office of the City Clerk.

Add 1 FTE into the Office of the City Attorney \$100,000

Add one Legal Assistant to the Criminal Division of the Office of the City Attorney to provide legal filing and research support.

Add 2 FTE into the Office of the City Auditor

Add one Performance Auditor position and one Administrative position to the Office of the City Auditor to provide sufficient audit coverage of high-risk areas and identify additional improvements to the efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of City operations.

Office of Labor Standards Enforcement (OLSE): \$300,000

Add 2 FTEs and funding for CBO-led community outreach

The City of San Diego's reports show high non-compliance with its minimum wage and living wage ordinances. Two Associate Compliance Officer positions should be funded and hired to conduct proactive investigations and worker-centered outreach. We should also look to provide grants to support community-based outreach to combat wage theft and other labor law violations. A system based on worker complaints without proactive investigations leaves workers vulnerable to retaliation.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my updated budget priorities for this upcoming fiscal year. Should you have any further questions, please free to contact Codi Vierra in my office at (619) 236-6633 or cvierra@sandiego.gov.