

For Immediate Release | June 8, 2020
Contact: [Perri Storey](#), (619) 236-7010

Councilmember Monica Montgomery Proposes New Office on Race & Equity

**AMID SUSTAINED PROTESTS AND CALLS TO DEFUND THE
POLICE, THE PROPOSED OFFICE WILL TACKLE RACE AND EQUITY
ISSUES PLAGUING THE CITY**

SAN DIEGO, CA: Today, during the special San Diego City Council Meeting to approve the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget, Councilmember Monica Montgomery will propose a new Office on Race and Equity to tackle these dire issues, as well as aid in healing racial tensions in the city of San Diego.

Earlier today, during a [community address](#), Councilmember Montgomery reassured her community that she remains committed to centering the community's voice at City Hall.

Since the excruciating death of George Floyd on Memorial Day, sustained national and local protests have called for police reform measures, and funding for social and economic justice programs.

"As elected officials, we must honestly and genuinely address the root causes of the local protests—the inequity in enforcement, and the systemic racism that is prevalent in our region," said Councilmember Montgomery, chair of the Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods.

"From the beginning of my administration, I have championed a holistic approach to reform measures, including economic justice components. This new Office on Race and Equity is another step in the right direction, along with other reform measures."

Last week, Councilmember Montgomery joined Mayor Kevin Faulconer, Council President Georgette Gómez, and Police Chief David Nisleit to announce the ban on the use of the carotid restraint. In addition, the proposed ballot measure for an independent commission that would provide civilian police oversight and review allegations of misconduct by law enforcement is scheduled for the Council's June 23 meeting.

"From day one, my office has been accessible and listened to the community. As traumatic as this year has been, as difficult and unpredictable, we have an incredible opportunity to tackle the hard work that effectuates meaningful changes, and that is exactly what my office plans to do," said Montgomery.

Community support for the new proposed Office on Race and Equity has been overwhelming:

“As human beings, we need to be fair and equitable, but some people simply do not know how to do that without guidance. Having an Office on Race and Equity in the city of San Diego is the best place for leadership and guidance to have the most impactful change on the people and the systems,” said Leon Williams, fmr. San Diego City Councilmember, Fourth District and namesake of the revived Leon Williams San Diego County Human Relations Commission.

“The City of San Diego should have a renewed focus of making all its policies and operations equitable and fair for all residents. This should be supported by a department with a sole purpose of administering and analyzing policies and departments within the city and directly reporting to the mayor and council with analysis and recommendations. I support Councilmember Montgomery’s recommendation because it is a direct response to the thousands of San Diegans that have demanded change,” said Tony Young, fmr. San Diego City Council President, Fourth District, and President/CEO of Civic Link Strategies.

“An Office on Race and Equity is a proactive move to help eradicate systemic racism and provide training on race relations and cultural proficiency,” said Francine Maxwell, President, NAACP San Diego Branch.

“The ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties commends Councilmember Montgomery for proposing the establishment of an Office on Race and Equity for the City of San Diego. Such an office is an important step toward institutionalizing San Diego’s commitment to address long-standing racial disparities. It will enable city leaders and the people they serve to examine how a wide range of public policy decisions impact communities of color and where policy changes are needed to make our city truly equitable. Only by centering racial justice and equity in city government operations will we achieve real, sustainable progress for all San Diegans,” said Christie Hill, Deputy Advocacy Director, ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties.

“Councilmember Monica Montgomery’s call for an Office on Race and Equity is a necessary step in the development of a just and safe community for all San Diegans. In 2009, shortly after being appointed Attorney General by President Barack Obama, Eric Holder was criticized for calling the United State “a nation of cowards.” We were cowards, he said, because of our failure as a nation to have real and meaningful conversations around race and the violence that stains our history. Councilmember Montgomery’s call for an Office on Race and Equity is a brave step in the right direction. Perhaps, this can be a starting point for us all to begin the process of healing and force America to live up to the lofty ideals of liberty and justice for all. Black, Brown, Indigenous, and poor White people may not have been the intended recipients of those words, but it is our duty to fight for them,” said Khalid Alexander, President, Pillars of the Community.

[Councilmember Monica Montgomery](#) is an attorney and represents the [Fourth Council District](#) on the San Diego City Council, which includes the following communities: Alta Vista, Broadway Heights, Chollas View, Emerald Hills, Encanto, Greater Skyline Hills, Jamacha, Lincoln Park & Knox, Lomita Village, North Bay Park Terraces, Oak Park, O’Farrell, Paradise Hills, Redwood Village, Rolando Park, South Bay Terraces, Valencia Park and Webster. She is the Chair of the [Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods](#), and is Vice Chair of the Committee on Economic Development and Intergovernmental Relations.

###