



**COUNCILMEMBER VIVIAN MORENO**

**City of San Diego**

**Eighth District**

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** January 4, 2022

**TO:** Councilmember Monica Montgomery-Steppe, Chair, Public Safety & Livable Neighborhoods Committee

**FROM:** Councilmember Vivian Moreno

**SUBJECT:** 2022 Public Safety & Livable Neighborhoods Committee Priorities

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I am looking forward to serving on the Public Safety & Livable Neighborhoods (PS&LN) Committee in 2022. The city has the opportunity to take positive steps forward to invest in underserved communities and ensure our public safety departments provide equitable and responsive service to all neighborhoods throughout San Diego. Under your leadership in the coming year, I believe the PS&LN Committee can make significant progress in these critical areas. In response to your memorandum soliciting priorities for the PS&LN Committee in 2022, I urge your careful consideration of the following:

**Parks and Recreation Equity**

In November of 2021, the City Auditor released an audit titled “Performance Audit of Equity in Recreation Programming.” This audit exposed a vast and disturbing difference in recreation services provided at recreation centers in southern San Diego, particularly in communities of color and low-income neighborhoods, when compared to services offered in the northern areas of the city. The City Auditor made 16 recommendations, which the Parks and Recreation Department agreed to implement. It is imperative that the PS&LN Committee be actively involved in monitoring the Department’s progress in increasing recreation opportunities in the communities identified in the audit. In addition to discussing the audit at a hearing early in the year, the committee should receive updates on progress made by the Department and should provide funding recommendations for implementation of the audit in the FY23 budget.

### **Enact Surveillance Ordinance**

The city utilizes various types of technology to aid law enforcement in solving and preventing crime. While this technology may have some advantages for officers, it is vital that San Diegans privacy rights are not infringed upon. The Committee should receive an update on the city's surveillance practices and 2021 data related to the use of surveillance technology by the city's public safety departments. Additionally, the committee should work with staff to schedule an update on the meet and confer process as it relates to the surveillance ordinance and a timeline to docket a second reading of the ordinance at City Council.

### **Police Department Board-Up Services**

Police officers encounter unsecured buildings or structures when responding to burglar alarms or other calls for service, as well as when on routine patrols. An unsecured commercial or residential building with damaged windows, doors, or walls could allow entry by unauthorized persons and creates a condition that invites criminal activity. According to a 2021 Hotline investigation by the City Auditor, *"SDPD Procedure 6.10, dated March 16, 2020, is the current policy for officers who encounter an unsecured non-residential building. It states that the officer should attempt to secure the building, and if that is not possible, they must attempt to notify the owner or responsible person. However, the policy does not address the procedure for obtaining board-up services when the owner cannot be contacted, and it does not address procedures for unsecured residential structures. The policy also does not establish a specific amount of time (such as one hour) that officers should wait for a responsible person to respond."*

The Police Department, in consultation with the City Attorney's Office, has agreed to develop a proposal for City Council to consider amending the Municipal Code to address abatement of unsecured commercial and private property by police officers. A previous proposal was discussed but not enacted in 2014. Additionally, the Police Department has committed to update its current procedures to include residential properties, a board-up report, a waiver of liability form, details regarding the amount of time officers will spend attempting to contact a responsible person, and appeal procedures. The Committee should request that the department bring forward an amendment to the Municipal Code and provide an update regarding revising current procedures regarding board-up services in 2022.

### **De-escalation Training for the Police Department**

De-escalation training is critical for all law enforcement agencies to invest in for officers who, on a regular basis, must interact with individuals in a variety of situations ranging from aggressive behavior, confusion or those affected by mental illness. By providing ongoing de-escalation training and techniques for officers, the Police Department can more often avoid violent confrontations. The Committee should receive an update from the Chief of Police on the Police Department's current de-escalation training and how the Department intends to expand its investment in this training for officers.

### **Recruitment and Retention of Police Officers**

The city must continue to prioritize the recruitment and retention of police officers. Recent budgets allocated funding towards recruitment and retention efforts, including a salary increase. These are positive steps in the right direction, but more must be done. The Committee should

hear an updated analysis from the Police Department of officer attrition to determine how best to modify retention efforts and its recruiting program.

### **Public Safety Communications Staffing**

Ensuring that the city has adequate staffing for safety dispatchers in the Police Department and Fire-Rescue Department is important to ensure that calls made to report emergencies are quickly dispatched to the appropriate first responders. The Committee should hear an update from the Police and Fire-Rescue Departments on the current status of staffing levels for safety dispatchers and any recommendations to improve recruitment and retention of dispatchers.

### **Enforcement of Barrio Logan Truck Route**

The Committee should receive an update from the Police Department regarding the enforcement of the Barrio Logan Truck Route, including any recommendations that would help improve enforcement and keep more trucks out of residential areas.

### **Reducing Gun Violence**

Gun violence has a devastating impact on communities throughout the country. According to the *Brady Center on Gun Violence* there are over 115,000 people shot each year in the United States, resulting in over 38,000 deaths, including nearly 8,000 children. Ensuring the city is employing the most effective strategies to reduce the presence of firearms on our streets is critical. The Committee should receive an update from the Police Department on current efforts to curb gun violence and any additional steps that can be taken in 2022.

### **Homelessness**

The city is in the process of implementing the Community Action Plan on Homelessness. The Committee should receive an update on progress made in achieving the goals of the plan. In addition, there are a number of recommendations from the City Auditor's "Performance Audit of the City's Efforts to Address Homelessness," that the Homeless Strategies Division has not yet implemented. The Committee should receive an update on progress made on the following:

1. Developing a strategic communications plan to educate the public on the importance of addressing homelessness.
2. Formalizing the collection of data on reasons for refusal of service, establish responsibility and methodology for data collection and analysis, and identify how the data is to be shared with appropriate stakeholders and how this data will be used to make improvements that increase rates of acceptance of services and shelter.
3. In regards to homeless encampment abatement, establishing responsibility for tracking the number of homeless individuals contacted, offered, and provided services at each encampment abatement and establishing responsibility and procedures for the data to be analyzed and shared with the Homelessness Strategies Division and other City departments, offices, and regional stakeholders involved in addressing homelessness.

Finally, the Committee should request staff update the plan to account for specific needs for mental health and addiction treatment services and how those needs measure-up with what the county currently provides. The Committee should also receive an update on what has been accomplished to date within the plan goals and implementation timeline.

### **Library Staffing and Re-Openings**

During the City Council's discussion of the FY22 budget, it was revealed that the Library Department had a significant staffing issue that caused libraries throughout the city to reduce operating hours or close. This was disturbing, as library services are critical to every community in the city. The final FY22 budget included funding to fill vacancies in the department in order to open all libraries by the end of the fiscal year. The Committee should receive an update and revised timeline on the Library Department's efforts to fill vacancies and return all libraries to normal operating hours.

### **Citygate Consultants Update**

The Committee should receive an update from the Citygate consultants regarding a revised fire station priority list and associated recommendations for Fire-Rescue operational needs.

CC: Honorable Mayor Gloria  
Honorable City Attorney Elliott  
Jeff Kavar, Interim Independent Budget Analyst