

# IALOGUE

News From Council President Todd Gloria



**March 2013**  
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**Council President  
 Todd Gloria proudly  
 represents**

Balboa Park  
 Bankers Hill/Park West  
 Downtown  
 Golden Hill  
 Hillcrest  
 Middletown  
 Mission Hills  
 Normal Heights  
 North Park  
 Old Town  
 South Park  
 University Heights

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## San Diego Suffers with Sequestration

By Council President Todd Gloria

As the President of the San Diego City Council, I generally have plenty to keep me busy within our municipal borders. There are many issues at the state and federal level, however, that impact our City and our region greatly. The federal budget sequester is of chief concern now.

Citing concern for the nation's growing national debt and unbalanced budget, an across the board budget cut of all federal departments and programs, also known as sequestration, has gone into effect.

Sequestration is causing San Diego to suffer. The San Diego region will be greatly impacted because of the federal spending cuts. For that reason, the City included opposition to sequestration as a priority in our 2013 legislative package and has conveyed that to our Congressional delegation.

Starting last year, my City Council colleagues and I have worked to fight sequestration and to advocate for more sensible ways to address federal fiscal challenges. I traveled to Washington, D.C. in September to convey the

importance of finding alternatives to sequestration. In October, I testified before the State Assembly Select Committee on San Diego Trade, Tourism and Job Creation about the economic impact of sequestration on our region. Also last fall, the City Council passed a resolution raising awareness about the negative impact of sequestration's automatic reductions in the Department of Defense's budget.

One out of every four local jobs is connected to defense spending alone, so if a number of jobs are cut due to budget constraints, our unemployed neighbors will likely spend far less money and will therefore impact the taxes on which the City depends to provide core services. If the City has less money, we'll obviously need to revisit our budget priorities.

These cuts are not empty positions. I recently received an email from NASSCO letting me know that 1,040 of its employees in San Diego, Norfolk, and Mayport received letters that they may be indefinitely laid off on April 29. That

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## Chat with Council President Gloria at an Upcoming Event

Council President Todd Gloria prioritizes ongoing communication with community members and welcomes all neighbors to his upcoming gathering. Join him for an informal discussion about City issues, and be sure to bring your questions and input.

In February, the Council President met with 15-20 neighbors at a community coffee hosted by the Hacienda Hotel in Old Town. Topics covered included libraries, homelessness, transportation, and Balboa Park.



**Saturday, March 9  
 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.  
 Twiggs Bakery and Coffeehouse  
 4590 Park Blvd.**

## Lily Pond Repairs Complete

On Monday, February 25, after almost six months of work, repairs were completed at the beloved lily pond in Balboa Park. Council President Todd Gloria was part of the pond's rededication.

"I know that the majority of San Diegans were as shocked and outraged as I was to wake up last August to the news that the Balboa Park Lily Pond – one of the most cherished and most photographed icons in our City — had been damaged by irresponsible acts of vandalism," said Council President Gloria. "I'm so happy to see all of the work that has been done to repair the damage from that incident and to maintain and upgrade the elements of the lily pond."

All damages associated with the water gun fight have been repaired or reconstructed. The damage from the incident was done to seven lily boxes and a drain pipe. In the aftermath, all 27 of the lily boxes were reconstructed with new marine-grade synthetic wood, which has a much longer life-span. Other repairs included the relocation of the unsightly green pipe that used to run down the middle of the pond, resurfacing of the coping around the edge of the pond, installation of a secondary gate-valve to prevent the pond from draining in the event of another pipe rupture; and repair of cracks in the pond's side walls. Thankfully, all lily plants were saved, and Park and Recreation staff are not aware of any loss of marine animals. The repairs were valued at over \$60,000, which was offset by donated materials and labor.

## New Bike Corral Installed in Hillcrest

Council President Todd Gloria celebrated the installation of the newest piece of bicycle infrastructure on February 25 with Mayor Filner, Ben Verdugo of the Uptown Community Parking District, and Glenn Younger, President of Hillcrest Business Improvement District.

The bike corral is located on Richmond Avenue, just south of University Avenue next to Filter. It will provide safe bike parking in the very popular Hillcrest business corridor.

Some repairs were also made to the North Fountain, which sustained some slight damage during the water gun fight.

The great majority of the costs were covered through donations, which were made by hundreds of caring San Diegans through the Friends of Balboa Park. In-kind donations by Lowes and SDG&E, along with dedicated work by City Park and Recreation staff all helped make the upgrades and repairs possible.



Frank Urtasun from SDG&E, Council President Gloria, Betty Peabody, and Mayor Filner celebrate repairs.

"The real story here is not necessarily the upgrade of our lily pond, but how San Diegans came together to pitch in when a beloved community asset was threatened," said Council President Gloria. "Literally hundreds of people stepped forward to donate funds and organize fund-raising efforts. Some donated as little as \$1.00 and some gave in far greater amounts. This is a reflection of how passionate San Diegans are about their park, and also what can be accomplished when that passion is translated into the act of giving. It is the kind of phenomenon that we hope to replicate more and more often with our partners with the Balboa Park Conservancy and with other Balboa Park stakeholders like the Friends of Balboa Park."

Council President Gloria recognized several individuals for their personal contributions to the project, including Grounds Maintenance Workers Salvador Serrano and Maria Castillo, Park Utility Supervisor Larry McElroy, the Citywide Support Services Team, and people from Friends of Balboa Park. From that organization, Marlene and Eric Williams coordinated volunteer efforts, Jim Hughes worked with contractors, and the incomparable Betty Peabody embodies the spirit of the park and is dedicated to its continued beauty.

According to the City Attorney's office, the lily pond incident at Balboa Park is still under review. They have not yet determined whether there will be a criminal complaint issued.



## Community Connection: The Todd Squad is Working for You

### Strengthening Public Safety

- A homeless encampment and debris along the Highway 94 overpass on Pershing Street to B Street and along the Pershing on-ramp to the 5 North were cleaned, thanks to coordination between Council District Three and Assemblymember Toni Atkins' office.
- Street lights were repaired on 13th Avenue near Petco Park.
- A series of streetlights was repaired in the 1400 block of 4th Avenue
- Historic streetlights in the 4200 block of Altamirano Way were repaired.
- A brick sidewalk in the 2900 block of Fern Street was asphalted to prevent tripping hazard.

### Infrastructure Investments

- A large water main break on 14th and F downtown was quickly repaired and replaced. The broken pipe, pictured, was installed in 1911.
- A pothole at 6th Avenue and Upas Street was repaired.
- Sidewalks on the eastside 3900-4100 blocks of Park Boulevard were repaired.
- A waterline construction timeline was altered on Adams



Avenue near 30th Street to assist nearby businesses.

- A rising concrete alley that had become nearly impassable was graded down by City staff off of New Hampshire in University Heights.
- Streets Division repaired utility trenching work that was substandard in the 4100 Sunset Road in Mission Hills.
- Potholes left on 33rd Street near El Cajon Boulevard and Orange Avenue were repaired following sewer and water construction.
- Water meter lids were replaced in the 1900 block of C Street and the 1100 block of 19th Street.
- A 300 foot storm drain pipe will be installed along Maryland Street from mid-March through June. This will alleviate flooding issues that occur at the intersection with Maryland Place.

### Community Character

- Four new community identification signs were installed in South Park.
- Overflowing trash bins and bottles were cleaned up for residents near 30th Street on Adams Avenue.
- A huge amount of illegal dumping in a canyon in Normal Heights was cleaned through a collaborative effort of Council District Three, Environmental Services, and local residents.
- A tree stump was removed from the 2200 block of E Street.
- A notice was sent from Neighborhood Code Compliance to the owner of an abandoned property in the 3100 block of Bancroft Street.

### Sequestration Impacts

(Continued from page 1)

single company alone could eliminate up to an additional 845 subcontractor positions. This equates to approximately 40% of its production workforce and almost its entire subcontractor base.

Of course, cuts to the defense industry are not the only ways San Diego will be impacted. Sequestration will decrease the San Diego Housing Commission's ability to create and improve housing opportunities for our neediest neighbors, slash Community Development Block Grant funding that benefits local organizations, rip apart critical services for children, seniors, people with mental illness, and health care, and gravely threaten local investment in streets, sidewalks, and public facilities. Our region and our country deserve better than this. Congress must act in the best interests of the people it represents, and that means not cutting our way to prosperity.

### The Latest on the Plaza de Panama

The City Council will also soon better understand its options related to the future of Balboa Park. Because of a judge's ruling early in February, the pedestrian-focused Plaza de Panama renovation project approved last July cannot move forward.

"We are left with a Balboa Park Master Plan and Precise Plan that cannot be implemented. Quite simply, we have to do something," said Council President Todd Gloria, who asked the City Attorney to provide the City Council with guidance on what current options to move forward.

It has been suggested that the Municipal Code section identified by the judge could be amended, which would allow the Plaza de Panama project to proceed. The project could also be removed from the Balboa Park Master Plan and Precise Plan. After the City Attorney has made the options clear, Council President Gloria will ensure community input is part of process to determine the future of the park.

## **Putting Neighbors First** By Council President Todd Gloria

One of the first major issues to come before the City Council after I was elected in 2008 was the proposed renovation project for the Academy of Our Lady of Peace (OLP). Sharing the concerns of neighbors, I opposed the project, and the City Council denied its approval in early 2009. In February, I remained steadfast in my opposition to the project when the City Council voted in Closed Session to authorize full and final settlement of a lawsuit with OLP.

It has always been my desire that OLP would revise their Modernization Plan so that it preserved the community character without removing or damaging the historic resources. I have remained consistent in advocating this position, as well as my opposition to the project as proposed by OLP through two Council hearings, a deposition, a cross-examination at trial, and four closed session meetings, including the most recent hearing on the settlement.

The Closed Session vote, which I opposed, reflected a business decision by the supporting members of the Council and the Mayor to take a settlement offer that had been reduced from \$5.6 million down to \$500,000. The settlement provides an opportunity to move two historic homes, whereas OLP had petitioned the court

to be able to demolish the homes on site. There is now an opportunity to relocate them, and I'm glad that the City's Real Estate Assets Department is investigating potential City-owned sites on which the homes may be appropriate.

Had this case moved forward on appeal, everything that the jury determined, like the finding that the City's denial of the plan unfairly burdened OLP's right to religious exercise, the Court of Appeal would have taken as facts.

It is important to note that the case does not constitute a published decision; it does not set precedent, meaning that it can't be used to decide other cases. The case will be dismissed when the City has complied with all conditions. If the City had continued with the appeal, we would have run the risk of it becoming a precedent setting case.

The efforts of OLP will forever change the character of the neighborhood and have soured the relationship between the school and its neighbors. I wish the outcome had been different but am proud to stand with my constituents and oppose this project from beginning to end.

## **Tourism Marketing District: Why You Should Care**

If you've been keeping up with the news, you have likely heard something lately about the Tourism Marketing District's (TMD) future. The TMD was founded in 2008 in response to the City's dire financial situation and the lack of funding to promote tourism. It has been a partnership between the City and the hospitality industry through which hotels are self-assessed to fund marketing and promotion efforts for San Diego, and for local special events. In addition to contributing funding for events like the Holiday Bowl, the TMD's promotional efforts have drawn visitors to our City. This equates to Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue, on which the City depends to help fund core services like police, fire-rescue, and libraries. And having more visitors in San Diego also means that the tourism industry and the many businesses related to it remain strong economic generators and job creators.

Unfortunately, the future of the TMD may be at risk. Last year, the City Council approved the renewal of the TMD by a vote of 7-1 to preserve this successful program and its positive impacts on local residents, the City, and our economy. The Mayor opposes the implementation of the TMD agreement unless additional revenue is given to the City and hotel workers' wages are increased.

"As the son of a former hotel maid, I could not more strongly favor better compensation and improved working conditions for

tourism industry workers, and would support that goal if it were pursued directly," said Council President Todd Gloria. "Further, I have been outspoken on the topic of the need for more revenue for the City, but the TMD is funded through an assessment on hoteliers for the specific purpose of promoting events and tourism in San Diego; state law prohibits the use of these funds for general civic purposes."

Instead of improving conditions for workers and getting more money for the City, sequestering the TMD could result in job losses in the tourism industry, as well as less TOT for the City's General Fund if fewer people come here. In 2012, tourism was San Diego's second largest traded economy. The region welcomed 32.3 million visitors who contributed to an economic impact of \$18.3 billion, generated \$151 million in City TOT, and employed 160,000 San Diegans.

"San Diegans want progress and practical decision-making based on principles. Moving forward with the Council's approval of the TMD is right and necessary now," said Council President Gloria, who was grateful the City Council agreed to move forward with the new agreement of the TMD on February 25.

It remains unclear whether Mayor Filner will release the funds already accumulated for the ongoing operations of the TMD.

## News You Can Use

**Rock 'n' Roll Marathon: Be Ready on June 2:** The Rock 'n' Roll Marathon will be using a new course this year, and most Council District Three neighborhoods will be impacted as thousands of runners take to the streets on Sunday, June 2. The course is still being finalized, but all District Three residents should stay tuned for more information to ensure no one is caught by surprise by traffic or detours on the day of the event. In response to Council President Gloria's concerns, the race organizers are reaching out to many local community groups in March including the Adams Avenue Business Association, Uptown Planner, Normal Heights Community Planning Group, and the Balboa Park Committee, as well as neighbors Between the Heights. More information will be forthcoming.

**Green Students 2013 Youth Forum:** All San Diego County high school students are invited to attend the Green Students 2013 Youth Forum, taking place 9:00 a.m.—2:30 p.m. March 23 at SDG&E's Energy Innovation Center.

The free event will feature interactive sustainability and energy efficiency workshops. Speakers include Mayor Bob Filner, Council President Todd Gloria, Council President Pro Tem Sherri Lightner, and Councilmembers Marti Emerald and Mark Kersey.

In addition to fun and educational workshops, students will have the opportunity to listen to nationally known speaker Jordan Howard. At only 20 years old, Jordan has won many prestigious awards for her work in developing youth programs across the nation and has even opened for Hillary Clinton at fundraisers for President Obama. A sustainable lunch will be provided by regionally acclaimed, Chef Yapo.

Pre-registration is required and seating is limited. For more information and to register, please visit [SDYouthForum.com](http://SDYouthForum.com)

**Want a Pothole Fixed? There's an App for That:** iPhone users who see potholes or other infrastructure concerns can report them using the Street Report app, developed as part of the City's first ever app-development contest in 2012. Street Report gives San Diegans the power to snap a photo, send their location, and report directly to the city, issues like potholes, graffiti, cracked sidewalks, malfunctioning street lights, and many other street and neighborhood issues. By attaching a photo and precise location, the City has an easy time addressing concerns. Submissions go directly to San Diego Street Division, and based on category get routed to the right team.

## Addressing Homelessness: Breaking the Cycle



Council President Gloria made clear his goal of ending homelessness downtown in the next four years when he was sworn in for his second term in December 2012. In February, this goal became closer with the groundbreaking of one affordable housing development, the opening of a new supportive housing project, and with an update on an inventive funding stream.

Ground was broken on Celedon at 9th Avenue and Broadway, which will be a high-rise affordable rental development in downtown San Diego and will offer 250 units of affordable family housing. These studios and one-bedrooms will be available for households with incomes ranging from 30% to 60% of the area median income. Completion is anticipated in Spring 2015.

Later in the month, Council President Gloria helped dedicate the restored Mason Hotel, a collaborative project of the County of San Diego, the San Diego Housing Commission, and Civic San Diego. The Mason is a 17-unit development located in the Core

district of downtown San Diego. The Mason will serve very low income adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and will provide supportive services for residents dealing with mental health challenges.

As people move from homelessness into developments like Celedon and The Mason, they need supplies like sheets, towels, and kitchen tools.

"Getting people stabilized in their new homes is an essential and often overlooked piece of ending the cycle of homelessness," said Council President Gloria.

To help address this, he is helping raise awareness for the Movin' Home program of the Downtown San Diego Partnership. The Movin' Home program helps fund move-in kits for homeless individuals and families via red "donation stations" placed throughout downtown. To date, \$20,000 has been raised. Donation stations look like red parking meters and collect funds that help pay for household necessities. They are a key ingredient to ending homelessness in downtown. A total of 8 meters are placed throughout downtown, made possible by a generous donation by the IPS Group, Inc. Another 17 meters are slated to be placed in the ground in the near future.

## Tracking Todd



Above: Todd meets Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg at the dedication of Thomas Jefferson School of Law's new downtown location.



Above: Todd paid a visit to MCAS Miramar to tour the base, greet the service members, and express the City's appreciation for the Marine Corps' many contributions to the community.



Above: Todd chats with San Diego Leadership Alliance's NLC Fellows. Below left: Todd and Padres' star Chase Headley at the Padres' Annual Awards Dinner to raise money for MLB's RBI program that supports recreational activities for inner city youth. Below right: Todd was honored to be visited at City Hall by the presidents of the student councils of La Jolla Elementary and Joyner Elementary.



Above: Todd celebrates the installation of the new Adams Avenue Recreation Center Marquee, for which he contributed funds resulting from savings in his office budget.

### Council President Todd Gloria serves on the following:

Chair, Budget and Finance Committee  
Land Use and Housing Committee  
San Diego Association of Governments Board (SANDAG)  
San Diego River Conservancy

Chair, SANDAG Transportation Committee  
Metropolitan Transit System Board  
San Diego Tourism Authority

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