



News from **Councilmember Todd Gloria**

City of San Diego ▪ District Three

Friends,

San Diegans have a lot to be proud of this week. Your City Council approved sites for two winter homeless shelters, supported the permitting for a transitional housing facility that will give our veterans a place to receive the care they need, and protected the public's access to City government proceedings. More information about each of these issues is below, along with good news for our local arts and culture industry.

City Council Approves Winter Shelter Sites

The San Diego City Council demonstrated our commitment to assisting our homeless neighbors by approving a winter shelter program on Monday. We look forward to opening Connections Housing, the City's first permanent homeless services and housing center, at the beginning of 2013 to end the cycle of homelessness for many San Diegans, and the winter shelters will ensure the basic need of shelter is provided during the coldest part of the year.

The shelter for single adults this winter will be located at 16th at Newton. One for veterans will be located at 2801½ Sports Arena Boulevard. Both will be funded by the San Diego Housing Commission and the City of San Diego and will open in November or December.

Connections Housing, located at 1250 Sixth Avenue in Downtown San Diego, is expected to be open in early 2013.

Aspire Center will Support Local Veterans and Service Members

Just one day after approving the winter shelter program, the San Diego City Council showed our support for our returning service members and veterans by approving plans for a Transitional Military Housing Facility, also known as the Aspire Center, at 2121 San Diego Avenue in Old Town.

After hearing from many neighbors, reviewing the evidence, and taking testimony at the City Council meeting, I had to conclude that the site meets all of the criteria to be granted a conditional use permit (CUP) for the supportive housing project for our service members and veterans in need. I was further convinced that the proposed Aspire Center was an appropriate use for the site when the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was able to reach agreement with the Old Town Academy (OTA), located directly across the street, on a set of conditions that address the school's concerns on a variety of issues. Numerous neighborhood associations, including the Uptown Planners Board, who had previously opposed the location of the Aspire Center, subsequently went on record in support of the conditions.

I believe the facility will continue to work with the community to be a good neighbor. This will be assured through oversight by the Neighborhood Advisory Committee which is modeled after other successful stakeholder committees. As the incoming Councilmember for Old Town, I expect to closely observe the situation and work with the VA, OTA, and the surrounding community to ensure all obligations, commitments, and agreements are met.

I am grateful that the VA worked with stakeholders in the neighborhood to meaningfully address the issues raised and agreed on conditions to make the facility a positive addition to the community.

Among the calls my office received about the proposed project was a notable one from a young man who indicated he recently returned from a tour of duty and experienced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He was calling to respectfully ask me to support this project so others could get the help that they need to deal with post-deployment life. For him and his brothers and sisters in the military, I voted yes. Together, we will support those who have served us all.

City of San Diego Protects Public Access and Open Meetings

The resolution of the Aspire Center project demonstrates the critical and positive value of public participation in government. This week, the San Diego City Council ensured ongoing public access to its proceedings by approving a resolution reaffirming our commitment to comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act. The measure passed unanimously. The resolution included strong language benefiting the public, as requested in a July 20, 2012 memo I wrote with fellow Councilmembers Marti Emerald and David Alvarez.

The added language guarantees the public will retain its right to hold the City accountable for complying with the provisions of the Brown Act suspended by the State.

Public participation is the foundation of our democracy, and we are ensuring San Diegans will always have a voice at City Hall. The State may say we don't need to include the public in our meetings, but the San Diego City Council values the people we represent.

Our action was in response to a recent decision by the State of California. Because of prolonged budget deficits, the State suspended some state-mandated local programs to save money. Some of the suspensions relieve local governments of the strict legal requirement to carry out previously mandated programs, including certain public noticing provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act. The Brown Act requires local government and advisory bodies to hold open and publicized meetings and allows members of the public to speak at the government meetings.

The City Council also directed the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance to ensure the public will continue to have remedies for non-compliance with the Brown Act. The ordinance will be considered at a future meeting.

Local Arts Leader Goes to Washington

Last week, I was honored to be part of an exciting announcement from one of my favorite local organizations. Mo'olelo held a news announcement to share that its co-founder and Executive Artistic Director, Seema Sueko, is a recipient of Theatre Communications Group's prestigious and inaugural "Leadership U[niversity] One-on-One Grant." The \$75,000 award will provide Seema with a 16-month in-depth mentorship with Molly Smith, Artistic Director of Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater in Washington, D.C. Congratulations to Seema! I can't wait to welcome her back and see what new amazing things she'll accomplish.

City of San Diego Arts and Culture Funding Workshops

At the announcement last week, Seema Sueko acknowledged the significant role the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture played in making her competitive for this opportunity. She shared that the Commission's workshops and application process taught her what it means to run a nonprofit arts organization and helped Mo'olelo develop best practices. The application process for Fiscal Year 2014 arts and culture funding is about to begin, so follow the successful path of Seema

and Mo`olelo and get involved in the process. To be considered for funding, you must attend an upcoming workshop. More information about the grants and full details about the workshops are available on the attached flier.

If you have questions or comments about any of these items or on other City matters, please reach out to me by phone, email, [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#).

Thank you for the continued opportunity to serve,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Todd", written in a cursive style.

Todd

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