

## Tackling community issues that matter

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By KEVIN FAULCONER



Hello. This is my first column on these pages. I'll be here monthly to answer your questions and discuss issues affecting our neighborhoods.

Let me first say I'm proud to serve as your City Councilmember. San Diego became America's Finest City because of communities like Midway, Ocean Beach and Point Loma, and I'm committed to working to ensure our beaches and bays are clean, safe and inviting.

I am passionate about protecting the environment, and in District 2 that starts with San Diego Bay, Mission Bay and our beaches. Within the last year, we've made important strides in Midway, Ocean Beach and Point Loma, including:

- Lease money generated in Mission Bay Park will now stay there and be invested at other local parks, such as Sunset Cliffs Natural Park, thanks to the ballot measure voters passed in November.
- Our coastline is alcohol-free and family-friendly, thanks to another ballot measure voters supported in November.
- The Ocean Beach library and Cabrillo Recreation Center remain open despite attempts to have them shuttered as a way to help close the city's budget gap.
- Potholes were repaired along a 3,000-foot stretch of Chatsworth Boulevard.
- The final phase of a 46-acre waterfront park is underway at Liberty Station. When fully completed later this year, NTC Park will be the second largest coastal park built in San Diego.

I can't tell you how happy I am with the support the Mission Bay ballot measure received in November. Voters — 67 percent — overwhelmingly approved this proposition, which I helped draft and campaigned hard for, along with Councilmember Donna Frye.

Mission Bay is the largest manmade aquatic park in the world and a San Diego treasure, but improvements have been few and far between. Proposition C, which takes effect July 1, means Mission Bay Park now has a permanent revenue source dedicated to addressing a backlog of capital improvement projects. The Mission Bay Park Master Plan identified more than \$300 million in such improvements 15 years ago — most of which are outstanding and include:

- restoration of passable waterways;
- wetland expansions;
- restoration of beach sand and the stabilization of erosion;
- completion of bicycle and pedestrian paths.

From now on, we're going to do what's right when it comes to Mission Bay Park, and I will continue to lead that effort while ensuring taxpayers get value for their investment.

Voters also supported aligning San Diego with numerous other Southern California coastal communities that prohibit alcohol at beaches and bays.

Locally, police are seeing fewer crimes and fewer problems at our beaches and bays. Alcohol-related crimes in beach communities were down about 17 percent last year over an eight-month period ending Sept. 7.

Our beaches and bays are not only safer, they're much cleaner. No longer are we seeing the volume of cans and trash left behind weekend after weekend.

As chair of the Audit Committee and vice chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, I'm working to make sure the city has the resources it needs to protect our most treasured assets.

My goal, and the goal of the editors at The Peninsula Beacon, is to make this column as interactive as possible. In that spirit, please send questions or issues you'd like vetted to the newspaper, and I'll respond here in the coming months.

You can e-mail your questions to editor Kevin McKay at [beacon@sdnews.com](mailto:beacon@sdnews.com). You also can reach me or my staff directly at [kevinfaulconer@sandiego.gov](mailto:kevinfaulconer@sandiego.gov) or (619) 236-6622. I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at our bays and beaches.

— *City Council Pro Tem Kevin L. Faulconer represents District 2.*