COUNCILMEMBER DAVID ALVAREZ

City of San Diego
Eighth District

MEMORANDUM

DATE: **January 23, 2012**

TO: **Councilmember Marti Emerald, Chair, Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee**

FROM: **Councilmember David Alvarez**

SUBJECT: **2012 Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Priorities**

In response to your memorandum of January 12, 2012, the following is a list of issues that the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services (PS&NS) Committee should consider this coming year:

- **Update on the Lifeguard Training Program and Relief Staffing:**
  - **Lifeguard Training Program:** Lifeguards perform thousands of water rescues annually. The opportunity to prepare younger lifeguards to learn and take over responsibilities of lifeguards leaving the service is vital. The City must continue training new lifeguards and ensure current lifeguards remain up to date on the most efficient and effective methods of providing life-safety services in the beach areas.

  - **Relief Staffing:** The City employs relief lifeguards so it does not have to pay overtime, fill shifts vacated due to injury, court, military, maternity, illness, vacation, etc. Lifeguards have a very high injury rate and a healthy relief system is vital to their ability to operate efficiently and effectively.

- **Implementation of Citygate Working Group Recommendations:** It is important that the Five-year Citygate Implementation Plan continues to be discussed in context of upcoming budget discussions. This will ensure there is funding identified for future projects, and the plan continues to be updated. The Fire Department should present an

updated implementation plan and provide an update on a revised project list that follows the framework laid out by the Citygate Report.

- **Graffiti Update:** Graffiti is an everyday battle within our communities in San Diego. The graffiti response that we offer to our residents should constantly be evaluated to meet the needs of our residents. The Committee should receive regular updates on the graffiti abatement efforts.

- **HAZMAT Update:** The pilot HAZMAT Program needs to be evaluated in order to ensure that the response time for Fire Station 44 has improved. This should include status reports from HIRT and Ocean Blue Environmental on how the HAZMAT program is operating and if any adjustments need to be made.

- **Police and Fire Academies:** The Police and Fire Departments are currently understaffed due to years of budget cuts. It is important that any open positions are filled quickly and efficiently. As we experience turnover in each department, we must prepare to bring in new recruits via police and fire academies.

- **Civilian Employees in the Police Department:** A great number of civilian positions in the Police Department budget have been eliminated. We need to consider restoring these positions, so our sworn officers can spend more time in the community protecting our neighborhoods.

- **Community Policing:** The presence of community relations officers within our neighborhoods creates a connection between residents and the Police Department. Retention of current community relations officers and any opportunity to increase their presence in the community needs to be considered as we move into the next fiscal year.

- **Neighborhood Parks and Recreation Centers:** Neighborhood parks and recreation centers throughout the City provide safe areas for recreation and family activities. The Committee should identify and prioritize the community parks that receive the most use and therefore require higher levels of upkeep and maintenance.

- **Follow-up on Performance Audit of Police Department Permitting & Licensing:** The Police Department should provide an update on alarm permit fee adjustments and automated records for pawn shop sales. The revocation policy for alarms should be reviewed and appropriately adjusted so police officers are not responding to an excessive amount of false alarms. In addition, the Committee should consider a fee structure for repeat violators. Pawn shops need to begin implementing an automated system to allow for a more efficient process that will reduce staff overtime costs. The cost of this system should be included in the FY 2013 budget.

I look forward to serving on the PS&NS Committee in 2012 and working with each committee member to ensure that the City develops policies and procedures that keep our citizens safe and provides equally high levels of city services to all neighborhoods throughout San Diego.

CC: Honorable Mayor Sanders
Andrea Tevlin, IBA

DA/mm