

News from Councilmember Todd Gloria

District Three

DIALOGUE



City of San Diego

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Plaza de Panama: It's the Right Choice

By Councilmember Todd Gloria

After two years of debate, the City Council voted last month to move forward with a plan to take back the heart of Balboa Park from cars and return it to the people. When completed in late 2014, this \$45 million project will represent that largest park improvement since 1935.

The vision for removing cars from the center of the park has been nearly universally shared for decades, but there is little consensus on how to achieve that goal and, until recently, no funding to do it. In 2010, in response to Mayor Jerry Sanders' call to pedestrianize the Plaza de Panama in time for Balboa Park's centennial in 2015, local philanthropist Dr. Irwin Jacobs proposed a bold plan and pledged funding to accomplish it.

Initially, I opposed Dr. Jacobs' plan. His proposal has significant impacts to the park's historic resources and would introduce paid parking in Balboa Park. Both of these things are of great concern to me. These costs are balanced against the benefits of restoring over six acres of parkland for the exclusive use of people,

increasing the amount of available parking, eliminating numerous vehicle/pedestrian conflicts, increasing disabled access to the park, and adding a new tram system to service the park.

After reviewing the environmental impact report, considering dozens of alternatives, and discussing the issue with many neighbors, it became clear to me the benefits of Dr. Jacobs' plan far outweighed its costs. I voted to support the project.

I recognize my vote has disappointed some of my constituents. While I don't expect everyone to agree with me, I assure you that this decision was made after a thorough impartial review by my staff and me and upon receiving assurances that this project would not result in degradation to Balboa Park's historic status. It was made not because of any pressure by either side but simply because I believe it's the right choice for Balboa Park.

I expect to be deeply involved in all aspects of the project as it moves forward to ensure that when it is completed, it will be embraced by a majority of San Diegans as an improvement worthy of our city's crown jewel. I hope that you too will engage with this and other projects that will prepare Balboa Park for its 2015 centennial.

City of San Diego Protects Public Access and Open Meetings

The San Diego City Council ensured ongoing public access to its proceedings by approving a resolution on July 24 reaffirming its 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 memo by Councilmembers Todd Gloria, 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

Continued on page 4

District Three Dialogue

Aspire Center Approved for Veterans	2
Winter Homeless Shelters Approved	2
AIDS Walk is September 30	2
Pride Month	3
Parking District Update	3
Champion of Labor	3
Councilmember Donates to Police Department	4
Community News Briefs	4
Community Connection	5
Tracking Todd	6

NORTH PARK

CITY HTS

NORMAL HEIGHTS

GOLDEN HILLS

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

SOUTH PARK

HILLCREST

KENSINGTON

LA JOLLA

MISSION BEACH

MISSION VALLEY

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Aspire Center Will Benefit All of San Diego

By Councilmember Todd Gloria

The San Diego City Council showed our support for our returning service members and veterans by approving plans in July for a Transitional Military Housing Facility, also known as the Aspire Center, at 2121 San Diego Avenue in Old Town.

After hearing from many local residents, 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 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.

The Aspire Center will be within an existing, three-story, 46,926 square foot building over subterranean parking. The facility will be limited to 40 beds and will provide a range of programs related to occupational therapy, vocational rehabilitation, psychology, and social work services for active duty military persons and armed forces veterans. Along with its medical and therapeutic spaces, the proposed facility will contain 34 men's bedrooms and six women's bedrooms.

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.

San Diego's Homeless will be Sheltered this Winter

Councilmember Todd Gloria applauded his colleagues on the San Diego City Council for unanimously approving sites for two winter homeless shelters on July 23.

"The San Diego City Council today demonstrated our commitment to assisting our homeless neighbors by approving a winter shelter program," said Councilmember Todd Gloria. "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.

AIDS Walk is September 30 Sign up today!



Councilmember Todd Gloria encourages all San Diegans to participate in AIDS Walk.

On Sunday, September 30, nearly 8,000 walkers, runners and volunteers will line up in Balboa Park for the 23rd AIDS Walk & Run San Diego to raise much-needed funds for local HIV/AIDS service organizations. Make sure you're part of it!

Registration is quick and easy. Just visit the website at www.aidswalksd.org and sign up as an individual, join an existing team or start your own team.

Thank you for helping to make AIDS Walk & Run San Diego the largest one-day HIV/AIDS fundraiser in San Diego County! For more information, contact Ian Johnson at 619.291.WALK (9255) or AIDSWalk@thecentersd.org.

July 2012: LGBT Pride Month in the City of San Diego

When Councilmember Todd Gloria presented the resolution proclaiming July to be LGBT Pride Month, it was easy to note the milestones made in the year since last year's Pride. Nationally, the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy ended, allowing all members of the military to serve honestly. Barack Obama became the first U.S. President to publicly support marriage equality. Locally, San Diego became the first City in the nation to name a street in honor of slain civil rights leader and LGBT advocate Harvey Milk, and approved a Pride Flag monument for Hillcrest, which was completed on July 20.



"San Diego has been a leader in supporting equal rights for all of our citizens, and we've seen tremendous progress locally and nationally in the past year to that end," said Councilmember Gloria.

Councilmember Gloria participated in the Pride Parade with his family and other supporters, discussed issues with constituents at the Pride Festival in Balboa Park, judged the Most Prideful Dog contest at Fido and Company, was honored to help raise the Pride Flag for the first time on Normal Street, and enjoyed many other events and activities in honor of Pride Month.

Councilmember Gloria Named "Champion of Labor"

Councilmember Todd Gloria was humbled to be named the John Torres Champion of Labor by the Municipal Employees Association for my support of workers on July 19. "I am thankful to MEA members for what they do every day to make our City work," said Councilmember Gloria. "From the reforms they have accepted and sometimes championed to the efficiencies they suggest, our employees demonstrate an absolute and strong commitment to the City of San Diego and to our citizens. The pride they take in their jobs is obvious to those of us who pay attention, and my appreciation for them will not recede."



Creating Change with Parking Meter Change

Serving as Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, Councilmember Todd Gloria championed changes on July 11 to policies and procedures to make more effective use of available funds for parking, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements in the City of San Diego.

"The shortage of parking is a problem in many San Diego communities, and funds are available to solve it. City staff and parking districts must move forward with tangible parking improvements for our neighborhoods," said Councilmember Gloria.

Community Parking District (CPD) advisory boards have expressed frustration with the speed at which their proposals and projects are analyzed and implemented by City staff. Councilmember Gloria and parking-impacted neighbors believe a focus by CPDs on studies and reports has resulted in too few tangible benefits or additional parking spaces.

The Budget and Finance Committee's oversight hearing included a discussion of guidelines for the use of parking meter funds, and the Committee took action to resolve challenges and streamline the current process.

The Committee approved a motion asking City staff to consider potential changes Councilmember Gloria identified for inclusion in Council Policy 100-18 and to modify existing agreements with the City's CPDs, and asking staff to bring back changes to the Budget and Finance Committee for consideration. Potential modifications include but are not limited to the following:

- Prioritizing funding for tangible results and creating additional parking spaces;
- Eliminating inappropriate restrictions on allowable distances and impact zones for CPD project expenditures;

Continued on page 5

Donation of Police Bicycles

Councilmember Gloria donated much-needed bicycles to the San Diego Police Department to assist in the mission of protection and service to residents, business owners and visitors to the neighborhoods served by the officers and volunteers.

Using funds available from his office budget savings, Councilmember Gloria donated bicycles and necessary safety equipment to the San Diego Police Department's Central Division. These bikes will provide additional resources and an alternate means for officers and volunteers, including the Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP) members, to patrol the Gaslamp, Balboa Park, and other neighborhoods within Central Division. Officers on bicycles enjoy greater mobility in sometimes crowded areas, as well increased interaction with people and high-visibility crime deterrence.

"I appreciate the leadership of Chief Bill Lansdowne, Assistant Chief Boyd Long, and Captain Mark Jones, and was happy to be able to be present to unveil the new bicycles," said Councilmember Gloria.



Community News Briefs

Neighborhood Beat

On June 28, a great group of community members joined Councilmembers Todd Gloria and Marti Emerald for the Neighborhood Beat program at the Joyce Beers Center. Participants, including Councilmember Gloria, learned how to perform basic CPR and how to use an AED from representatives from the City's ambulance provider, Rural/Metro, and from San Diego Project Heartbeat.

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. To learn more about the grants and see the schedule of workshops, please visit www.sandiego.gov/arts-culture and click on Funding.

Local Arts Leader Goes to Washington



On July 19, Councilmember Gloria was honored to be part of an exciting announcement from Mo'olelo 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!

City of San Diego Arts and Culture Funding Workshops

At the Mo'olelo announcement, 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

Brown Act (continued from page 1)

always have a voice at City Hall," said Councilmember Gloria. "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."

The City Council's 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.

Community Connection: The Todd Squad is Working for You

Strengthening Public Safety

- Extensive tree trimming and clean up occurred along the 163 median between I-5 and Washington Street thanks to coordination between the Todd Squad, Caltrans, and Assemblymember Toni Atkins.
- The speed limit on 30th Street between Maple Court and Juniper Street was scheduled to be raised from 25 mph to 30 mph, upsetting some residents. Residents can request the speed limit remain the same, but the 25 mph limit cannot be enforced because of State speed trap laws.
- A street sign in the alley behind the 3900 block of Grim Avenue that was obstructed by stickers and graffiti was replaced.
- Speed humps requested for Crestwood Place between Robinson Avenue and Cypress Avenue will not be installed because they failed to meet Transportation Engineering's criteria.

Improving Infrastructure

- Cedar Street, from 31st Street to Gregory Street will have its water and sewer mains replaced from March 2014—September 2015 and is therefore ineligible for street repaving.
- An abandoned street sign was removed from the 4000 block of Van Dyke Avenue and reinstalled at its proper location.
- Numerous improvements were made on the 3300 block of Altadena Avenue.
- Water and sewer main work was completed in the 4200 block of Menlo Avenue, leaving meter box installation and street cleaning as remaining issues for neighbors.
- While repaving occurred near Highland Avenue and Wightman Street, access to a nearby business was maintained.

- A temporary water line serving the 2800 block of University Avenue was replaced because it was leaking.
- Water service was restored to a resident of the 4600 block of Arizona Street.
- A fallen light pole in the 3300 block of 30th Street was removed and a new pole was installed.

Community Character

- Chains and bollards protecting a clock on Grape Street were repaired. (See picture, right.)
- A tree was illegally removed from the 3200 block of Thorn Street. The abutting property owner has been ordered to grind the stump and plant a replacement tree.
- An abandoned vehicle was removed from the 1900 block of Dale Street.
- A business in the 3000 block of Beech Street was assisted to decrease impacts of SDG&E maintenance.
- Council District Three staff ensured trash pickup would continue in the 4000 block of 45th Street during construction.
- A Normal Heights businesswoman was provided information about the utility markings in her parking lot.



Community Parking Districts (continued from page 3)

- Using previous successful projects as guidelines for future implementation to cut down on analysis and review time;
- Increasing regular coordination with necessary City departments and City Attorney; and
- Adding quantifiable performance measures into annual plans and budgets for CPD Boards.

Parking meter revenue is split between the City's General Fund, which receives 55%, and CPDs, which receive 45%. CPDs are tasked with using the funds to implement parking solutions in their neighborhoods. Three CPDs have amassed unallocated balances totaling more than \$1 million in areas that all suffer from tremendous parking shortages:

Uptown: \$1,100,801

Mid-City/El Cajon Boulevard: \$244,607

Mid-City/University Heights: \$158,875

At the hearing, Councilmember Gloria called out some parking improvements that have been implemented in recent years.

- Angled parking was installed on Meade Avenue near Campus Avenue in University Heights, yielding a net gain of 10 parking spaces for a cost of \$3,200.
- The long-fenced vacant Pernicano's parking lot in Hillcrest was opened for public use, generating 36 parking spaces at no cost to the City.
- A bicycle parking corral in Hillcrest added 12 on-street bike parking spaces for \$2,500.

"It doesn't take a lot of money to make a big difference in addressing parking shortages. Our neighborhoods deserve better and should not have to wait for more of these improvements," said Councilmember Gloria. "I will continue to fight to ensure neighborhoods receive benefits as mitigation for their impacted parking conditions."

Next steps include hiring a City traffic engineer to coordinate projects and updating parking regulations to clarify and simplify policies.

Tracking Todd



1. Todd celebrates the newest members of the Young Leaders Council on July 1.
2. A homeless veteran meets Todd at StandDown on July 21.
3. Todd joined Mayor Sanders and Councilmember Zapf to announce City employees won the Managed Competition for landfill operations on July 20.
4. UCSD Medical Center Hillcrest received the Human Rights Campaign's top score on its LGBT healthcare equality index on July 13.
5. Todd shows off rain collection barrels that will help irrigate the New Roots Community Farm in City Heights with a representative of Urban Corps on July 18.

Councilmember Gloria serves on the following:

- Chair, Budget and Finance Committee
- Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
- Land Use and Housing Committee
- Rules, Open Government and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee
- Metropolitan Transit System Board
- San Diego Association of Governments
- San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau
- San Diego River Conservancy

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