

News from Councilmember Todd Gloria

District Three

DIALOGUE



City of San Diego

October 2012 Volume 4, Issue 9

A Budget Wake Up Call *By Councilmember Todd Gloria*

As the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, I have worked diligently with my council colleagues, Mayor Jerry Sanders, and City staff to stabilize and strengthen San Diego's finances.

Since 2008, our budget has gone from a deficit of more than \$200 million to a surplus for Fiscal Year 2013. After years of budget cuts, our reform efforts, compensation agreements with City employees, managed competition savings, and the global economic recovery combined this year to make restoration of necessary services possible.

It is now clear that our hard work to balance the City's budget may be compromised as a result of Prop B, which was approved by voters in June.

I have recently learned that the City's Annual Required Contribution (ARC) to the San Diego City Employees Retirement System (SDCERS) in Fiscal Year 2014 is estimated to be as much as \$37 million higher than previously anticipated because of Prop B and because of lower than anticipated investment returns. The payment may be

approximately \$273.2 million.

It is imperative that we consider how this unanticipated expense may impact City services. Options for how to move forward must be considered carefully. The Budget and Finance Committee discussed this critical topic as we received an update on the City's current financial conditions at our meeting on September 26. With this context, the status of the City's financial reserves is especially relevant. We currently have reserves of 13.3% of our General Fund budget. We can use them to address our ARC payment next year so critical services are spared from being cut again. However, that could have implication on our credit rating and ability to bond. We must consider actions the City may want to pursue to ensure our fiscal strength and a high quality of life for San Diegans.

I look forward to addressing this newest challenge proactively, intelligently, and efficiently. As always, I welcome your feedback. I will keep you updated as plans on how to address this change develop.

Targeting Abandoned Properties

Since Councilmember Todd Gloria's early days as Chair of the Land Use and Housing Committee in 2009, he has fought for tough new measures to more effectively deal with properties that negatively impact neighborhoods throughout the City. On September 18, the City Council unanimously approved the Abandoned Properties Ordinance.

The Abandoned Properties Ordinance expands the definition of what constitutes an abandoned property and imposes more stringent maintenance requirements while making it easier for police and code inspectors to respond to nuisance properties.

By broadening the definition of abandoned properties and identifying those with code violations

as public nuisances, the ordinance allows the City to be more aggressive in addressing vacant

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202 C Street, MS 10A
San Diego, CA 92101
Phone (619) 236-6633
Fax (619) 595-1481
toddgloria@sandiego.gov
www.sandiego.gov/cd3

Bike Sharing

Mayor Jerry Sanders and Council President Pro Tem Kevin Faulconer joined Councilmember Todd Gloria on September 17 to announce steps the City is taking to bring bike sharing to San Diego.

Bike sharing is a concept widely used in cities across the nation, and it provides public access to modern bicycles for short trips and serves as an affordable transportation alternative to driving. The City recently issued a Request for Sponsorship, which will allow companies to express interest in partnering with the City to create a program in our urban neighborhoods.

"I understand that ours will be the first bike sharing program in the region, and it will be one of the first in the nation to operate without public subsidy," said Councilmember Gloria.

Representing San Diego in Washington, D.C.

I was proud to carry San Diego's interests to leaders in Washington, D.C. earlier this week and bring back some ideas for making our City even better. I had a great meeting with leaders of the Smithsonian Institution on ways we can partner on Balboa Park's 2015 Centennial Celebration; met with transportation leaders to advocate for extending the trolley and expanding Bus Rapid Transit locally; was briefed on the Defense Department budget, which is critical to our economy because one in four San Diegans is employed in a military-related job; and led a series of meetings focused on homelessness and how our federal partners can assist local initiatives to tackle this important problem. I also was excited to see a bike sharing program blossoming in Washington, D.C. Stay tuned for news early next week about what we're doing locally along the same lines.

Your Guide to the City's Capital Improvement Program

Have you ever wondered when certain City projects were going to be done and how they were prioritized?

Stemming from conversations with community members during the budget development process last spring, the Office of the Independent Budget Analyst is introducing the Citizen's Guide to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). It was developed to provide a solid foundation of knowledge on the CIP.

This guide can be used in conjunction with the Citizen's Guide to the City's Operating Budget. Both guides can be found by visiting the IBA's webpage at <http://www.sandiego.gov/iba/otherdocs/index.shtml>.

"As the Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee, I know these guides will help San Diegans provide informed input to City leaders on spending priorities," said Councilmember Todd Gloria.

One of the greatest impacts of the bike sharing program is that it will provide a link to and from public transportation lines. When examining ways of adding ridership to buses and trolleys, one of the primary challenges is getting people from their origins to transit and from transit to their destinations. Having bike sharing facilities near transit hubs would make transit a better option. Bike sharing will also help address parking problems and traffic congestion as fewer people use cars.



When Councilmember Gloria was in Washington, D.C. recently, he witnessed its amazingly successful bike sharing program. Corals with several shareable bikes were quickly emptied by morning commuters there, and large groups of businesspeople in suits rode along busy streets.

"I know our bike sharing program will be similarly beneficial here, and we hope to have it implemented in Spring 2013," said Councilmember Gloria.

Register to Vote

Please note that the last day to register to vote for the November election is October 22. If you have never registered or if you have recently moved and want to vote in your current neighborhood, this is the time to act. Additional important dates from the San Diego County Registrar of Voters are below.

October 8, 2012: First day mail ballots will be available. First day that early voting is available at RoV. RoV is open for voting 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

October 15, 2012: Mail ballot processing (signature checking) begins. To observe, call 858-694-3403.

October 22, 2012: Last Day to Register to Vote

October 26, 2012: Opening and preparing mail ballots for computer tabulation.

October 29, 2012: Mail ballot scanning process begins (computer processing). To observe, call 858-694-3403

October 30, 2012: Last Day to Apply for a Mail Ballot. Requests are due to the RoV by 5:00 p.m.

November 3, 2012: Weekend voting at RoV. Registrar of Voters will be open for voting from 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.

November 6, 2012: Election Day. Polls and the Registrar of Voters are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Preserving San Diego Canyons

Thanks to legislation by Senator Christine Kehoe which was signed into law in September by Governor Jerry Brown, the City of San Diego can dedicate 10,000 acres of canyons as open space.

Councilmember Todd Gloria testified on behalf of the City on March 27 when the bill, SB 1169, was being heard by the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Culture.

“San Diego’s system of urban canyons and open space has long been recognized by planners and community members as one of our region’s most valuable and distinguishing features. In fact, the

Council District that I represent, while highly urbanized, is laced with canyon areas. As densification increases, so does the importance of preserving and restoring our canyons as a link to nature and a sanctuary from the urban environment,” said Councilmember Gloria.

The canyons and other open space areas subject to the law bill are all owned in fee title by the City of San Diego and have been set aside specifically as open space. By enabling their dedication, SB 1169 gives these areas an added layer of protection against the pressures of encroachment since Dedicated Open Spaces require a 2/3 vote of the electorate in order to be used for any other purpose.

Community Connection: The Todd Squad is Working for You

Strengthening Public Safety

- Overgrown brush was cleared from the fence line near Trolley Barn Park.
- Two V-Calm signs that monitor vehicle speed have been approved for Juniper St. between Felton St. and Westland Ave. and will be installed should funding permit.
- A streetlight was repaired on Alder Dr.
- A missing streetlight was replaced on Adams Ave. near 34th St.
- Numerous vehicles were tagged for 72-hour violations north of Adams Ave. in Normal Heights.

Improving Infrastructure

- Potholes were repaired in the 3700 block of Menlo Ave.
- The 3800 block of Westgate Pl. is on the street resurfacing backlog list and will be repaved as funding becomes available.
- A meter box on Cleveland Ave. that was leaking water was repaired.
- A damaged portion of asphalt was repaired near Harvey Rd.
- After months of investigation, the cause of a water leak in the 4100 block of Hamilton was determined to be an irrigation issue on private property. The issue has been addressed.
- The condition of the concrete alley near the 2900 block of Kalmia Ave. was determined to require reconstruction. The alley will be patched with asphalt until funds allow for the reconstruction.
- Debris was cleared from a storm drain in the 3500 block of Seventh Ave.
- A segment of the sidewalk in the 3600 block of Curlew St. was patched to alleviate tripping hazards.

Community Character

- Illegal dumping was cleaned up at 38th St. and Beech St.
- Trash and debris were cleaned up at the intersection of I-805 and Monroe Ave.
- A recliner dumped in the alley near Hawley Blvd. was removed

by the Environmental Services Department.

- Overgrown cactus plants protruding into the sidewalk in Kensington were trimmed.
- A missed trash collection was picked up the following day on Illinois St. thanks to intervention by Councilmember Gloria’s office.
- A Normal Heights neighbor’s water bill was corrected to appropriately reflect actual usage.
- Weeds and invasive arundo were cleared from the right of way near the 3400 block of Florida St. by the Urban Corps.

Coffee with your Councilmember



Saturday, October 27
10:00—11:30 a.m.

Alchemy Cultural Fare & Cocktails
1503 30th Street in South Park

Please join Councilmember Todd Gloria for a casual chat in South Park. Bring your questions, comments, and brilliant new ideas for further improving our neighborhoods.

Thanks to Alchemy for hosting the event.

City Taking Steps to Keep Streets Smooth

On September 13, the Land Use and Housing Committee considered proposed changes to the Municipal Code that would create procedures, requirements, and limitations for excavating San Diego's roads and implement a Street Damage Fee.

"The City of San Diego has wisely increased our investment in road repairs and repaving over the last three years. The changes that moved forward today will help ensure our streets are protected when utilities need to excavate or trench in the public right-of-way," said Councilmember Todd Gloria.

Historically, streets were often torn up for water or sewer improvements or utility work shortly after being repaved or repaired. The changes discussed in September would coordinate excavation work and resurfacing work so roads can be maintained longer term and the City's investments are not wasted.

Among the other changes proposed:

- Requires that all utilities twice per year submit to the City major

- work anticipated to be completed in the public right-of-way in the upcoming 24 months so that projects can be better coordinated;
- Requires that excavation work begin within 90 calendar days of the permit start date and is completed within one year;
- Increases the length of the existing moratorium for excavations on slurred/resurfaced streets from 1 year/3 years for slurry/overlay to 3 years/5 years in order to maintain the improved condition of the street for a longer period of time;
- Extends the cost recovery for degradation of the asset resulting from excavations in the public right-of-way to municipal excavators by charging them the Street Damage Fee.

"I believe the parties who excavate in the public right-of-way should bear the full cost of restoring smooth road conditions following their work. San Diego taxpayers drive and bike on our roads, and we pay for their repaving. We should not be forced to also pay to restore the same roads that other people damage," said Councilmember Gloria.

The changes were forwarded to the full City Council for consideration. A City Council hearing date has not yet been set.

Water Conservation Gardens of the Month: N. Mountain View at Hawley



Last April, a home in the 3400 block of N. Mountain View Drive in Normal Heights (pictured below left) was nominated and awarded the Water Conservation Garden of the Month. Now, not only is that property still looking great, but several more homes nearby have joined the water-wise trend!



Councilmember Gloria was so impressed when driving through this area recently, that he is honoring the entire neighborhood this month.

Has your neighborhood adopted water-wise landscaping? Do you have a favorite water conservation garden in the neighborhood? Snap some pictures and submit them to toddgloria@sandiego.gov. As always, don't be afraid to submit your own!

Community Wrap Up and Upcoming Events

Utility Box Workshop Councilmember Gloria is grateful for the community members who joined him for a workshop about utility boxes on September 24. Multiple neighbors expressed concern to utility company representatives over the level of community involvement in the planning stages of undergrounding projects and about graffiti on the boxes, and requested for detailed engineering specifics which the utilities said they would provide. Additional workshops may be scheduled.

October 2012 is Kids Free Month A variety of "kids free" incentives are available this month, ranging from complimentary meals, attraction admission, and Amtrak rides to welcome amenities at area hotels and much more. The San Diego Zoo and Safari Park, SeaWorld, LEGOLAND, and many museums are all participating in this great deal. Visit www.sandiego.org/KidsFree for more information.

Balboa Park is \$2.6 Million Richer Thanks to Federal Grant On September 7, Councilmember Gloria had the opportunity to congratulate the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership for securing a \$2.6 million award from the National Science Foundation. The funded project is called "Integrating Informal STEM and Arts-Based Learning to Foster Innovation." The work of our Balboa Park institutions is fascinating, and I'm proud that it continues to gain national recognition.

Abandoned Properties Ordinance

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properties, especially those that have become unsightly because of litter and debris or that have become



centers for gang and other illegal activity. The ordinance would allow the City to require property owners to file their plans on restoring properties to productive use. It also addresses vacant foreclosed properties, which blight neighborhoods and pull down property values.

"The Abandoned Properties Ordinance gives the City the leverage we need to resolve troublesome properties, which are found in neighborhoods throughout San Diego. This is a long time coming, and I'm especially grateful to my colleague, Councilmember Sherri Lightner, for pushing for the ordinance when she served as chair of the Land Use and Housing Committee in 2011," said Councilmember Gloria.

Help Crime Stoppers Increase Safety Crime Stoppers is a great local organization focused on helping police agencies solve crimes, and the San Diego community can help by joining the them on organization's social media activities. Please "like" Crime Stoppers on Facebook (www.facebook.com/sandiegocountycrimestoppers) and follow the organization on Twitter (@sdcrimestoppers).

Financial Planning Day

Saturday, October 6, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Port Pavilion at Broadway Pier
1000 North Harbor Dr.

Certified Financial Planners will provide free guidance on topics including improving your credit score, preventing identity theft, managing your money, career planning, first time homebuying, and several more. Please join Councilmember Todd Gloria, Mayor Jerry Sanders, and County Treasurer-Tax Collector Dan McAllister for this great opportunity. To register, visit www.financialplanningdays.org or call 877-861-7826.

Nightmare on Normal Street

Saturday, October 27, 7:00—10:00 p.m.
Normal St. at University Ave.

It's almost time for Hillcrest's biggest Halloween Party! Don't miss the costume contest featuring a \$1000 grand prize. This is an event for people at least 21 years old and ID is required. Tickets are available at <http://events.thecentersd.org>. Proceeds from this event benefit more than 40 community programs at The Center.

Additional Ambulance Hits the Streets To address intermittent spikes in emergency calls from 12:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m., the City's ambulance service provider, Rural/Metro, added a paramedic ambulance starting September 4. The unit is posted in areas where the City experiences high call volumes and helps ensure adequate emergency response coverage. The City now has 34 paramedic ambulances at peak times.

Temporary Suspension of the Power Beach Wheelchair Program

San Diego's beaches are some of the greatest natural assets, and Councilmember Gloria has been proud to ensure greater beach access for locals and visitors with mobility challenges by contributing to the Beach Wheelchair Program. Please note that the Power Beach Wheelchair service provided by the Park and Recreation Department at Mission Beach will be suspended effective Monday, September 17. Construction will be underway on the Mission Beach Lifeguard Station and due to lack of storage space and safety concerns, the power chairs will not be available during this time. Renovations are projected to be completed in 66 days and service will resume as soon as it is safe to do so, hopefully by early December. Manual beach wheelchairs will still be available for check-out from lifeguards at all the main towers, including Mission Beach.

Tracking Todd



Top left: Todd continues his efforts to combat HIV and AIDS by participating in Diving for Being Alive on September 3.

Top right: Todd joined local fire-rescue personnel on September 8 at the Second Annual 9-11 Memorial Stair Climb to raise funds for FirefighterAid.

Middle left: Todd celebrates the completion of court resurfacing at Golden Hill Recreation Center, which he helped fund.

Above: San Diego's third bike corral opens at the Lafayette Hotel in North Park on September 22.

Bottom left: Todd and Councilmember Marti Emerald celebrate the 92nd Women's Equality Day at the City Council meeting on September 25.

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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