

From: "Councilmember Joe LaCava" <cd1news@sandiego.gov>
Subject: **Spring is Awakening**

LACAVA'S COLUMN

Your District 1 News Update



Friends,

With COVID-19 restricting our use of indoor facilities and spring weather knocking at our doors, San Diego's incredible outdoor spaces are a blessing. Personally, I find that the City's conscious protection of nature through our open space parks and canyons program to be what sets our metropolis apart from most.

Open space parks and canyons are parcels of land that have been left intentionally undeveloped for us to enjoy. These areas provide us with iconic scenic vistas, unique flora and fauna, and exciting outdoor recreational options.

In total, the City of San Diego Park & Recreation's Open Space Division manages [29 of these sites](#) totaling 24,000 acres of open space land. What's more is that seven of these jewels are located right in District 1!

With outdoor spaces more needed than ever, it's important that we uphold our end of the bargain with nature – enjoy and preserve.

Before taking a stroll through Rose Canyon in University City or a hike in the Carmel Mountain Preserve, make sure you're up to date on the [rules](#). Some key ones are to stay on the trails as to not destroy sensitive habitats and disturb wildlife, take only pictures, and leave nothing behind but your footprints. And always take plenty of water with you.

These preserves are a treasure and a gift. It's up to us to enjoy and respect them for generations.

Yours truly,



COVID-19 Updates

District

District 1 Welcomes our First County Run Vaccination Site

On February 21, the first public vaccination site in District 1 opened its doors at RIMAC gym on University of California, San Diego's campus.

Those eligible to receive the vaccine can make an appointment at this no-cost, walk-in clinic 7 days a week, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., at <http://vaccinationsuperstationsd.com> (and maybe even enjoy a bite to eat at a local small-business after!)

City

City-Run Vaccination Site Operational and Open to the Public

Eligible residents can now make an appointment at the City-run site located in the Municipal Gymnasium at Balboa Park (2111 Pan American Plaza, San Diego, CA 92101.)

Information on the vaccination site and general eligibility requirements can be found at <https://www.sandiego.gov/covid-19-vaccination>. Appointments are required and, as available, can be made through this website as well. Please note that due to a limited supply of vaccines, appointments may be difficult to come by or rescheduled.

Rent and Utility Assistance Gearing Up

On February 22, City Council authorized \$92 million in State and Federal funding for the creation of an emergency rental and utility assistance program. This program supports housing stability and makes Federal funds available to residents to help pay past-due rent, upcoming rent, and utility payments.

An [online portal](#) is available now for City residents to express interest in receiving information about the application process for this program. Signing up to receive information is not an application for the program and will not affect eligibility determinations.

New COVID-19 Committee on the City Council Block

On February 22, City Council voted unanimously to create a Special Issues Committee to hear items pertaining to the City's COVID-19 response and recovery. This committee is co-chaired by Council President Campbell and Councilmember von Wilpert with Councilmembers Whitburn and Elo-Rivera serving as members.

County

Petco Park Vaccination Site Closed Until At Least Wednesday, March 3

The Petco Park COVID-19 vaccine superstation is closed due to a shortage of doses. The site will reopen, at the earliest, on Wednesday, March 3.

Teachers, Law Enforcement, Food Workers on Deck

People who work in emergency services; child care; education; and food and agriculture (including grocery store employees) are now eligible to receive the COVID vaccine.

[Teachers' Vaccination 'Answer Key'](#)

The San Diego County Office of Education and the California Schools VEBA offers appointments reserved for transitional kindergarten (TK) through 12th grade teachers and staff through vebavaccinates.com.

The priorities are open schools, those planning to open, and then closed schools. Closed schools will begin with those in the fourth quartile of the [California Healthy Places Index \(HPI\)](#).

[School is \(Almost\) Back In Session for San Diego Unified](#)

On February 23, San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) announced that students are allowed to return to in-person learning beginning April 12. Students will also have the option to continue distance learning.

SDUSD also confirmed that teachers will return to the classroom on April 5 and will be vaccinated prior to then.

State

[Huge News on the Back-to-School Front](#)

On February 25, the State released its [equity-focused plan](#) to accelerate vaccinations for education workers. Per this plan, vaccines will be directed to counties and school communities weighted by equity, including the proportion of students from low-income families, English learners, and homeless youth. In turn, education workers will qualify for vaccine prioritization based on occupational health exposure – whether they are currently reporting or will imminently report in person.

This follows the State's [announcement](#) that beginning March 1, California will set aside 10% of all first-round vaccination doses for teachers, educators, and childcare workers to help with supply.

Finally, parents, teachers, and students can now track the status of schools reopening across California using the new, interactive [Safe Schools Reopening Map](#).

[Huge News on the Statewide Relief Front](#)

On February 23, Governor Newsom signed into law a package of immediate actions to speed relief to those suffering the most significant economic hardship due to COVID-19.

This package includes:

- **Direct relief to individuals and families** - \$600 in one-time relief to households receiving the California EITC for 2020, taxpayers with Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITINs) who were precluded from receiving federal direct payments, households with ITINs and income below \$75,000, households enrolled in the CalWORKS program, and recipients of SSI/SSP and Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI);
- **Immediate relief for small businesses** - \$2.1 billion for grants up to \$25,000 for small businesses impacted by the pandemic, and \$50 million of this total allocated for non-profit cultural institutions;
- **Fee waivers for heavily impacted licensees** - two years of fee relief for restaurants and bars as well as barbering and cosmetology individuals;
- More resources for critical child care – just over \$400 million in new federal funds to provide stipends of \$525 per enrolled child for all state-subsidized child care and

- preschool providers;
- **Additional aid for agricultural workers** - \$24 million for financial assistance and services through Housing for the Harvest – a program providing support for agricultural workers who have to quarantine due to COVID-19;
 - **Emergency financial relief to support community college students** - \$100 million in emergency financial aid for qualifying low-income students carrying six or more units and \$20 million to reengage students who have either left their community college studies because of the pandemic or to engage students at risk of leaving;
 - **CalFresh student outreach and application assistance** - \$6 million to support outreach and application assistance to University of California, California State University and California Community College students made newly eligible for CalFresh, and \$12 million in state funds to support associated county administrative workload.

You can track daily COVID case numbers, deaths, tests, and ICU capacity [here](#).

News from City Hall

Four Equity-Focused Amendments to Strengthen Short-Term Vacation Rental Ordinance Not Accepted, but Ordinance Passed

My short-term vacation rental (STVR) stance has been clear; the City should enforce our current municipal code, which does not define STVRs, therefore prohibiting them. However, given the ordinance proposed on February 23 had the support it needed to pass, my goal was to offer amendments that would strengthen the ordinance in its acceptance by Council, the community that it affects, and for city staff that will implement and enforce it.

The four equity-focused amendments I proposed were:

1. **A Fixed Cap Calculated at 1% of the Current Housing Stock for Tier 3 Licenses** - This ordinance gives up 1% of our housing stock -- in perpetuity. We work tirelessly to increase our housing stock and we must not give away future housing units, affordable or market rate, for visitor accommodations. Affordable coastal accommodations mean nothing if we don't deliver affordable housing.
2. **Limit License Terms to 6 Years** - As written, this ordinance awards lifelong 'golden tickets,' and that doesn't comport with a vision of equity. A reasonable term ensures that every property owner can have the opportunity to participate in the financial gains that short-term rentals offer. This must include owners who will now have clarity that whole-home rentals are legal, as well as, for those who aspire to someday be a landlord or a host.
3. **Expressly Provide Platform Enforcement** - Technology is constantly changing, and the City is unlikely to keep abreast of how and who abuses those changes. The ordinance must expressly provide the City the right to enforce against platforms that advertise or offer unregulated units.
4. **Include an Affordable Housing Preservation Fee for Tier 3 Licenses** - I formally requested that the Council President include an affordable housing preservation fee supported by a nexus study when the fees associated with the action are docketed. This fee was one of the formal recommendations outlined in the 2020 Preserving Affordable Housing in San Diego study adopted by the City Council last year and was proposed in the 2018 compromise to mitigate the affordable housing impacts that came along with adopting a STVR ordinance.

Each councilmember and the Mayor have spoken of the importance of equity. If we are serious, and I believe we are, we must look at every policy through that lens. This

ordinance was no exception.

While my amendments were not accepted by Council President Campbell, I will continue to push for equity and housing preservation when the Administrative Regulations return to full City Council.

[Saving the Planet One Survey at a Time](#)

The environment affects us all, so our environmental policy must reflect us all.

Help the City of San Diego by lending your input on what environmental justice issues should be included in a new Environmental Justice Chapter to the City's General Plan. The [survey](#) should only take a few minutes of your time and is available until March 31.

Getting it Done (Virtually) in District 1!

No Stopping Carmel Valley

After a resident alerted my Carmel Valley community representative Ricky Flahive about graffiti on a stop sign along High Bluff Drive, Ricky sprung into action by reporting the instance on the Get It Done app and working with staff to indeed get it done.

Thank you to the resident who reported the problem, the City staff who worked on the solution, and Ricky for helping turn an email into action!



The Crane has Flown the Coop in La Jolla

After five years of perching on a La Jolla property along Whale Watch Way, a long lost (construction) crane has finally been migrated out of the area. Thank you to my La Jolla representative Steve Hadley for working with code enforcement and Cal/OSHA to address this issue and return the crane to its flock.

Do You Know What's on the Docket?

If you are looking to stay informed on important issues coming to City Council, check out my weekly "What's on the Docket?" social media posts. Each week on my Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, I break down major items coming to Council, and provide insight on why they may be important to you.

Read this week's edition [here!](#)



What's on the Docket?

Your recurring run down of what's coming up in Council!

Community Representative Office Hours

If you haven't had a chance to say hello yet, stop by your community representative's Zoom "office hours" happening each week!

- Brian Elliott (belliott@sandiego.gov) will be hosting **Del Mar Heights office hours** from **10 – 11 a.m. on Wednesdays** ([link here](#))
- Kaitlyn Willoughby (kwilloughby@sandiego.gov) will be hosting **University City office hours** from **10 - 11 a.m. on Fridays** ([link here](#))
- Ricky Flahive (rflahive@sandiego.gov) will be hosting **Carmel Valley, Del Mar Mesa, and Torrey Hills office hours** from **11 a.m. - 12 p.m. on Wednesdays** ([link here](#))

- Steve Hadley (srhadley@sandiego.gov) will be hosting **La Jolla office hours** from **1 – 2 p.m. on Mondays** (link [here](#))

Stay Connected with District 1

To stay up to date on all district news and updates, make sure you follow me on Twitter, (@JoeLaCavaD1) Facebook, (@JoeLaCavaD1) and Instagram (@joelacava_d1) and invite your neighbors to sign up [here](#) to receive email updates like this one!

[Unsubscribe to Email News Letter](#)
