



**OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER CHRISTOPHER WARD
THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT**

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: January 13, 2020

TO: Councilmember Chris Cate, Chair

FROM: Councilmember Christopher Ward 

SUBJECT: 2020 Economic Development and Intergovernmental Relations
Committee Priorities

In response to your request for priorities for the Economic Development & Intergovernmental Relations Committee, I offer the following suggestions as we develop our work plan. I look forward to working with you to keep San Diego and our binational region competitive, invest in stronger neighborhoods, prioritize equity and proactive outreach to all communities, and develop new avenues for the economic empowerment of all San Diegans.

Economic Development:

- Review regional trends in economic and workforce projection data and their alignment with incentive programs, educational systems, and policies.
- Develop policies to attract, retain and expand businesses in San Diego's base sectors.
- Develop and expand policies to support small businesses and co-operative businesses.
- Review the City's efforts to expand small business funding opportunities including the Revolving Loan Fund Program, the Small Business Micro-Revolving Loan Fund and the Business Finance Loan Program.
- Receive regular updates on the City's current Economic Development Strategies and review approaches to foster inclusive economic growth and new business development focused in low and middle income communities.
- Prepare for the update to the City's Economic Development Strategy for 2020-2022.
- Review the updated Council Policy 900-12 (Business and Industry Incentive Program) and provide any appropriate updates to improve functionality, including incentives for businesses to open or expand in underserved communities.
- Work closely with government partners in the binational region to track the strength of the cross-border economy and identify opportunities for improved economic collaboration.

Improve the connection between small businesses and City Hall

- Take input from small businesses to ensure City services are provided in a timely, efficient way.
- Simplify City applications, permitting, licensing, and contracting opportunities. Seek a centralized location for these processes.
- Support local small businesses and entrepreneurs in accessing capital investment and other resources available to them.

Cannabis Equity

As our local cannabis industry continues to take shape, it's critical that we ensure that economic benefits prioritize communities which suffered from past criminalization of marijuana and related over-policing. The committee should continue its policy work to develop a cannabis equity policy framework which helps direct benefits from this emerging industry to the communities which were disproportionately impacted in the past.

Childcare Access

Finding licensed childcare for many families has become increasingly difficult, including for many parents who work for the City of San Diego. Childcare is a basic infrastructure element that should be pursued for children of city employees that are three months to five years of age. The Committee should continue working with stakeholders and other government agencies to identify policy and funding opportunities to make childcare more affordable and accessible, both for city employees and parents overall.

Public Banking

AB 857 was signed into law in 2019, giving municipalities the power to create their own public bank. Public banking offers many potential benefits to San Diego, and the committee should explore the necessary steps for identifying these opportunities going forward.

Monitor Expanded Capacity for Federal and State Grant Opportunities

The Committee should request an annual update regarding all Federal and State grant opportunities available, sought, applied for and awarded. This report should include the impact of additional grant staff and the collaboration with our region's elected leadership and lobbyists.

Intergovernmental Relations:

According to the Rules of Council, the Committee has jurisdiction over intergovernmental relations – including development of the City's State and Federal Legislative Platform, and the lobbying and advocacy on the City's behalf related to those approved legislative priorities.

Review reports from the following agencies and organizations:

- BIOCUM
- Center on Policy Initiatives
- City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture
- City of San Diego Small Business Advisory Board
- NAVWAR
- San Diego Convention Center Corporation
- San Diego Military Advisory Council
- San Diego Regional Airport Authority

- San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation
- San Diego Regional Task Force on the Homeless
- San Diego Tourism Marketing District
- San Diego Unified Port District
- San Diego Workforce Partnership

State and Federal Legislative Priorities:

- Update the City's state and federal legislative platform for 2020 to reflect the dynamic affairs in Sacramento and Washington, DC ensuring the City remains a champion for the civil rights and economic empowerment of all people.
- Work with the City's lobbyists and the local State and Federal delegations to pursue an impactful economic agenda for the region, including continued investment in the border region.
- Support the City's efforts to increase exports from the region and increase the amount of foreign direct investment into the region, in keeping with identified City goals for economic development.
- Propose resolutions for firm City positions, as necessary, in response to specific regional, state, or federal policies or legislation.
- Ensure regular, timely legislative updates from city staff and the City's lobbyists on priority state and federal legislative issues, including such issues as may arise which may impact the City's operations or the welfare of San Diegans.

Homelessness Resources

Homelessness has emerged as our most pressing regional challenge, and San Diego has received less funding per capita compared to most other metropolitan regions in the United States. While one-time funds in recent California State budgets have provided critical short-term investments, the Committee should work closely with city staff and our lobbyists to protect existing funding and advocate for continuing additional revenue to help implement appropriate services and housing programs to support the policies and approaches that have been proven to work in San Diego. Additionally, the committee should hear updates as appropriate on the programs initiated by the Council Select Committee on Homelessness in 2018, and programmatic updates on relevant items from the Regional Task Force on the Homeless.

Thank you for your consideration of these priorities. If you have any questions please contact my office at (619) 236-6633.

cc:

Allen Young, Director of Policy, Councilmember Chris Cate