




**COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM
STEPHEN WHITBURN
CITY OF SAN DIEGO**

DISTRICT 3

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 06, 2021

TO: Hon. Councilmember Monica Montgomery, Chair, Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods

FROM: Council President Pro Tem Stephen Whitburn 

SUBJECT: Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods 2021 Priorities

Thank you for seeking my input on the 2021 priorities for the Public Safety & Livable Neighborhoods (PS&LN Committee). I look forward to serving on the Committee under your leadership, and to working with the members of the Committee to address the public safety needs of our communities and improve equity and quality of life in San Diego. I have included my priorities for committee discussion/action below.

Community-Oriented Policing

It is imperative that relationships and trust be built between SDPD and our communities through communication, collaboration, and a commitment to transparency and justice. SDPD should develop and improve partnerships with community stakeholders and receive input from residents in a collaborative approach to problem-solving. This Committee should continue to receive updates from SDPD detailing community policing policies, strategies, and effectiveness.

This Committee should also explore strategies for ensuring diversity in recruitment and retention of police officers to ensure that they reflect the communities they serve, including low-cost housing programs that would better enable officers to live in these communities.

Police Accountability and the Independent Commission on Police Practices

With the passage of Measure B, the Committee should explore the best way to implement the new Commission on Police Practices in a timely manner, and in a manner which ensures that the new commission reflects the diversity of our city and the communities most affected by policing.

Evaluating De-escalation and Other Policies

This Committee should receive reports from Chief of Police on the effectiveness of the new policies on de-escalation and duty to intervene, as well as the Department's investment in training to implement these new policies.

The Committee should further discuss expanding alternatives to arrest for low-level offenses.

Continued Implementation and Monitoring of AB 953

The Committee should continue to receive updates on the analysis of data collected under the Racial and Identity Profiling Act and recommendations from the Center for Policing Equity, any racial bias complaints and their outcomes, and actions taken by SDPD to mitigate racial biases.

The Committee should also explore policies to address any policing practices that disproportionately harm BIPOC and LGBTQ communities.

Vehicle Towing and Impounding

The Committee should examine the City's towing and impounding practices and contracts to examine how they perpetuate systemic racism and exacerbate economic disparities insofar as lower income San Diegans are disproportionately impacted by these practices, regulations, and penalties.

Emergency Response Times

The Committee should evaluate ambulance staffing and deployment plans. It should receive updates on ambulance response times and whether they improve in the future under a new contract, particularly for neighborhoods with a history of being underserved. It should also receive updates on the impact of COVID-19 on response times.

The Committee should also receive information about response times for police non-emergency calls and explore how to reduce response times.

Monitoring Homeless Strategic Plan and Data Management Systems

The City should continue to monitor progress on the regional plan from the Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH), as well as continue to monitor homeless management data systems to ensure those in these databases can receive wraparound services in a timely manner, and allow for coordination and collaboration from various agencies.

The Committee should explore mechanisms to engage social workers to conduct the primary outreach to unsheltered individuals.

Homelessness and COVID-19

The Committee should receive updates on the City's efforts to address COVID-19 among our residents experiencing homelessness, including the effectiveness of the Convention Center shelter and efforts to find permanent housing for these residents.

Safe Parking Program / Vehicle Habitation Ordinance

The focus of the Safe Parking Program should be on providing safety and connecting residents experiencing housing insecurity with services, rather than criminalizing them. The Committee should receive updates on the Safe Parking Program, its enforcement, and the effectiveness of the program at providing a pathway to permanent or longer-term housing for participants.

San Diego Fire Department Wellness and Staffing Optimization

The Committee should receive an update on the status, outcomes, and needs of the San Diego Fire Department's wellness program. SDFD firefighters typically spend 48-72 hours on call and see increased rates of PTSD, depression, cancer, and other physical and mental illness compared to the general public. The Committee should also ensure SDFD receives proper funding and resources to ensure that there are enough floating firetrucks to be readily available in all areas of the City to optimize equitable emergency response times for all San Diegans.

Parks and Recreation Equity Funding

The Committee should receive continued updates from Parks and Recreation on how disparities in funding received by parks across the City have been, or are being remedied, and should explore methods to ensure all community parks in San Diego receive the same level of services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also made the need for and importance of open space in our communities clearer than ever. This Committee should review proposed changes to the Parks Master Plan and ensure that changes do not significantly deprioritize open space for underserved communities, especially those that experience higher levels of pollution and poorer air quality.

Neighborhood Code Compliance

The Committee should continue to receive updates from the Development Services Department to determine what additional resources are needed to ensure that the required standard of service is met citywide and that there is equity in code compliance enforcement.

Youth Issues

The Committee should explore the creation of community youth and young adult violence prevention programs that are evidence-based, offer counseling and mental health services, and provide youth development activities and job training programs.

The Committee should also explore the creation of a Transitional Age Unit within the Neighborhood Justice Unit that would provide age-appropriate and trauma-informed responses, support, and accountability mechanisms to secure pathways to success for young people.