




Councilmember Marni von Wilpert

City of San Diego • District 5

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 4, 2022

TO: Council President Pro Tem Monica Montgomery Steppe, Chair, Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods

FROM: Councilmember Marni von Wilpert 

SUBJECT: Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Priorities

Thank you to Chair Montgomery Steppe for the opportunity to share my priorities for the development of the 2022 Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Committee (PS&LN) workplan. I am honored to serve on this incredibly important and impactful Committee. I look forward to working with my fellow PS&LN Committee members and the public to move towards our shared goals of protecting our communities from wildfires, ensuring our first responders have the tools they need to perform their crucial jobs, increasing public trust with police, achieving community equity, and prioritizing government accountability in the year ahead. My priorities for the PS&LN Committee for 2022 include, but are not limited to the following:

PUBLIC SAFETY:

- **Implementation of the Commission on Police Practices (Measure B)**
 - The residents of San Diego have spoken with the passage of Measure B, calling for the creation of the Commission on Police Practices. In my FY 2022 budget priorities memo, I called for the necessary funding and staff to ensure the timely implementation of the provisions outlined in Measure B. I continue to support full funding for the Commission and support the Chair's efforts to bring forward an ordinance for implementation. Once the Commission is operational, the Committee should continue to receive routine updates regarding their activities.
- **Teenage Nicotine Addiction Crisis**
 - Mass-produced flavored tobacco products that closely resemble cigarettes are disproportionately popular among youth, pose many of the same public health problems, and have created an alarming rise in teenage nicotine addiction. I

request the PSLN Committee work with our City Attorney to bring forward an ordinance to address the rise in teenage nicotine addiction in the City of San Diego.

- **Gun Violence Prevention Through Implementation of the ENUF Ordinance**

- The Committee should request semi-annual updates regarding the enforcement and implementation of the ENUF Ordinance from the Police Department's Ghost Gun Task Force and City Attorney's Office.

- **Mental Health Support for Our First Responders**

- As our first responders work daily in crisis situations, and now on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PS&LN Committee should receive briefings from the Fire-Rescue and Police Departments' Wellness Units to better understand the current mental health programs available to our Police, Firefighters, and Lifeguards. This discussion should also include an evaluation of other jurisdictions' efforts to support first responders through mental health services.

- **Fire-Rescue and Police Recruitment and Retention, and Diverse Workforce**

- Ensuring our Police, Firefighters, and Lifeguards have adequate staffing and resources is essential to decrease emergency response times and ensure that those who protect and serve us are properly staffed and have the resources they need to keep us safe.
- Having diversity in our public safety institutions that aligns with the diversity of our community is essential. Our City must intentionally focus on diversity in recruiting and outreach programs, including the San Diego Fire Department's Girls Empowerment Camp. The PS&LN Committee should request regular updates from the Fire-Rescue and Police Departments to monitor and improve upon recruiting and community engagement.
- This Committee should also request to receive reports from the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief to learn more about their respective departments' training efforts to address implicit bias within our workforce.

- **Use of Force and De-escalation Policies; Community-Oriented Policing**

- In addition to the Police Department's renewed efforts to focus on de-escalation strategies, the Committee should support procuring additional resources to assist our police officers. For example, the Committee should request increased availability of PERT clinicians and Mobile Crisis Response Teams, among others, from the County of San Diego. The discussion should also include an evaluation of SDPDs training program that relates to use of force tactics when responding to mental health crises.

- The Committee should receive regular updates from SDPD detailing their current community policing efforts. By building trust and partnerships with community leaders and groups, our policing efforts can be enhanced with creative community problem-solving to develop solutions to keep our communities safe.
- **Restorative Justice and Criminal Diversion**
 - The Committee should engage in efforts to support the City Attorney’s Office and community courts, among others, to support criminal diversion programs. This will ensure that we reduce crime by allowing low-level misdemeanor offenders to have their cases dismissed in exchange for rehabilitation and community service.
- **Your Safe Place, A Family Justice Center**
 - The Committee should receive an update from the City Attorney’s Office regarding the programs and progress the Center is making to address family violence in San Diego. In particular, the Committee should receive updates on the effort to address gun violence through the “Gun Violence Restraining Order” (GVRO) program.
- **Office of Race and Equity**
 - The PS&LN Committee should receive updates from the Office of Race and Equity on the priorities and programs for the year ahead.
- **Wildfire Prevention and Resiliency**
 - As climate change-driven wildfires worsen each year, the City must work to prevent wildfires and ensure our City is prepared if another big fire like the 2003 Cedar Fire or 2007 Witch Creek fire were to occur. The Committee should invite regular briefings from our Fire-Rescue and Police Departments, and local Fire Safety Councils to ensure we are ready in case of an emergency.
 - We must continue the City’s brush management services that our residents rely on for the safety of their communities. Given the current state of climate change-driven wildfires in California, the City must remain vigilant in our efforts to reduce the fire dangers that our communities face. Regular brush management is one of the most effective ways of protecting and hardening both private and public structures from wildfire risk.
- **Citygate Studies Update**

- The Committee should receive an update from Fire-Rescue on the Citygate Associates studies. This should include an assessment and recommendations for operational needs of our Fire-Rescue Department. The Committee should track the progress of these recommendations and advocate for priority needs addressed in the reports.
- **City Surveillance Ordinance**
 - The Committee should continue in its efforts to enact a City surveillance ordinance. This ordinance is critical to ensure public trust and transparency in the City's efforts to introduce new technologies.
- **Oversight of Falck Emergency Medical Systems**
 - 9-11 response times are critical to public health and safety for San Diegans. This committee should continue to monitor and receive updates on Falck USA's performance as the City's ambulance service provider, including ensuring adequate coverage and response times for all our neighborhoods.
- **Emergency Medical and Mental Health Services**
 - To continuously improve on the services we provide to our communities the Committee should hold discussions with our Fire-Rescue Department about new and changing healthcare models. These discussions should include, but not be limited to, evaluating the opportunities that community paramedicine provides and identifying new and innovative ways to work with our County partners to improve the public's access to mental health services.
- **Regular Update from Psychiatric Emergency Response Teams (PERT) and Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRT)**
 - Our region faces a significant gap in mental health resources. The Committee should request regular updates from the County of San Diego's Psychiatric Emergency Response Team and the newly established Mobile Crisis Response Teams, which provide emergency assessments and referrals for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises.

LIVEABLE NEIGHBORHOODS:

- **Naloxone Accessibility**
 - Naloxone, sold under the brand name Narcan, is a nasal spray that can rapidly reverse an opioid overdose. We are in the middle of the worst opioid drug abuse crisis in American history and people across the City of San Diego are dying too often because of drug overdoses directly related to the fentanyl crisis. I request the

Committee prioritize a discussion about ways to offer Narcan at our City's facilities so that we can help save lives.

- **Parks Master Plan Implementation**

- The PS&LN Committee should receive updates from the Parks and Recreation Department regarding the implementation of the recently approved Parks Master Plan. This update should focus on the City's investment within our neighborhood parks to ensure that we are fully leveraging state and federal grants and equitably distributing resources to meet every community's needs.

- **Library Programming**

- The Committee should receive an update from the Library Department regarding programming availability, including access to internet services and community outreach and engagement opportunities post-pandemic. This discussion should include evaluating opportunities to increase internet access and library users through marketing campaigns and partnerships with local school districts, with special focus on underserved communities.

- **Deterring Street Racing**

- I request the Committee receive an update from SDPD to discuss ways to help deter street racing and other illegal gatherings in which groups of drivers take over intersections, city streets, stretches of busy freeways and/or parking lots to perform tricks with their cars. This discussion should include measures to offer alternate safe resources to help minimize and create legal means of celebrating car enthusiasm.

HOMELESSNESS:

- **Monitor & Support Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH)**

- I request this committee continue to monitor and support the RTFH strategic regional plan and receive briefings on how city-funded homeless service providers currently provide housing opportunities as they move away from VI-SPDAT criteria and towards coordinated assessment. This should include how those at risk of homelessness navigate these housing challenges and understand what steps are required towards securing permanent housing.
- I request this committee also continue to monitor and support the RTFH Ad Hoc Committee on Addressing Homelessness Among Black San Diegans, as Black people make up a disproportionate portion of people experiencing homelessness.

- Additionally, I request this Committee continue to monitor and support the City's outreach efforts to those experiencing homelessness with partners like People Assisting the Homeless (PATH).
- **Diversion, Substance Use, and Mental Health Programs**
 - The Committee should request an update from the San Diego Housing Commission, the SDPD HOT team, County Behavioral Health, and other stakeholders regarding the regional efforts to address substance use and mental health disorders among people experiencing homelessness. This update should include efforts regional partners are making to provide specialized treatment for substance abuse and mental health. Criminal and civil diversion programs, along with other mental health and substance abuse treatment programs, are vital first steps to ending the cycle of homelessness for many. These efforts aim to balance compassionate enforcement of the law while providing the support and resources people need.
 - This committee should also support and monitor the work of service providers focusing on addressing some of the highest impacted homeless communities, including transitional aged BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth.
- **Clean Syringe Exchange Program**
 - I request this committee continue to support Clean Syringe Exchange Programs throughout the City of San Diego and request annual updates on the status of the program and ways we can better uplift those battling with addiction. Clean Syringe Exchange Programs have been proven to better address public health crises related to Hepatitis C and HIV epidemics, which are exacerbated by the shared use of needles by injection drug users.

CC: Tiffany Harrison, Public Safety & Livable Neighborhoods Committee Consultant