



**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SEAN ELO-RIVERA
NINTH COUNCIL DISTRICT
M E M O R A N D U M**

DATE: September 25, 2024

TO: Charles Modica, Interim Independent Budget Analyst

FROM: Council President Sean Elo-Rivera, District Nine

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Priorities

Our vision of an opportunity for all drives everything we do in the District 9 office and our Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget priorities reflect this vision. These priorities are grouped under the categories of safety and opportunity for all, clean and healthy neighborhoods, and world-class services, as these are the goals that guide our work. I look forward to working with you and the City Council in the coming months to develop a balanced and equitable FY26 budget.

Cost of living consideration

By many metrics, San Diego is one the most expensive cities in the United States. This injustice cannot persist if we want San Diegans and the local economy to thrive. Our budget priorities are focused on the key drivers of cost of living, especially housing and childcare costs. Housing costs are often a household's greatest monthly expense, and research shows that homelessness is driven by housing costs. And childcare costs are forcing families to make difficult sacrifices that impact their children's opportunity and quality of life. Moving forward, our office will do all we can to address cost of living through the City budget.

Measure E – sales tax consideration

Understanding that the outcome of November's Measure E will significantly impact the outlook for the FY2026 budget, our priorities below closely mirror last year's priorities and what was ultimately funded in the FY2025 budget. The City should focus on maintaining current services and staffing until Measure E is decided. Our budget priorities update in January 2025 will account for the outcome of Measure E.

Safety and opportunity for all

Budget priority	Amount
<i>Housing and homelessness</i>	
Eviction Prevention Program	\$3,000,000
Housing Instability Prevention Program	\$5,800,000
Redevelopment of Old Central Library for publicly-owned housing, shelter, and services	\$5,000,000
Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Preservation Fund	\$3,300,000
LGBTQ-affirming shelter and services	\$2,035,000
Middle-Income First-Time Homebuyer Program	\$3,000,000
Age-friendly improvements at City-owned shelters	\$500,000
Multidisciplinary Outreach Team	\$1,100,000
Tenant termination notice registry	\$500,000
Tenant Protection Ordinance enforcement	IBA-identified amount
Full funding for safe parking sites	IBA-identified amount
Full funding for non-congregate and City-funded shelters	IBA-identified amount
<p>Homelessness Prevention for Foster Youth</p> <p><i>1 in 4 foster youth becomes homeless within 4 years of aging out of foster care. This is unacceptable. Philanthropy has offered funding for a program aimed at providing the financial and wraparound support necessary to prevent foster youth from the added trauma of experiencing homelessness. The City should provide supplemental support to reach full funding for the proof-of-concept program.</i></p>	\$500, 000
<p>Ensure shelter contracts honor workers</p> <p><i>The City should adjust its contracted bed rates to match other existing City shelter programs to ensure that our homeless service providers are well-equipped to effectively address homelessness while reducing turn over and increasing continuity of care.</i></p>	As determined by contract administrators

<p>Cash for trash and trash services</p> <p><i>The nonprofit community had operated an effective “Cash for Trash” program wherein individuals experiencing homelessness receive payment for keeping their community clean. The City should support community-based organizations in their efforts to sustain this program.</i></p>	Amount comparable to past programs
<p>Expanded Housing Navigation Center hours to 24/7</p> <p><i>The City should redevelop this property, but in the interim the City should fund 24/7 operations at the site.</i></p>	As determined by contract administrator
<i>Public safety</i>	
Youth Care and Development Program	\$1,000,000
No Shots Fired	\$250,000
Parks and recreation programming - Parks After Dark and Come Play Outside	\$500,000
Gun buyback program	\$100,000
<p>Safe Streets for All Team</p> <p><i>With dedicated FTEs and operational budget, the Transportation Department could stand up a ‘Safe Streets for All Team’ that is focused solely on implementing and maintaining quick-build safety enhancement installations.</i></p>	As determined by departmental staff
<p>Weed abatement and fire prevention</p> <p><i>This is particularly important in the District 9 neighborhoods whose canyons and hillsides present unique fire risks to homes.</i></p>	As determined by departmental staff
<i>Economic and community development</i>	
Small business enhancement program	Fully fund in accordance with CP 900-15
SD Access for All	\$1,000,000
Arts and culture funding - Penny for the Arts	9.52% of TOT revenue
Funds for childcare facilities	As determined by departmental staff

<p>Reducing Cost for Childcare and Afterschool and Care – San Diego Strong Start Initiative</p> <p><i>The San Diego Strong Start Initiative aims to create a comprehensive, City-funded program that supports San Diego families by providing affordable childcare and enriching after-school activities for children from infancy through their early teenage years. This initiative is designed to reduce the cost of living for working families while investing in the future of San Diego’s children by fostering their academic, physical, and creative development. The initiative consists of two programs: the Childcare Assistance Program and Youth Enrichment Program (see below).</i></p>	<p>See below</p>
<p>Child Care Assistance Network (SD-CCAN)</p> <p><i>This program is designed to provide immediate financial relief to low- and middle-income families struggling with the high cost of childcare in San Diego. By offering flexible subsidies and supporting various forms of care, the program ensures that all families have access to affordable, high-quality care for their young children.</i></p>	<p>\$5,000,000</p>
<p>Youth Enrichment Program</p> <p><i>The Youth Enrichment Program component of the San Diego Strong Start Initiative reduces cost-of-living for families while offering support to school-aged children and pre-high school teenagers by providing no-cost after-school programs that combine sports, recreation, academic tutoring, and creative arts. This program focuses on older children and ensures they have access to a safe, enriching environment that fosters their physical, academic, and social development.</i></p>	<p>\$2,500,000</p>
<p>San Diego Promise</p> <p><i>Launched by the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) in 2016, the San Diego Promise provides qualified students at San Diego City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges with a free community college education, offers grants to those who demonstrate financial need to offset the cost of textbooks and instructional supplies, and engages all students in a learning community promoting academic success. The City supporting Promise would increase the number of San Diegans benefiting from the program. This program can be coupled with the City’s successful Employ and Empower internship program.</i></p>	<p>\$549,231</p>
<p>Reestablish the City’s Cannabis Social Equity and Economic Development (SEED) Program</p>	<p>\$803,746</p>
<p>Establish Global Sports Event Fund (GSEF)</p> <p><i>Sports San Diego has proposed this fund to help stage and market sports events to drive economic growth.</i></p>	<p>\$2,000,000</p>

<p>Participatory Budgeting</p> <p><i>The City should pilot a participatory budgeting process. Projects eligible for the Climate Equity Fund or within the Capital Improvements Program could lend themselves well to the participatory budgeting process.</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Continue participation in Employ and Empower program</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Clean and Healthy Neighborhoods

Budget priority	Amount
Restoring Energy Independence Fund allocation, including funds for continuing the public power feasibility study	20% of gas and electric franchise bid payments
Fully fund the Climate Action Plan (CAP) <i>Prioritization should adhere to Council Policy 900-22</i>	IBA-identified amount
Climate Equity Fund	\$15,000,000
Increase funding for stormwater needs	\$100 million
Street sweeping <i>Recent operational changes to street sweeping affected services in many District 9 communities. Our office requests that service is increased and appropriate signage is posted in the Castle and Teralta neighborhoods.</i>	As determined by departmental staff
Sidewalk installations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadway from 40th St to 41st St • Toyne St from F St to Hilltop Dr • Delta St from 43rd St to Delta Park Ln 	As determined by departmental staff
Crosswalk at 41st Street and Market Street <i>An evaluation determined that this location meets the criteria established in Council Policy 20007 for a marked crosswalk. We request high visibility continental crosswalk markings with pedestrian activated flashing beacons and a horizontal deflection treatment.</i>	As determined by departmental staff
Tree planting and urban greening: Normal Heights <i>The southern portion of Normal Heights between 40th Street and Cherokee Avenue has suffered from a lack of maintenance of City-owned trees and has multiple areas that could benefit from the planting of additional trees and drought tolerant plants.</i>	As determined by departmental staff
Left turn signals on El Cajon Boulevard at Rolando Boulevard	As determined by departmental staff
Mt. Hope community sign	TBD
Security for Restrooms at Clay Park	Consistent with contracting standards

World Class Services

Budget priority	Amount
Maintain current departmental funding, particularly in Parks and Recreation, Library, and the Office of Child and Youth Success	No less than FY25 funding levels
Lifeguard FTEs – three marine safety lieutenants and one marine safety captain	\$92,456-\$111,613
North Pacific Beach and Ocean Beach Lifeguard Towers	As determined by departmental staff
<p>Procedural equity</p> <p><i>This City should continue compensating organizations and residents who assist in outreach efforts and seek additional opportunity to compensate the community for their engagement with the City.</i></p>	As determined by departmental staff
<p>Job-related benefits and policies for working parents</p> <p><i>The City should make permanent its childcare assistance pilot program and pursue other opportunities to better support our workers.</i></p>	As determined by departmental staff
<p>Code Compliance Officers</p> <p><i>Development Services Department should be provided full code enforcement staffing to meet the needs of our city, including addressing illegal dumping, brush management, and graffiti abatement.</i></p>	As determined by departmental staff
Expand and fully staff the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE)	As determined by departmental staff
<p>Continue contracting with organizations who provide restorative employment opportunities</p> <p><i>The City should increase investment in partnerships with organizations such as Center for Employment Opportunities and Urban Corps that provide employment opportunities for Opportunity Youth and our justice-Impacted community. Funding should support partnership with AFSCME Local 127 to make it easier for program participants to transition to unionized City careers.</i></p>	N/A

Existing Capital Improvements Program (CIP) project priorities

Parks and Recreation

- P20005 / Chollas Triangle Park
- P23003 / Mt. Hope Rec Ctr @ Dennis V. Allen Park
- Officer Jeremy Henwood Memorial Park improvements

Transportation

- AIH00001 / Installation of City Owned Street Lights
 - 800 block of 42nd Street in Mt. Hope
 - Central Avenue in Castle
- AID00005 / Street resurfacing and reconstruction
 - 33rd Street from K to Market Streets
 - 33rd Street from Lincoln Avenue to University Avenue
 - 34th Street at Spring Garden Place
 - 36th Street from El Cajon Boulevard to Orange Avenue
 - Edgeware Road from E. Canterbury Street to Adams Avenue
 - Home Avenue from Spillman Drive to I-805
 - J Street from 30th and 31st Streets
 - Mansfield Street between Copley Avenue and Adams Avenue
 - Menlo Avenue between University Avenue and Wightman Street
 - Orange Avenue from Winona Avenue to 52nd Street
 - Raven Street from Hilltop and Market Streets
 - Redwood Street from Chamoune and Menlo Avenues
- AIA00001 / Bicycle Facilities
- AID00007 / Bus stop improvements

Stormwater

- B16174 / Kensington North Storm Drain Replacement
- S22008 / Upper Auburn Creek Revitalization
- B16174 / Kensington North Storm Drain Replacement

PUD

- B19152 / College West Improv 1 (S)
- B19148 / College West Improv 1 (W)
- B19153 / College West Improv 2 (S)
- B19149 / College West Improv 2 (W)
- B20085 / College West Improv 3 (S)
- B20084 / College West Improv 3 (W)
- S15019 / Alvarado Trunk Sewer Phase IV

New Capital Improvements Program (CIP) project requests

Parks and Recreation

Colina Park Pool

Parks and Recreation Department is addressing the material condition of the Colina Park Pool through its operational budget, but should the repairs warrant capital investments a CIP should be created to support this crucial community asset.

Mt. Hope to City Heights Trail

The SR-94 reduces multi-modal community mobility by acting as a physical barrier. Caltrans has longer term plans for a bike path from Federal/Home to Market St. In the near term, we support a trail along an existing canyon, connecting 39th St (Mt. Hope) and Home Ave (City Heights).

Transportation

El Cajon Permanent & Extended Rapid Transit Lanes

The El Cajon Boulevard Rapid Bus Lane has been successful in decreasing commute times for MTS riders, slowing vehicles on a historically deadly corridor, and has not significantly impacted traffic flow. This project should be made permanent with red paint and extended to San Diego State University.

Extend Market Street Complete Street project west to I-5

The Market St, 47th St to Euclid Complete Street Project (CIP #S16061) is currently under construction, and will provide widened sidewalks, a concrete median, and separated bikeways when complete. To provide continuity through this corridor, we request a new CIP to continue this design through the full length of Market Street to provide a safe active transportation route connecting Chollas View, Mt. Hope, Stockton, Grant Hill, Sherman Heights, and Downtown San Diego.

Poplar/Pepper/Tulip/Midvale/Gateway Traffic Calming

The roads connecting Home Avenue to Fairmount Avenue through Fairmount Park and Azalea Park are heavily trafficked and often experience unsafe driving. We ask that traffic circles and Class II bike lanes or Class IV protected bikeways be installed along this corridor.

Teralta Park Capital Improvements

Engineering documents from 2005 show the designs for Teralta Park included a clock tower. We request that a CIP is created to improve Teralta Park and implement its original vision, including the construction of a clock tower.

Adams Avenue Complete Streets

Adams Avenue from I-805 to I-15 is a perfect location to implement a Complete Streets project. Constituents regularly request pedestrian enhancements, and cyclists must share the roadway with high-speed traffic. This project would also better connect the communities of North Park, Normal Heights, and Kensington.

Alley repaving

Paving unimproved alleys is among the most requested infrastructure investments from our constituents. We understand the City's resources are limited and priority should be given to regular streets, but the City should develop funding and maintenance plans to begin addressing the many unimproved alleys in our communities.

Stormwater

Drainage improvements at 47th Street and Dwight Street

This project would address drainage issues that often affect private property in an area badly needing improve stormwater infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure Project next to Harriet Tubman Joint Use Park

This new green infrastructure project would serve as both traffic calming and water recapture for the areas next to the Joint Use Park at Harriet Tubman Village Charter School. This should include bulb-outs at the corner of 68th and Saranac.

Cost savings

Fill staff vacancies

Vacancies create budgetary uncertainties, force the City to contract out core services, and delays key infrastructure projects, which drives up costs.

Hold contractors and lessees accountable

The City should hold lessees of public land accountable to the terms of their leases, including required lease payments, and hold contractors accountable to the outcomes they agreed to meet.

Expanded use of energy savings performance contracts

The City should continue pursuing opportunities for renewable energy and battery storage projects on City-owned facilities.

Address overtime spending

We must develop a more fiscally responsible system for the utilization of overtime and ensure that best practices are utilized consistently throughout the City.

Address inefficiencies in police personnel management

Police personnel often spend valuable time in performing duties that they are either not trained or ill-equipped for, such as addressing homelessness and enforcing certain code requirements.

In-housing services

In recent reports, the IBA and City Auditor recently considered “in-housing” certain public services and no longer relying on contractors. The City should pursue in-housing opportunities when the benefits outweigh the costs.

Revenue

Revenue from non-residents to support San Diego's cultural and natural resources

The City should explore charging for parking and services at Balboa Park, Mission Bay, and other key resources.

Cost recovery for City-provided solid waste management services

The passage of Measure B allows for the City to recover costs for solid waste management services. Implementation of recovery should begin with short-term rental properties that disproportionately burden City services.

Redevelopment of surplus land

The City is soliciting proposals for several surplus properties, and the revenues from such redevelopment should support public services and programs.

TransNet

The regional sales tax should be used to fund priority projects that address our climate crisis and historic inequitable distribution of City investments.

Payments relating to gas and electric franchises

City staff should ensure the City receive all payments required by SDG&E under the gas and electric franchises.

General Plan Maintenance Fund

This revenue should be used to further the goal of the General Plan and assist communities in addressing their housing and infrastructure needs.

Elective pay

With elective pay, an eligible entity (such as a local government) that qualifies for a clean-energy investment tax credit can notify the IRS of their intent to claim the credit and file an annual tax return to claim elective pay for the full value of the credit. The IRS would then pay the local government the value of the credit. The City should maximize this tax credit.

Grants

The City should pursue all grant opportunities it is eligible for, especially such grants that further our housing, homelessness, and environmental goals.

Ballot measure

The County's Measure G and City's Measure E would result in new revenues to the City.

SeaWorld Lease Payments

Despite touting record revenue, SeaWorld owes the City over \$12 million in unpaid lease payments. The City should more aggressively pursue payment.