



**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SEAN ELO-RIVERA
NINTH COUNCIL DISTRICT**

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: February 21, 2025

TO: Honorable Members of the Environment Committee

FROM: Councilmember Sean Elo-Rivera, Chair, Environment Committee

SUBJECT: 2025 Environment Committee Work Plan

Every San Diegan deserves to live in a clean and healthy neighborhood. The San Diego City Council Environment Committee is uniquely positioned to advance this vision, which is why I am excited to share our 2025 Work Plan as the chair of the Environment Committee. The Work Plan is based in part on your policy priorities, which were promulgated via memo in response to my call memo dated January 6, 2025. The public also played a role in shaping the Work Plan.

As per the municipal code, the Environment Committee's areas of responsibility are policy matters related to:

- Clean Water Program
- Water Management and Policy
- Energy (Solar, Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs, Green),
- Multiple Species Conservation Program
- Solid Waste Disposal
- Recycling
- Air Quality Standards
- Hazardous Waste
- Regional Parks
- Open Space
- Public Utilities
- Golf
- Utility Undergrounding
- Franchise Agreements
- Stormwater Management and Policy
- Climate Action Plan
- Climate Resiliency Plan
- Sustainability
- Wastewater Management and Policy
- Independent Rates Oversight Committee
- Pure Water (including Indirect Potable Reuse/Direct Potable Reuse, Recycled Water, Graywater)
- San Diego County Water Authority
- Shoreline Preservation
- Wildlife Management
- Environmental Services
- Environmental Policy

District 9 staff reviewed each submission from the committee members and public and grouped them by themes, which are represented in the Work Plan. It then aligned the public's priorities with those of the committee members to build a list of policy priorities. Not all priorities submitted by the public or committee members are reflected in the Work Plan, but the Work Plan is neither exhaustive nor binding. I welcome your and the public's feedback on its priorities throughout the year.

Attachments: (1) 2025 Environment Committee Work Plan

Attachment 1 – 2025 Environment Committee Work Plan

2025 Committee meeting information

Meeting Dates

Date	Time	Type
January 23	1:00 p.m.	Regular (<i>adjourned</i>)
February 13	1:00 p.m.	Regular
March 13	1:00 p.m.	Regular
April 17	1:00 p.m.	Regular
May 22	1:00 p.m.	Regular
June 12	1:00 p.m.	Regular
July 10	1:00 p.m.	Regular
September 11	1:00 p.m.	Regular
October 16	1:00 p.m.	Regular
November 13	1:00 p.m.	Regular

Note: the legislative calendar is subject to change and special meetings may be called. The public will be notified in accordance with Brown Act noticing requirements when meetings are added or changed.

Meeting participation

Access

The public may participate in committee meetings either in person or via Zoom Webinar. Information for viewing, attending, and participating in meetings can be found on the City Clerk's website and on each committee meeting agenda.

Non-agenda public comment

At each regular meeting, members of the public can provide non-agenda public comment. Non-agenda public comment is an opportunity to offer remarks on any topic relevant to the Environment Committee that is not being discussed as an agenda item. Speakers for non-agenda public comment will have 2 minutes to provide their remarks, although there will be no discussion among the committee members of the topics addressed during non-agenda public comment.

Public comment

Members of the public have an opportunity to comment on each agenda item. Depending on the number of speakers, each speaker will have 1-2 minutes to provide their remarks, which must be applicable to the item being heard. Following the conclusion of public comment, committee members will deliberate on the item. Instructions for providing public comment are included on the meeting agenda and are promulgated at the meeting.

Attachment 1 – 2025 Environment Committee Work Plan

Guiding Values

Informing the Environment Committee’s work and policy priorities is the following set of values.

Environmental justice

As defined by State law, environmental justice means “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Racist and prejudiced government decisions over the decades have resulted in San Diego’s lower income communities and communities of color being disproportionately impacted by pollution and associated health risks. Today, these communities are bearing the brunt of climate change. Environmental justice represents the intentional action to correct these inequities and ensure the input of San Diegans most impacted by climate change are considered in policies that affect them. Centering environmental justice is intended to eliminate disparities and provide opportunity for all.

Sustainability

UCLA defines sustainability as “the integration of environmental health, social equity and economic vitality in order to create thriving, healthy, diverse and resilient communities for this generation and generations to come.” Decisions by the Environment Committee should advance this vision for all San Diegans.

Economic and Worker Justice

Too often, environmental justice is assumed to be at odds with economic and worker justice. This need not be the case. The work of the Committee should prioritize the economic well-being of working families and the empowerment, safety, and dignity of workers.

Democracy

Meaningful public participation is essential to building public trust and to developing and implementing impactful public policy. The Committee invites all members of the public to engage in Committee work. This can be through public comment at meetings to inform decision making and hold committee members accountable. It can also be through phone or email communication with committee members’ staff or the committee consultant in between meetings.

Committee goals

Flowing from the committee’s principles are desired outcomes, which were identified by grouping community and committee members’ priorities by theme. Policies crafted and informed by the committee should result in improved quality of life for all San Diegans by:

- Advancing environmental justice
- Taking effective climate action
- Investing in infrastructure and services
- Advance economic and worker justice

2025 Environment Committee priorities

The policy priorities below are designed to achieve the Committee’s goals and align with its guiding values.

Advancing environmental justice

Climate Resilient SD implementation

Climate Resilient SD is the City’s comprehensive climate adaptation and resiliency plan, which will increase our ability to adapt, recover, and thrive in a changing climate. The Committee should receive an update on Climate Resilient SD implementation and will support policies that advance the objectives of the plan, to include addressing sea level rise and mitigating wildfire risk.

Support efforts to address the environmental crisis in the Tijuana River Valley

The air and water pollution in and around the Tijuana River Valley have significant environmental and public health impacts. In conjunction with its several regional partners, the City should continue to monitor the Tijuana River Valley and provide its support in the response to this crisis.

Monitor compliance of gas and electric franchise agreements

In 2021, the City awarded San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) the franchises to gas and electric utility services, which entitles SDGE to use the public right of way to deliver those services. In conjunction with the Franchise Compliance Review Committee, the Environment Committee will monitor compliance with the franchises and update the Energy Cooperation Agreement.

Addressing utility costs

High costs water, electricity, and gas are contributing to San Diego’s high cost of living. The Committee will prioritize policies that mitigate cost increases and promote competition.

Receive updates from the City’s Climate Advisory Board and Climate Resiliency Board

The Climate Advisory Board and Climate Resiliency Board were established to advise the City on environmental-related policies. The Committee should receive updates from both Boards on its priorities and outcomes.

Taking effective climate action

Climate Action Plan (CAP) implementation

Implementing the CAP is essential to achieving the City’s climate action goals. Goals and policies stated in the CAP include:

- Building decarbonization
- New building electrification
- Municipal fleet electrification
- Fewer vehicle miles traveled
- Waste diversion and gas capture
- Tree canopy and natural space restoration

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The Committee should receive an update on CAP implementation and prioritize policies that progress toward the City's CAP goals.

Review tree canopy and greenery programs and policies

Urban tree canopy is an important tool in mitigating the effects of climate change and is an environmental justice issue. The Committee should request staff to present on funding, programs, and policies to increase the urban tree canopy, especially in communities of concern.

Review land uses of and access to regional parks

The City's regional parks include Balboa Park, Mission Bay Park, Presidio Park, and Shoreline Parks. These are some of the finest public spaces in the region and country, yet many of the popular attractions within them are difficult to access without single-occupancy vehicles. Residents are also burdened with the costs of maintaining these assets, despite their being tourist draws. The Committee should prioritize policies that make City's regional parks more accessible, equitable, and sustainable, to include advancing key projects like De Anza Cove Revitalization.

Investing in infrastructure and services

Measure B (2022) implementation

Recovering costs for residential waste management services is key to advancing equity, the City's CAP goals, and more sustainable fiscal practices. The Committee will act on next steps regarding the implementation of 2022's Measure B.

Stormwater investments

The storms and resulting floods on January 22, 2024, made clear the impact of our deficient stormwater infrastructure. The Committee will receive its annual update from the Stormwater Department and prioritize policies and contracts that will improve the City's stormwater system.

Advance Pure Water and hold contractors accountable

Pure Water San Diego, which will provide about a third of the city's drinking water, is the single largest infrastructure project in the history of the City. The multi-phase project is expected to be completed in 2035. The Committee will receive an update of the Pure Water Project and consider Pure Water-related contracts and policies to advance the project. A key component of this is holding contractors accountable, ensuring they are not taking advantage of the City and ultimately raising costs for its ratepayers.