EL CAJON CITY COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2021

SEPTEMBER 16, 2021

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(September 16, 2021)

The adage says, "Don't Try to Do Everything — You'll End Up Accomplishing Nothing." This maxim applies to cities. There are far more needs in a community than there are resources to meet those needs. Given this reality, in January and February 2021, the El Cajon City Council engaged in a process of prioritizing the City's primary needs and then established sixteen goals to address those priorities. The priorities and goals were established by the City Council after conducting a series of workshops and meetings, while taking input from residents.

These priorities and goals make up the 2021 Action Plan. The Action Plan helps:

- o Establish a vision for the City;
- o Provide a clear and transparent message to the community of how limited resources will be allocated; and
- o Allows the City to be proactive rather than reactive.

This document serves as a quarterly update on the progress in accomplishing the ambitious objectives set forth in the 2021 Action Plan.

These priorities established by the City Council augment on-going and regular municipal services the City provides. Also, since the creation of the Council Action Plan, the City received approximately $30 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds with a charge to spend those funds by December 2024. In addition to the goals set forth through this plan, the City is working to complete ARPA projects. A summary of the ARPA spending plan is found on the last page of this document.

PRIORITY: COMMUNICATION/CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Communicating and engaging its citizens is a priority for the City. In the past few years, the City increased its social media presence and strives to provide residents with important information. For example, the City posted 84% more social media posts last year than previous years and the City launched its mobile phone app to better connect with its citizens. The Council Action Plan includes two goals that will help the City better communicate and help residents become more involved:

Goal/Objective	Status
1) Refine the City's communication/outreach/engagement plan by talking to community members about what information they want and how they want to receive it.	*In Process* – the Council received a presentation on September 14, 2021, regarding the City's communication/outreach/engagement plan. The presentation included information gathered from focus groups with various community groups. Council feedback was provided and refinements to the plan are underway.
2) Leverage technology and social media to promote the City, its events, and the community by relying on experiential marketing.	*Ongoing* – the City strives to enhance the City's social media presence through posts using video and featuring individuals. Additional work in this area will be completed as part of the City's communication/outreach/engagement plan.

PRIORITY: HOMELESSNESS

Over the past three years, the City has launched nine programs aimed at providing permanent and temporary housing for those experiencing homelessness. The Council Action Plan includes three additional goals:

Goal/Objective	Status
1) Increase enforcement on drug dealers supplying vulnerable homeless population.	***On Hold*** – current California laws and booking restrictions thwart the City's ability to focus law enforcement attention on those illegally distributing harmful drugs.
2) Coordinate homeless services and housing with cities in the East County region so that all jurisdictions in the region share the responsibility of providing housing and services to individuals experiencing homelessness.	***In Process*** – the City is on the committee to prepare an agreement between all East County cities and the County of San Diego to address different types of homeless shelter needs in the region. A first draft of the agreement has been prepared and is being reviewed by the various parties.
3) Continue to address and clean up homeless encampments and debris and include power washing into the cleaning process.	***Ongoing*** – since September 2018, the City has conducted 212 clean-up events, resulting in 1,089.25 tons of debris being cleaned from the City and 72 areas power washed.

PRIORITY: PUBLIC SAFETY

Providing a safe community is a top priority for the El Cajon City Council. The Council Action Plan provides three strategies to augment the City's current efforts:

Goal/Objective	Status
1) Implement technologies that could assist in the response and services provided by the City's Fire and Police Departments.	*In Process* – Accomplishments include: the El Cajon 2.0 Strategic Plan approved by Council, the Police Tech & Innovation group convened, recruiting for new Fire Tech group, issued first Request for Innovation for Technology as a Public Safety Force Multiplier. Results of the RFI will be presented to Council in October 2021.
2) Evaluate public safety staffing and equipment needs for the City as it grows.	*No Activity* – work on this objective has not yet started.
3) Launch a human trafficking/safety education campaign.	*No Activity* – work on this objective has not yet started.

PRIORITY: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is the lifeblood for any city. El Cajon has had significant success in this area over the past five years, but many opportunities remain un-tapped. The Council Action Plan includes the following two economic development goals to help strengthen the City's fiscal position, enabling it to provide more services to its residents:

Goal/Objective	Status
1) Develop a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan to address opportunities, marketing, incentives, and priorities.	*In Process* – on June 21, 2021, the City entered into an agreement with a consultant to help the City prepare an economic development needs assessment and strategic plan. The consultant's work is due to conclude and its findings presented to the Council in early 2022.
2) Analyze and change zoning policies that inhibit development.	*In Process* – On April 27, 2021, the Council directed staff to include language in the Zoning Code update allowing select freeway-oriented uses not expressly prohibited in the downtown master plan on properties north of Madison Avenue.

PRIORITY: ENHANCE IMAGE OF CITY (FOCUS ON CITY ENTRIES)

One of the City Council's goals is to enhance the appearance of the City, with a focus on its entryways. Two Council Action Plan goals that address this priority include:

Goal/Objective	Status
1) Implement a landscape/beautification plan around the City's main entries.	***In Process*** – the Council received a report on April 27, 2021, regarding entryway options and priorities. Based on the feedback from the discussion, staff prepared the scope and budget for a capital project to be included for adoption in the first quarter budget update of FY2021-22. Following adoption, several projects will continue to focus around the City's key entry points. To date, staff has completed the cleanup and the planting of medians and parkways at the following locations: Cuyamaca Street at the northern City boundary, Magnolia Avenue from Madison Avenue to Main Street, and Main Street from Magnolia Avenue to Claydelle Avenue.
2) Attract businesses at key entry locations.	***Ongoing*** – staff meets with property owners and developers about possible development/redevelopment projects throughout the City, including near key entrances into the City.

PRIORITY: MISCELLANEOUS GOALS

The El Cajon City Council Action Plan includes four additional miscellaneous goals for 2021.

Goal/Objective	Status
1) Consider an Election Integrity regulation.	*Complete* – a resolution approving the El Cajon Election Integrity was adopted by the Council on September 14, 2021.
2) Explore a process in which businesses can operate under modified zoning rules and explore policy opportunities to relax regulations post-COVID-19, permanently.	*Complete* – on April 13, 2021, the Council adopted a resolution allowing the continued relaxation of certain Zoning Code standards, including the allowance for temporary banner display and the no fee TUP, until December 31, 2021. On June 8, 2021, the Council adopted an ordinance eliminating the CUP requirement for outdoor dining and drinking areas on City sidewalks.

PRIORITY: MISCELLANEOUS GOALS (Continued)

Goal/Objective	Status
3) Explore modified sign regulations regarding flashing and/or lighted signs and windows.	*Complete* – the Council received an initial presentation on April 27, 2021. Additional information was gathered through business organizations, which was presented to the Council on September 14th. Staff is now determining if conditions change. If so, an agenda item with recommendations will be presented.
4) Continue to be an industry leader by promoting wellness of City staff.	*Ongoing* – in 2021, the City launched an alternative work schedule policy, a telework policy, secured a second fire station dog, trained executive staff on signs of suicide, provided training to all sworn police officers on stress indicators and PTSD, and updated gym equipment for City staff.

ALLOCATION OF AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS

PROJECTS	FUNDING
Assistance to Households & Businesses	
Street Beautification/Safety Projects	$5,000,000
Small Business Grant Program	$5,000,000
Cool Zones/Evacuation Site Upgrades at Recreation Centers	$3,000,000
Public Improvements (Economic Development)	$3,000,000
Park Amenities	$2,925,000
"Dollar Days" Recreation Program	$700,000
Social Worker Response Team Pilot Program	$500,000
Business License Assistance Program	$225,000
Economic Development Studies/Efforts	$200,000
El Cajon Foodie Fest	$150,000
COVID-19 Response & Mitigation	
Reimbursement for Mitigation Efforts	$1,000,000
Reduce Vaccine Barriers	$100,000
Replace Revenue & Reinvest in City Infrastructure	
Solar/Battery Project	$5,000,000
City Network/Cybersecurity/Video Equipment Upgrades	$1,300,000
Infrastructure	
Expand Broadband/Fiber Network	$2,300,000
TOTAL	**$30,400,000**