



**City of National City  
Summary of Councilmember Priorities  
For Initial Review in Budget Discussion February 21, 2023**

The table on the following page contains a list of the priorities shared by members of the City Council in their interviews. These will be discussed during the Council priority setting workshop scheduled for March 24, 2023. An initial discussion will take place during a budget session to be held on February 21, 2023.

**Summary List**

An overall summary list of policy priorities suggested by Councilmembers is as follows. Following discussion on March 24, Council direction will be provided on what will move forward as priorities in the upcoming fiscal year. After the workshop, staff will develop implementation plans and prepare budgets based on the Council priorities, including updating the Strategic Plan document.

- **Address future deficit and maintain a balanced budget**
- **Improve overall communication and outreach and tailor some communications by district**
- **Increase home ownership opportunities and the ratio of ownership to rental housing**
- **Improve permitting and development process for greater efficiency**
- **Address homelessness through partnerships with other agencies**
- **Interest in rent stabilization**
- **Enhance public safety through short- and long-term solutions to crime involving youth**
- **Maintain and improve infrastructure**
- **Provide and maintain basic City services that impact quality of life (e.g., cleanliness)**

***Organization of the Table:***

- The priorities noted by Councilmembers have been placed into the categories of the City’s adopted Strategic Plan. All categories within the Strategic Plan were cited as important priorities by two or more members of Council.
- Bullet points below each topic in the first column are explanatory notes provided by Councilmembers.
- The City Manager’s notes provided in the second column provide information for each of the categories to aid in discussions at the retreat.



Strategic Plan Category and Councilmember Notes Regarding Their Priorities	City Manager Notes and Plans for FY 2023-24
<p><b>1. Balanced Budget and Economic Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Address future deficit and maintain a balanced budget</b></li> <li>• Future deficit projected; need to diversify revenue</li> <li>• Understand the budget process (one-time vs ongoing expenses)</li> <li>• Understanding levels of service we can provide based on financial resources; use of funding for core city services</li> <li>• Potential new development by Plaza Bonita</li> <li>• Increase property tax through home sales; increase the percentage of for-sale housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be committed to revenue generation for General Fund without conditions</li> <li>• Focus on staffing levels for existing core service and stay competitive with meaningful and sustainable wage increases for our workers</li> <li>• CarMax/Cannabis should be completed in the near future with revenue the following approximately a year after that</li> <li>• Other initiative(s) such as Balanced Plan/Downtown revitalization, parcel tax or other revenue measure will take more time</li> <li>• Consider and analyze revenue measures for next two elections</li> <li>• Recognize that tax-exempt affordable housing projects do not create tax revenue but expand service demands; need to find a balance through policies, plans, programs, and projects that maximize resources for delivering services</li> <li>• Explore alternate funding sources through partnerships and grants</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Communication and Outreach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Improve overall communication and outreach and tailor some communications by district</b></li> <li>• Increase the level of engagement and connection to community</li> <li>• Connecting people in the community to local government; connect with our constituents post-COVID</li> <li>• How we communicate and relay information to residents and businesses</li> <li>• Tailor community outreach for feedback by district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish balance and consistency between staff and councilmember communications and outreach efforts</li> <li>• Recognize the resources and be realistic about staff capabilities</li> <li>• Utilize boards, commissions and committees; regional assignments, and staff liaisons</li> <li>• Determine best practices for restarting Neighborhood Councils or other engagement strategies (District Councils?); consider staffing and Communications Manager</li> <li>• Utilize analysts in each functional area to collaborate on communication materials provided to the public; establish staff working group</li> <li>• Develop quarterly management report for City Council that includes financial data, service requests, calls for services, and major priorities</li> <li>• Provide weekly staff updates to Councilmembers with department detail</li> </ul>



<p><b>3. Health, Environment, and Sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuation of existing projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are hiring a Health/Environmental Justice Planner that will provide staff support for a potential Health and Environmental Justice (HEJ) Committee.</li> <li>The HEJ committee can help guide policies and priorities such as amortization of non-conforming toxic uses</li> <li>San Diego Community Power (SDCP) will be rolled out to SDG&amp;E customers and we can work on other energy initiatives through them.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Housing and Community Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Increase home ownership opportunities and the ratio of ownership to rental housing</b> (build more townhomes, potential to use City property for home ownership development, incentives for developers)</li> <li><b>Improve permitting and development process for greater efficiency</b></li> <li><b>Address homelessness through partnerships with other agencies</b></li> <li><b>Interest in rent stabilization</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to enhance over the counter permits and streamline plan reviews for large projects and small, like ADUs.</li> <li>Will finalize our Focused General Plan Update (FGPU) in 2023 where we update housing element and related policies including House National City</li> <li>Implemented rent stabilization on mobile home parks in 2022 and can continue to address specific problems in the community regarding tenant protections</li> <li>Overall rent stabilization measure failed at the ballot box in 2020. State and region continue to expand renter protections and we need to keep up with best practices.</li> <li>Clarify our role and influence regarding homelessness on regional, state and federal initiatives and maximize outcomes for National City</li> <li>Transition HOT to HOME outreach and remain persistent in addressing neighborhood concerns.</li> <li>Support Navigation Center and other high impact programs provided by service providers</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Parks, Recreation and Library</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide these important city services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider staff options to help define after school programming and/or youth development</li> <li>Recognize what school and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are already providing</li> <li>Finish plans and secure funding to build park improvements at all three parks</li> <li>Develop a vision for a “youth development center” at Kimball Park that incorporates the rebuild of the Kimball Rec Center.</li> <li>Strengthen partnerships with local schools</li> <li>Maintain “Age-Friendly” community and intergenerational programming</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Public Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Enhance public safety through short- and long-term solutions to crime involving youth</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM) reports have been presented to City Council and will guide priorities for Police and Fire</li> <li>Recruitment pipelines/programs (youth development)</li> </ul>



<p><b>7. Transportation Choices and Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maintain and improve infrastructure</b> for the enjoyment of community; need sufficient funding</li> <li>• <b>Provide and maintain basic city services that impact quality of life</b> (i.e., trash cans, lighting, roads, parks)</li> </ul>	<p>Consider infrastructure through the separate components we maintain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streets/Pavement: update PCI and prioritize resources accordingly.</li> <li>• Address street lights and best practices for signals and traffic control</li> <li>• Sewer/Wastewater: Implement master plan and ongoing maintenance</li> <li>• Storm water: Identify funding sources and prioritize projects</li> <li>• Parks: Finalize funded projects and continue assessing needs</li> </ul>
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**Footnote from Chief Tellez:**

The Police Department continues to prioritize our engagement with community youth. In California, several changes have occurred that have reduced penalties for youth and/or decriminalized crimes normally committed by youth. While we continue to enforce the law by arresting those that commit crimes, it is essential that as laws change, we continue to change and adapt as well. The Police Department has taken the following proactive steps to engage youth and reduce youth crime:

1. Increased the number of School Resource Officers (SRO) in the elementary and secondary schools, from 2 to 3 officers.
2. The SROs are providing curriculum instruction at the elementary schools regarding bullying, general safety and cyber bullying. The SRO presence at the school provides a positive law enforcement role model. Their presence at the school is also intended to deter crime.
3. Prostitution has once again become a problem in our city due to a recent change in the law that decriminalized solicitation for prostitution. Unfortunately, young people are forced to work in this industry against their will. In order to identify victims, the department works in collaboration with the county Human Trafficking Task Force (HTTF) to identify victims and arrest those that prey on them.
4. The police department has a long-standing working partnership with South Bay Community Services (SBCS) to provide counseling and diversion services to youth that commit crimes. Our diversion program identifies youth with minor criminal violations that can benefit from counseling and community services versus custody. SBCS provides wraparound services to youth and their families to address the problem holistically with the goal of steering youth from committing additional crimes.
5. The department has established partnerships with community youth centers that service At Risk Youth and their families. Officers not only give of their time to work with youth as volunteers, but officers also frequently conducted presentations regarding gang awareness, cyber safety, and law enforcement careers. The presence of officers in these youth centers not only provides a positive role model but also provides engagement opportunities to build meaningful relationships with youth in our community.