



March 2013 Newsletter Message

Dear Neighbor,

In my last newsletter message, we focused on Evergreen Village as a model Urban Village of the future. While economic development, which includes job creation, is one of my top priorities, an even more immediate priority is responding to our community's concerns about public safety.

Between January 17 and 24, 2013, the City contracted to have a random Budget Priorities Survey conducted, as the City has done for the past seven years. Their use of a Random-Digit-Dial (RDD) sampling methodology allowed the greatest number of residents an opportunity to participate in the survey. I hope you were one of the fortunate community members to be able to give your feedback during the survey. The results and conclusions from the survey give us an idea of the community's top priorities and help us to make the tough decisions we have to make during the upcoming, annual budgeting process.

The conclusions drawn from the survey are not surprising, but they are telling. The most telling conclusion from the survey indicates residents of San José are still concerned about the City's budget but that they feel more positive about the local economy and public safety in the City. This is a good sign and one that gives me hope we're moving in the right direction. The respondent's perception of public safety also included enthusiasm for increasing public safety expenditures.

Hiring additional police officers is the clear number one priority of most residents in the survey. In this, I agree. I also agree with the majority of residents who support increasing the pay of experienced police officers to increase retention rates and to maintain staffing levels. In addition to this, I also have supported and will continue to support utilizing civilian staff in the police department where we can allow sworn officers to return to on-the-ground police work. Working with our new Acting Chief of Police, Larry Esquivel, and Acting Assistant Chief, Eddie Garcia, we have begun meeting to discuss strengthening the partnership between the police department, the staff of the Foothill Division that services our district, our community, and all the tools we have on hand, such as the online groups in Evergreen using Nextdoor.com.

I am very pleased with Chief Esquivel's leadership vision and his commitment to not just maintain a status quo with the department while we search for the next Chief of Police, but his commitment to move forward and implement ideas that will address morale issues within his department as well as increase community policing strategies. The Foothill Police Division whose service area includes Evergreen has a new Acting Captain. Lt. Brian Ferrante has taken command of the Foothill Division and my meetings with him have been very productive while we have discussed ways for my office to work closely with him and his team. Lt. Ferrante is already fast to work on revamping the Foothill Division webpage to become more interactive for users to communicate with the division police patrol and the department. Although the Foothill Division webpage is still under construction, please take a minute to visit it and save it as a favorite on your computer: www.sjpd.org/BFO/Foothill.asp and we're also featuring this link on our newsletter and home page of the D8 website. Our new Captain has also articulated the priorities of his division as the following:

1. Reduce gang violence
2. Address community concerns regarding "Quality of Life" issues (narcotics traffic, graffiti, abandoned vehicles)
3. Investigate traffic related complaints and concerns

4. Maintain strong partnerships with community and City based organizations to address the above concerns

During my meetings with our police leadership I shared the concerns of our residents but also several messages of praise for the great work being done by members of our police patrol with the limited resources at hand. It was conveyed to me from some neighbors that during a burglary investigation of their home, Officer Robert Dale, a member of the Foothill Division Team, took ownership of their case and worked with them to find and arrest several suspects in the case. It was through a combined effort of the victims using technology to capture an image, share it on their Nextdoor.com neighborhood site, and forward possible leads to Officer Dale. It was committed follow up on the leads by Officer Dale that led to the arrests. This is the type of cooperation that leads to a safer community for all of us.

On **Wednesday, April 10th from 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at the Carolyn Clark Elementary School's Cafeteria (3701 Rue Mirassou)** I will be hosting a District 8 Community Forum with our Acting Chief of Police, Larry Esquivel, our Foothill Division Acting Captain, Brian Ferrante (attendance dependant on Division Command needs at time of meeting), and Sandra Avila from Crime Prevention to hear community concerns, share potential solutions with them, and elicit feedback and support. Please consider attending this important event and be sure to invite your neighbors! We will need your help to make a safer community. Together we can make a difference.

We expect a lot of our police officers and they want to serve their community well. The officers can experience significant stress as they attempt to balance customer service with managing a large call volume. So, it is especially encouraging when members of our community reach out to commend our officers for their continued dedication and professionalism. Thank you to those of you who have communicated your appreciation for the work that our officers do for our community. We would like to continue that communication of appreciation for service by encouraging community members to help recognize officers who have demonstrated exceptional service by going to the compliments page of the San Jose Police Department website: www.sjpd.org/COP/IA.html.

New District 8 Staff Member

I'm very pleased to welcome our new District 8 staff member, Jennifer Gonzales, to our team. Jennifer is a graduate of San Jose State University with a major in Political Science and a resident of District 8. She previously interned for Vice Mayor Madison Nguyen and spent a summer in Honolulu, Hawaii interning for Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard. Prior to joining District 8's team, she worked for the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. Jennifer is a big Harry Potter fan and enjoys sporting games. She spends most of her spare time with her family and friends and currently volunteers with local non-profits.

As a Council Assistant, Jennifer is responsible for a range of policy issues and neighborhood issues. This includes the advocating for the TOCKNA neighborhood, and focusing on issues and activities related to education, after school programs, and community centers. She is also our office coordinator of the annual Day in the Park Festival, the Great American Litter Pickup, the Senior Health Fair and other district-wide community events.

If you need assistance or have any questions, please contact my office at (408) 535-4908 or by e-mail at district8@sanjoseca.gov.

Regards,



Councilmember Rose Herrera