



# Councilmember Marcus Bush

"Leading with Integrity. Serving with Heart"



Issue #04 | October 2024

Serving the City of National City

## What the MSA Does Not Include

### Full cost of Services:

- Facilities are not apportioned
- Training is not included
- Specialized Equipment not recoverable
- Standby Services, added personnel
- Homelessness Services not paid
- Sewer and stormwater not part of the MSA
- Code enforcement not part of the MSA



## Fair Compensation: National City Publishes White Paper Reveals How the Port Needs to Close the Gap in Underfunding Our Public Safety Personnel

At the City Council meeting on October 1, 2024, the City of National City presented an eye-opening report highlighting the extensive services our City provides to the San Diego Port Authority and the public safety risks that port operations pose to our community. The report, prepared by consultant Ralph Hicks in collaboration with our Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments, detailed a proposal for National City to receive fair reimbursement from the Port to cover these essential services.

The "Municipal Services Agreement (MSA) White Paper" starkly revealed that while our City incurs an \$8 million annual cost to provide critical services to the Port, we currently receive only \$1.3 million in reimbursement. Just a fraction of what's needed for adequate public safety and risk management. This shortfall places an undue burden on National City, forcing our community to subsidize vital services that the Port relies upon daily.

National City Firefighter Union President Jeremy Day powerfully described the serious and immediate risks our public safety personnel face every day, highlighting the impact of this funding gap on the safety of our entire community. "We're prepared to meet the challenges of a port filled with various hazards from lithium-ion batteries powering electric vehicles to other volatile chemicals, because of the city's support, not the Port's. This city is funding our department's training and equipment, and we do it proudly," Day emphasized, underscoring the need for increased financial backing from the Port.

The Port Authority has frequently resisted fair compensation claims, citing state law restrictions on "gifts of public funds" and using a restrictive interpretation of the State Constitution and an Attorney General's opinion to limit compensations for non-property tax-generating parcels. While the Port has pledged to consider "creative, data-driven approaches" to establish a more equitable baseline rate, past efforts have consistently fallen short, leaving our community to bear the brunt of these costs.

## Other Cities TOT Revenue from Port leaseholds 2021

- San Diego \$53.6 Million
- Chula Vista \$0.4-Gaylord estimated \$599 million over 40 years.
- Coronado \$4.1 Million
- Imperial Beach \$0
- National City \$0



Historically, the Port’s commitment to addressing these concerns has been minimal. In 2010, under the influence of legislative reform efforts led by Former State Senator Denise Ducheny and modeled after community benefit funds at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, the Port of San Diego established the Maritime Industrial Impact Fund (MIIF). However, this fund was created as a way to sidestep more comprehensive reforms, and it remains severely underfunded. Less than half of the \$1.3 million baseline total that we receive from the Port even reaches the fire department’s budget—a far cry from what’s necessary to protect our citizens and first responders.

National City is holding the Port accountable to its promise to collaborate on establishing a fair compensation framework. We are steadfast in our demand for a true partnership that genuinely supports our community and ensures that our public safety professionals receive the recognition and resources they deserve. National City cannot accept a partnership that skirts its obligations under the guise of legal technicalities.

The White Paper report underscores the troubling imbalance as our City continues to subsidize public services in favor of the Port, particularly the storage of lithium-ion batteries and other hazardous materials are on the rise. Ensuring our civil workers’ safety is paramount, and we look forward to meaningful discussions with the Port to establish common ground on fair compensation.

### Changes in Circumstances:

- EV cars, trucks and charging stations create greater conflagration risks.
- Maritime Clean Air Strategy changes risk profiles.
- U.S. Border = Higher risk of homeland security threats.
- Increases in homelessness.
- MSA does not cover full costs of services provided to the Port.



National City deserves fair and adequate support from the Port, and I am committed to seeing these negotiations through to a successful conclusion that prioritizes the well-being of our community.



*Randa Coniglio is the Acting President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Port of San Diego*

*“We have only just begun to analyze this interesting new 'unconstrained approach' to the numbers and costs associated with your provision of services to the Port tidelands.”*

## Summary

- The City expends approximately \$8,848,107.00 per year protecting Port Assets.
- The current base rate for City reimbursement is \$1.3 adjusted at 3% annually.
- MSA is event driven instead of enterprise driven.
- The event/service call driven MSA approach results in significant losses to the City each year.
- Reimbursement based on the full cost of each service enterprise will help make the City whole.
- Recommend that staff appear before the Board of Port Commissioners and present these conclusions and work with Port staff to reformulate the MSA approach to capture the full costs associated with protecting port assets.



Every National City City Council Meeting is archived and available to watch online

[City Council Meeting Video Archive](#)

*“It always seems impossible till it’s done.”  
-Nelson Mandela*



## Hotel Workers at Hilton San Diego Bayfront Approve Contract, Ending Strike

Unionized workers at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront have ended a 38-day strike after ratifying a new four-year contract with the hotel. Represented by Unite Here Local 30, 94% of the workers voted in favor of the contract, allowing them to return to work. Over 700 workers had gone on strike starting September 1, following stalled negotiations and the expiration of their previous contract on August 31. The main issues were wage increases and improvements in working conditions, including workload adjustments and updated scheduling policies. While specific contract details were not disclosed due to a non-disclosure agreement, Unite Here Local 30 described the new agreement as “life-changing.” Notable changes include wage increases for all workers, enhanced pension and healthcare funding, updated staffing and workload policies, and the introduction of a new anti-harassment policy. The contract also recognizes Juneteenth as a holiday and improves PTO policies. The contract is set to expire in 2028.

Union president Brigette Browning highlighted the benefits of the new staffing guidelines, which will add extra staff during peak times, reducing workloads for senior employees and offering more hours to newer workers. This strike was part of a broader labor movement across the U.S., where hotel workers in several cities have gone on strike. Although another strike is possible at the Hotel del Coronado, Browning remains optimistic about reaching a settlement there, given the recent resolution at the Hilton.

This 38-day strike marks the longest hotel strike in San Diego's history, surpassing the 2018 strike at the Westin San Diego Gaslamp hotel, which lasted 35 days.



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*-Nelson Mandela*



## Surveys Will Be Done to Review Affect of Tj River

### "CDC Surveys Tijuana River: Assessing Health Impacts of Persistent Pollution"

The CDC is launching a door-to-door health survey in South County, San Diego, to assess the impact of sewage pollution from the Tijuana River Valley on residents' health. The survey will target 210 randomly selected households affected by noxious odors and pollutants stemming from sewage spills stemming from the Tijuana River. Residents have reported health issues such as chronic coughs and nausea due to polluted air and water, though local officials have not noted a rise in reportable illnesses. The data collected will help identify health gaps and inform future public health actions. The results are expected to be shared by the end of the year. We will continue to follow this story to keep you updated on this ongoing situation. *Reference: Tammy Murga, "CDC set to launch door-to-door health survey in South County communities impacted by sewage crisis," San Diego Union-Tribune, October 16, 2024.*



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## NCFD Trunk or Treat

**Halloween**  
Join us for a fun & family friendly afternoon

**TRUNK OR TREAT**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20TH**

**NATIONAL CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
343 E 16TH ST, NATIONAL CITY 91950  
12 NOON TO 4:00 PM

**HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTESTS FOR ALL AGES**  
**MUSIC - FOOD AND DRINKS**

For more information contact : Jovita @ 619 227-4588

United Lowrider Coalition  
SAN DIEGO

National City Fire Department (NCFD) and Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU) Nursing Program will be providing free Flu shots during the event. Adults and Children welcome.

The National City Fire Department’s Trunk or Treat was a great time! From the amazing costume contest to all the fun, food, and music, it was a perfect day with friends, family, and our incredible community! Seeing everyone come together in creative costumes made the event even more magical! Huge thanks to the United Lowrider Coalition, National City Fire Department, and PLNU for making this day so special, plus those free flu shots!



# Granger Volunteer Event

We had an amazing turn out at our Granger Hall Community Center clean up volunteer event! It was an incredible opportunity to make a positive impact and breathe new life into a cherished community space. Volunteers gathered to lend their hands to everything from beautification projects to small renovations, working as a team to refresh and reinvigorate the hall.

If you haven't visited Granger Hall lately, it's a perfect time to stop by. The community center isn't just a building; it's a place where neighbors come together, celebrate, learn, and grow.



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## Re-Pavement on Stockman Street

I've been out in our community, knocking on doors and listening to resident concerns and one of the top issues that one neighborhood had was the recent changes to the Stockman and Sweetwater Rd intersection—particularly the No-Turn-On-Red sign and the concrete barrier. When I forwarded those over to our City staff, they acted swiftly to fix it.

Our public works crew removed the No Right Turn on Red sign and re-striped the southbound Stockman lanes to restore the right turn only lane onto Sweetwater Road. As far as the concrete barrier blocking the right turn lane onto Stockman from Sweetwater Road - that will take more time and study from our engineers to make sure removal benefits public safety, but our Mayor and Council are committed to working with staff and the community on fixing it.

I fully support the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and installing bike lanes and traffic calming. But in areas like this where the design is flawed and causes more safety issues for residents, I support making changes. Moving forward it's also important that we as a City have better communication and outreach to the affected neighborhoods - which hadn't happened for this specific project.

Big shout-out to our Public Works Director Steve Manganiello for cutting through the red tape and taking swift action to address residents' concerns! I also want to recognize our public works employees James and JC who worked on the improvements over this past weekend.







## Listen to My New Podcast The Local Voice: Policy and Progress with Marcus Bush!

Tune in and join the discussion—your voice matters!

You can listen to our podcast on Spotify, Youtube, and Apple Podcast.



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