

Sunset Cliffs Natural Park Council
3770 Pio Pico, San Diego, Ca 92106

September 20, 2020

City of San Diego
Andrew Field
San Diego Park and Recreation Center
202 C Street MS 35
San Diego, Ca 92101



Dear Andrew Field:

Since the Sunset Cliffs Natural Park's Hillside Improvement Project(HIP) has been completed and the Lower Parking Lot will soon be reopened, now is the ideal time to reset use by re-evaluating and enforcing policies which address both public safety and preservation of this beautifully restored natural park. **Therefore, the Sunset Natural Park Council(SCNP) is sending this letter to reiterate the motions sent to you previously regarding Park policies and enforcement and request immediate action combined with the reopening of the Hillside Section!**

As reported through the years, Sunset Cliffs Natural Park(SCNP) is not only a unique and well loved regional coastal park which attracts visitors seeking a quiet, contemplative, restorative resource , it also attracts those who consider it an unsupervised, isolated location, especially suitable for nightly and weekend illegal drug and alcohol use, graffiti, gang activity, etc. As social media has spread the word that folks can do whatever they want at Sunset Cliffs, the problems have significantly escalated.

When the City opened SCNP during the coronavirus pandemic before any other regional and shoreline parks, Sunset Cliffs was inundated with people who were, understandably, eager to get outside. Unfortunately, social distancing, masks, etc. are almost nonexistent. It is nightly party time throughout the Park, and especially on the pocket beaches, where folks are unwittingly endangering themselves and others by setting up their bands directly under overhanging cliffs, and using boom boxes which add to vibrations on the unstable cliffs. Neighbors report misbehavior including folks urinating and defecating on the Park, the streets, and neighboring properties. **Social media continues to spread the word that the Park is open and unsupervised. When the following recommendations are effectively implemented, social media will help spread the word!**

2020 SCNPC recommendations sent to you previously include:

- "Increase enforcement throughout SCNP, including at pocket beaches, canyons, and caves." Motion approved 6/1/2020 (14-0-0)
- "Establish a curfew for the Hillside Section of SCNP from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise." Motion approved 6/1/2020 (12-1-1)
- "Ask the City to research the need for additional porta potties at SCNP." (Motion approved 6/1/2020 (12-0-2)
- "Due to increased activity at Sunset Cliffs Natural Park, increase in calls for emergency services including cliff rescues, loud parties with alcohol and drug use, loud music and yelling, and the trash including feces and broken bottles left behind, recommend that street parking on the west side of Sunset Cliffs Boulevard, and the parking lots in the Linear Section of Sunset Cliffs Natural Park be closed from two hours after sunset until one hour before sunrise. Included in this closure would be any pocket beach accessible via the linear park." Motion approved 7/6/2020 (7-6-2)

- “When the lower parking lot in the Hillside Section of the park is reopened, move portable restrooms to their former location. Signs should be posted to direct park users to the portable restrooms. The former location was the flat area at the existing southeast corner of the lower parking lot. This is temporary until such time as the new lower parking lot plan is (approved) and implemented.” Motion approved 2/3/2020 (19-0-0)

Please note that 1) We recognize that our requests for the Hillside and Linear Sections are different, both in hours noted and curfew vs. closure. These differences are deliberate. 2) We also understand that the request for closure of street parking will need to be addressed by the Streets Department.

At the September 14, 2020 SCNPC meeting, we learned from Jeff Wooley's report that the Hillside Improvements Project(HIP) is essentially complete and that acceptance of the project by the Park and Recreation Department is anticipated quite soon. The report also stated that the Lower Parking Lot will reopen soon; the Upper Parking Lot is already open.

The imminent reopening of the Lower Parking Lot provides the ideal opportunity to implement these much needed recommendations! Please also include the recommendation to lock the entry gate from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise, a recommendation that the SCNPC has repeatedly made through the years. We suggest using any available funds to pay for locking and unlocking the entry gate including discretionary funds from the mayor, council member, or SCNP Fund.

In summary, the SCNPC recommends immediately addressing these recommendations! When the Hillside's Lower Parking Lot is opened for use, the curfew should be official, enforcement provided, sufficient porta potties, and provisions to lock and open the entry gate at Ladera Street from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise. It will not only help reset appropriate use at SCNP, but be cost effective to combine the to be enforced policies with the completion of the HIP and Lower Parking Lot re-opening!

The SCNPC looks forward to your quick response to this important request! Please contact Gene Berger as soon as possible. Thank you!

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:



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Gene Berger, Chair

Sunset Cliffs Natural Park Council

CC: Mayor Kevin Faulconer
Councilmember Jennifer Campbell
Council Aide Joshua Coyne
Elizabeth Schroth-Nichols
Lin Keiser-Hua
Jeff Wooley
Dan Daneri
Vincent Paniagua