



DIANNE JACOB
VICE-CHAIRWOMAN
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: May 14, 2008

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: INCREASING PUBLIC SAFETY IN AND AROUND THE SAN DIEGO RIVER IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA (DISTRICT: TWO)

SUMMARY:

Overview

On May 4, 2008, there was an alarming and potentially tragic incident at Cactus Park in Lakeside. A registered sex offender attempted to kidnap a 9 year-old Little Leaguer. Luckily, the boy was let go after his yelling caught the attention of parents and coaches, prompting them to come to his rescue. The sex offender then tried to flee into the nearby riverbank, but fortunately a law enforcement officer apprehended him soon after.

The San Diego River is one of our region's forgotten jewels, and regrettably, the overgrown brush in and around the riverbank has become a safe haven for transients and criminals. Something needs to be done immediately to clean up this area to ensure the future safety of people attempting to enjoy areas around the San Diego River.

Today's action will direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to work with the property owners along the River, in particular the area adjacent to Cactus Park, to clear the riverbank of overgrown brush, remove encampments, and to incorporate a larger and more prominent trail in the County Trails Program. This would increase visibility and clear the area of places for criminals to hide. In addition, it directs the CAO to work with the different property owners, organizations, and public entities with an interest in the River, in an effort to make the River a more attractive feature for the public to enjoy.

Today's action will also direct the CAO to continue to work with the Sheriff's Department to develop and implement a long term security plan to ensure the safety of the public, particularly children, along the San Diego River, with immediate attention to the areas surrounding Cactus Park, so that the kids playing ball can keep their game schedules intact without fearing for their safety.

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Recommendation(s):

VICE CHAIRWOMAN JACOB

1. Direct the CAO to work with the San Diego River Conservancy, the Lakeside River Conservancy, private property owners, and public property owners, such as the Helix Water District, the Metropolitan Transit System, and the Sheriff, to clear out the encampments and the overgrown brush in and adjacent to the River in the unincorporated area, with immediate attention to the area adjacent to Cactus Park.
2. Direct the CAO to work with the San Diego River Conservancy, the Lakeside River Conservancy, private property owners, and public property owners, such as the Helix Water District and the Metropolitan Transit System, to include in the Community Trails Master Plan, a larger and more prominent trail along the River.
3. Direct the CAO to continue to work with the Sheriff's Department to develop and implement a long term security plan to ensure the safety of the public, particularly children, along the San Diego River within the County's jurisdiction, with immediate attention to the safety concerns at Cactus Park in Lakeside.

Fiscal Impact:

Funding for brush clearing on County owned land is included in the 2007-2008 operational plan. Other property owners along the River would be responsible for the cost of their own brush clearing. The Sheriff's Department will be able to develop a security plan with existing resources.

Business Impact Statement:

N/A

Advisory Board Statement:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

On May 4, 2008, there was an alarming and potentially tragic incident at Cactus Park in Lakeside. A registered sex offender attempted to kidnap a 9 year-old Little Leaguer. Luckily, the boy was let go after his yelling caught the attention of parents and coaches, prompting them to come to his rescue. The sex offender then tried to flee into the nearby riverbank, but fortunately a law enforcement officer apprehended him soon after.

In the past, both the softball league and the little league at Cactus Park have had several problems with people living in the River. Their snack bars have been broken into on numerous occasions, and inappropriate behavior around the kids has become a normal occurrence. I recently met with the Parks Department, the Sheriff's Department and the Lakeside River Conservancy to address the situation at Cactus Park. Solutions were discussed, but this past weekend's incident has made the clean up of the area an urgent matter.

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The San Diego River is one of our region's forgotten jewels, and regrettably, the overgrown brush in and around the riverbank has become a safe haven for transients and criminals. Something needs to be done immediately to clean up this area to ensure the future safety of people attempting to enjoy areas around the San Diego River.

Today's action will direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to work with the property owners along the River, in particular the area adjacent to Cactus Park, and with the San Diego River Conservancy and the Lakeside River Conservancy to clear the riverbank of overgrown brush and encampments. In addition, the action directs the CAO to include a larger and more prominent trail for this area in the Community Trails Master Plan. A riding and hiking trail in this area would increase public use of the land, resulting in increased visibility and the elimination of places for criminals to hide. Such use would also greatly reduce safety problems making the River an attractive feature for the public to enjoy.

Today's action will also direct the CAO to continue to work with the Sheriff's Department to develop and implement a long term security plan to ensure the safety of the public, particularly children, along the San Diego River, with immediate attention to the areas surrounding Cactus Park, so that the kids playing ball can keep their game schedules intact without fearing for their safety.

I urge your support.

Respectfully submitted,

DIANNE JACOB
VICE-CHAIRWOMAN
Supervisor, Second District

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s): N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: District 2

CONTACT PERSON(S):

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AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: _____