

Economic Equity Development Plan

We Have A Problem

Black San Diegans and others who live in underserved communities have not had equitable opportunities to housing, employment, education, and investment in their businesses. We all pay a cost for this inequity.

We Are All in This Together

When communities of color are denied equal opportunities, the impact reverberates throughout the economy. A recent study by Citibank estimated that the national GDP lost \$16 trillion over the last 20 years due to systemic and societal racism and discrimination faced by Black Americans alone. The loss includes gaps in wages, access to housing and higher education, and investment in Black-owned businesses -- in other words, money not paid or invested which then is not available to be spent on goods and services. The report concludes that, if the discriminatory gaps were closed today, the result could be an addition of \$5 trillion to the national GDP over the next five years.

The current pandemic has magnified these impacts, as communities of color, and lower-income communities generally, have borne the brunt of job losses, service cutbacks, and overall economic decline. While the stock market and the highest-paying job tier have fully recovered, only about half the overall jobs lost to the pandemic have been restored.

What I Propose

To undo these economic injustices and boost San Diego's economy, I propose to implement the following specific measures as Mayor:

City Government Operation

- Ensure that all companies have equal access to city contracts. To that end, I have already supported funding for a disparity study, now underway, to determine what factors are keeping women- and minority-owned firms from receiving a fair share of those contracts.

- Allow gender and race to be among the criteria considered in awarding city contracts. I am supporting state Proposition 16, which would authorize that.
- Rectify the gender and racial disparity pay gap at City Hall.
- Fund enforcement and compliance for the city's living wage program.
- Expand Police Department recruitment to ensure that the force reflects the diversity of our local population and provide adequate funding for the independent police review commission upon the expected passage of Measure B.
- Ensure adequate funding for the new Office of Race and Equity.
- Update community plans to ensure appropriate housing opportunities in every community.

Private Sector Enhancement

- Develop a vibrant ecosystem of small businesses that hire from and serve their surrounding community, with a focus on Council Districts 4, 8, and 9. I already supported allocating at least \$12 million of federal CARES Act funding in the next city budget to local small businesses and non-profits hurt by COVID-19, with a portion of this specifically allocated to small businesses in underrepresented communities.
- Ensure equal access to capital for investment in businesses and homes by requiring financial institutions seeking to do business with the City to demonstrate their equitable lending practices.
- Establish a contracting system that allows for recognition of all government-approved apprenticeship programs. My support for this already has won me an endorsement by the president of the National Black Contractors Association.
- Close the digital divide by offering citywide broadband internet access, giving all residents the ability to connect with local government, telemedicine, education, and other services. I already supported allocation of \$500,000 in the next city budget for a pilot program while the city develops a long-range plan.
- Create the Mayor's Office position of School Engagement Coordinator, charged with developing linkages between employers and our schools, beginning with south of Interstate 8. Those linkages will ensure that, from a young age, children have access to good jobs including paid internships, particularly in our growing biotech and technology industries and other high-paying industries like construction.

- Working through the San Diego Workforce Partnership, a city-county initiative of which I have been a board member, make equity investments in workforce programs for young adults, invest funding and other resources in organizations that prioritize diversity, create a diverse talent pipeline through the TechHire program, and provide assistance with development of employee ownership programs focused on businesses that employ people of color.
- Work with the County of San Diego and other local jurisdictions to support a large-scale program of daycare, to support lower-income working families with this critical need.
- Establish a first-time homebuyer down payment assistance plan, operating through financial institutions doing business with the City, to support greater home ownership among residents having steady incomes but lacking savings for down payments.
- Facilitate use of the City’s accessory dwelling unit program and the small-lot subdivision program to enable homeowners in disadvantaged communities to gain immediate income and build long-term wealth.

As Mayor, I will provide equal access to all communities. Further, I will meet on a regular basis with representatives of disadvantaged communities to ensure that they are receiving the benefits promised by my plans. Out of those discussions, I hope to build on the proposals above and move the City in the direction of economic equity.