



# COUNCILMEMBER JESS RIVAS

## D I S T R I C T 5 N E W S L E T T E R

Dear Neighbor,

I hope you were able to have a restful Thanksgiving with your family and friends after staying apart last year. Unfortunately, we are all grieving the loss of several community members from gun and traffic violence over recent weeks. In particular, we have been shaken by the shooting death of Iran Moreno-Balvendeda, a 13-year-old boy who was playing video games in his bedroom. As parents, we think that the safest place for our children to be is at home with us and I am haunted that was not true for one of our families. Every child deserves to be safe in our city – in our neighborhoods, on our streets, in our schools, and especially in their own homes. **Anyone with information relating to Iran's case is encouraged to call Pasadena Police at 626-744-4241 or report information anonymously by calling Crime Stoppers at 800-222-8477.**

I am grateful for the hard work of our Police Department, which has recovered hundreds of firearms over the past several years and is working tirelessly to investigate this and other recent tragedies. However, it will take more than the immediate law enforcement response to end this cycle of gun and gang violence. We must continue to invest in our community to ensure that all Pasadenans can thrive.

As always, I am honored to represent you and be a progressive voice on the Council during these challenging times. Here are some highlights of what came before the Council over the past month:

- **City Manager Steve Mermell's Retirement** – After nearly 33 years of dedicated service to our City, Steve had his last Council meeting on November 29<sup>th</sup> and retired on December 1<sup>st</sup>. He is a true public servant and I have been honored to work with him over the past year. I will miss his professionalism, expertise, encyclopedic knowledge of our City, and his responsiveness. Please join me in thanking Steve for his service and wishing him well in retirement.
- **Final Stages of Redistricting** – The task force has completed its work and their recommendation has been before the Council for consideration and further public comment since November 15<sup>th</sup>. You can read the task force's report [here](#) and view the recommendation [here](#). In short, their recommendation, on which the council will vote for the final time on December 13<sup>th</sup>, adjusts the boundaries of districts 2, 6, and 7. Districts 1, 3, 4, and 5 are unaffected.
- **Central Library** – We received an update on the status of the seismic retrofit process; staff now believes it will cost roughly \$111 million to complete, but we will not have a more concrete number until we have selected a design team and it performs a more detailed analysis. Additionally, we approved entering an agreement with PUSD to use Jefferson Elementary School to house library collections, provide adult, teen, and children's services and programs, a computer center, local history archives and resources, public areas for reading and using library materials, programming space, staff office space, and other similar uses while Central Library is closed.
- **City Parking Garages** – The City owns nine parking structures in the downtown area, which currently need roughly \$12 million in repairs. In order to continue to maintain our structures so that they are safe and pleasant to use, the Council voted to implement a small fee (\$1 for first 2 hours, \$ 2 for each additional hour, \$12/day max). Additionally, we approved contracting with one operator to manage all 9 garages, rather than have multiple operators. This will be more efficient and save the City \$2 million per year.
- **Specific Plans** – In light of the recent adoption of SB 9 and 10, which affect zoning in single-family home neighborhoods and near transit, respectively, the Council previously held off on acting on the first specific plan to come before us (Lincoln Avenue). Now that we received a briefing from the Planning Department on these new state laws, we have continued with our review and approved the Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan.
- **Huntington Library Shuttle** – The Huntington Library has limited parking and no ability to expand parking. We approved a contract with the Huntington under which Pasadena Transit will operate a demonstration route that runs from the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line station to the Huntington from January 2022 – June 2022. Based on how the demonstration goes and public feedback, the

Huntington will determine whether they will seek to make the route permanent.

Please don't hesitate to share your thoughts on the above or any other issues by reaching out to me directly at [jerivas@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:jerivas@cityofpasadena.net). I truly value your opinion and look forward to hearing from you.

-Jess



## Commissioner Spotlight Cindy Schnuelle

A short commute to Downtown LA and riding stables are what brought District 5 Northwest Commissioner, Cindy Schnuelle, to Pasadena, but she soon realized that our city offered the quality of life she had been searching for: space, great neighborhoods, robust business corridors and nature in the form of the Arroyo Seco. In 1990, all of these aspects helped her decide that this was home.

In 2009, after years of living on Grace Terrace in Council District 7, Cindy and her husband Dave, bought their current home in District 5's Orange Heights. The timing was perfect because she had retired and was able to devote her time to renovating the house but it wasn't long before she completed the work and had extra time on her hands. She decided to use her talents to better her own neighborhood and got involved with her neighborhood association. The rest is history.

Cindy quickly became chair of the neighborhood association, met then Councilmember, Victor Gordo, and was soon serving on the Norwest Commission and the Hahamongna Watershed Park Advisory Committee. Seven years later, she is still doing the work.

Cindy treasures living in Pasadena, not just for its beauty, but also for its culture of neighborhood activism. She values the ability to voice your opinion and to be heard. She also loves the fact that we can explore nature in our own backyard, the Arroyo Seco.

If you are interested in serving on one of Pasadena's volunteer commissions, check out this list of [current vacancies](#) and apply today!

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