



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 your holiday season is going well! I can't believe we're already heading into December and the New Year is around the corner. Please see below for some highlights of what has come before the Council in October and November.

- **Approved More Funding for Tenant-Landlord Counseling Services through Housing Rights Center (HRC)** – Back in August 2021 we earmarked some American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to expand eviction prevention legal services; these will now go toward continued services from HRC for Pasadena residents. Services include paralegal services, mediation of disputes, handling cases under the City's Tenant Protection Ordinance, general counseling on tenant and landlord rights, and legal representation for participants in the tenant-based rental assistance program.
 - **HRC now has an office in District 5** 1015 N. Lake Avenue #100 Pasadena, CA 91104. Walk-in Office Hours are 8:30am – 5:00pm M-F. Phone: (626) 831-9732. You can also continue to access services from HRC via 800-477-5977 or info@housingrightscenter.org.
 - Note: I have heard mixed reviews from residents on their experience with HRC. Please let me know what your experience has been like by e-mailing me directly (jerivas@cityofpasadena.net).
- **Approved More Funding for Shower of Hope**– Shortly after COVID-19 was declared a pandemic in March 2020, the Housing Department procured a mobile shower operator, The Shower of Hope, to ensure access to low-barrier basic hygiene services. The showers have continued to operate every Monday morning out of All Saints Church with federal emergency funding and will continue with this additional funding.
- **Specific Plans Update** – The Council is currently reviewing the specific plans, which have gone through a very rigorous and years-long process with staff, consultants, the Planning Commission, and extensive resident input. A key part of these plans is that they set the amount of density for housing within their boundaries. In light of the current housing crisis, I've taken the position that I will not vote to approve a specific plan if my colleagues on the Council decrease the density from what was recommended as a result of this very in-depth, measured, community-driven process. Accordingly, I recently voted against the **South Fair Oaks Specific Plan**. The North Lake Specific Plan (the main one in our district) should be coming before the council sometime in 2023; I will keep you posted on the status.
- **Return to In Person Meetings** – We have agreed to return to full in-person meetings in the New Year. Initially, public comment will only be available in person (as it was before the pandemic), but we will work on making remote public comment available. The pandemic has shown us that this is possible and its importance to ensure public participation. This matter has been referred to the Economic Development and Technology Committee, on which I serve.

Finally, please follow me on social media if you haven't already. It's an easy way to stay up to date on what's going on in our neighborhoods and throughout the City. Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter handles are all @PasadenaD5.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly at jerivas@cityofpasadena.net. I truly value your opinion and look forward to hearing from you.

-Jess

Commissioner Spotlight Judith Blanton

As with many commissioners, Judith Blanton's first involvement in our community happened in her own neighborhood. The 1893



Victorian cottage that she bought in 2005 is on a section of Raymond Avenue that experiences problems with speeding. Although it took two attempts and a block party, she and her neighbors worked together to get speed bumps approved. Getting involved made Judith realize that she wanted to do more for our community.

With a desire to do more and share her fondness for books, the life-long book lover and self-proclaimed “book-a-holic”, became a Library Commissioner in July of 2021. Due to the pandemic all meetings were virtual. With a background in **Organizational Psychology**, Judith can’t wait for in-person meetings to start so she can utilize what she knows about group dynamics to make the commission as productive as possible.

Judith thinks of Pasadena as a small town in terms of its neighborhoods but with the benefits of a big city in terms of amenities. She enjoys the cultural aspects (theaters, museums and festivals) and counts the Pasadena Public Library as one of the best things about Pasadena. She asks that you **check out their offerings**.

Pasadena City Council, District 5

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