



As 2012 begins, I'd like to look back at the first year of my mayorship and take note of several issues I worked on, along with major developments in our city.

Transparency

One of my goals as Mayor is to make the work of our city more accessible and transparent. Today, City Council meetings are digitally recorded and can be heard live. The recordings are available on the city website.

Budget

Last June, the City Council adopted a budget that projects a small surplus without transfers from reserves, representing a substantial turnaround in the city's fiscal well being. Development of fiscal year 2012-13 budget has commenced. My overriding goal, which I am confident will be achieved, is another budget that is balanced without drawing upon reserves.

Business Development

On my first day in office as Mayor, I met with Dr. Patrick Kennedy of OSIsoft, Inc., the largest private employer by payroll in San Leandro. He outlined a plan to build a high-speed fiber optic loop around the city, using conduit that the city had already installed. OSI would pay for installation costs. A portion of the fiber would be given to the city and the remainder would be used to attract a new set of businesses to San Leandro.

My response was an enthusiastic "Yes, let's move forward." Staff studied the proposal and recommended that the City Council adopt it, which we did. You can learn more about the project, called Lit San Leandro, at www.litsanleandro.com

Another significant project that advanced in 2011 was the Village Marketplace which will be located at the former Albertson site on East 14th Street. The plans for the development include a Fresh and Easy market, a Peet's Coffee, two restaurants and two retail shops. There will be outdoor dining, and a plaza with a fountain and public art.

Public Safety

The number of serious crimes in San Leandro increased by about 4 percent in 2011 over 2010. Crime fluctuates from year to year and 2010 was a historic low for crime in San Leandro. The number of serious crimes in 2011 was less the annual amount in 2007 through 2009.

If you are the victim, however, one crime is too many. Everyone can play a role in making San Leandro safer. We need to be the eyes and ears of the police as even during peak periods there are only about 15 police officers on patrol (more can be deployed in an emergency). The police department publishes crime prevention tips and a newsletter at www.sanleandro.org/depts/pd/prevention/programs.asp

City/School Partnership

The city undertook several initiatives this year to build a more solid partnership with our schools, including:

- Providing a third police officer assigned to the school district for high school campus safety;

- Negotiating with Waste Management to provide free trash and recycling services to our public schools in its new contract with the Oro Loma Sanitary District, saving the schools over \$80,000 annually; and

- Conducting a joint meeting of the full San Leandro and San Lorenzo School Boards and City Council, the first such meeting in over a decade, to discuss areas of common interest.

Disaster Preparedness

For the first time in several years, the city allocated funds for the services of an Emergency Services Coordinator and disaster preparedness programs offered by the Alameda County Fire Department (ACFD). Starting on January 19, 2012, the ACFD will offer a Community Emergency Response Team class at the main library. The multi-week class trains people to take care of themselves and neighbors in a disaster. There is no cost for this training. Visit www.acfdcert.eventbrite.com to register for the class.

New Facilities and Programs

In April, the San Leandro Senior Community Center opened. Our Senior Services Program promotes healthy independent living, enhances quality of life, and builds a sense of belonging and community among older adults, caregivers and families.

With much barking and excitement, the San Leandro Dog Park immediately south of Marina Park opened in September. The park is divided between areas for small and large dogs. We also dedicated the nearby Luster Knight Memorial, which commemorates the life of caring, giving, and community involvement by former firefighter and Park and Recreation commissioner Luster Knight.

Our library now offers eBooks and audio books for download to variety of devices. Titles automatically expire at the end of the lending period, so there are never any late fees.

In conclusion, I thank City staff, City Commissioners, and the many volunteers in our community for their commitment to improving San Leandro. I also thank my colleagues on the City Council for working together as a team in the best interests of our city. For me, it's been a year to listen and learn, a year to plan and build, and I have renewed faith in the future of San Leandro.

Are there other steps we should be taking to better address the needs of San Leandrans? I welcome your input. Please contact me at scassidy@sanleandro.org or 510-577-3355.