

Speaker 1 ([00:00:00](#)):

The philanthropy for Voice of San Diego. We are so happy to be here with you today. If you don't know us, voice of San Diego is a nonprofit investigative news organization committed to holding public officials accountable and giving you the public the information you need to be advocates for good government. As a nonprofit, we depend on members, donors, and sponsors like you to make our work possible. So thank you for your support. I'd like to take a minute to recognize our sponsors who help make politics possible. A special thanks to the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of San Diego for being our partner for a seventh year. Our thanks also to the Qua Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, the United Domestic Workers Union, A A RP, the San Diego Foundation Business for Good Pike Development, the San Diego Municipal Employees Association, the Asian Business Association, planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest Atlantis Group, and the Southern California Rental Housing Association.

Speaker 1 ([00:01:02](#)):

We'd also like to thank KPBS and I News Source our partners in Public Matters. We are partnering together to share content, conversation and events like politics to ensure all San Diego's understand their opportunity to participate in the democratic process, and that it means more than voting in an election. A couple of logistical things, uh, for Fest, if you can attend any of our sessions in person, we will have the recordings up on our website next week. We welcome your questions. We'll have two volunteers, one on each side who have note cards and pens for you to write down questions. If you have a question that you'd like to write down, just raise your hand and they'll bring it to you. And then when you're done writing it, raise your hand again and they will collect it. And we will have that during our question and answer portion. You can tweet along with us and with this section by using the hashtag POL 2024 on social media. And tag us on Instagram and Facebook. Now allow me to introduce our moderator, Andrea Lopez via Fania, who is our managing editor at Voice of San Diego.

Speaker 2 ([00:02:18](#)):

Thank you, Erica. Hi, how's everyone doing? Good. All right. I will speak loudly. If you can't hear me, let me know. I am super, super jittery from all the coffee I've had. This always happens at Boulder Fest. Um, so yeah, just let me know if you can't hear me, but I should be pretty loud 'cause I got all the caffeine in me. Um, we're gonna have a great discussion debate here. I think I sat in the middle just in case it gets a little wild, but I think we'll be fine. Um, let me introduce to you your candidates for the District nine City Council race. On my left is Sean ELO Rivera. He's currently represents the district. He was elected in 2020 and has served as the city council president since 2021. Thanks for coming, Sean. Awesome. And then to my right is Terry Hoskins.

Speaker 2 ([00:03:11](#)):

He is a retired police officer and Sergeant Major with the Marine Corp. Um, if elected, this would be his first time in office, so welcome Terry. Awesome. Lemme just make sure y all your mics are on. Good, good. Okay. So we're doing something new with <inaudible> this year. We're setting up a little primer, uh, but since this is a debate, I'm not going to get too into the primer. If you already are familiar with District nine, you know what neighborhoods are in it, you know, top issues. Um, so I'll speed past that, but I may throughout the course of the debate interrupt our panelists and have them explain a term they might have mentioned. So we'll just do that. Uh, of course, district nine includes the communities of estates, city heights, college area college View Estates, El Cerrito, Kensington, mission Valley, east Mountain View, Mount Hope, normal Heights, Redwood Village, Rwanda Park, Rwanda Village, Stockton, and Tom Beach.

Speaker 2 ([00:04:07](#)):

Did I miss any? Sounds right. Cool. It's an incredibly diverse district. I had the great honor of writing about D nine when I was a community reporter at the Union Tribune. It was one of my favorite districts to cover and write about because the communities were so diverse and the issues and, uh, stories they had to share were quite incredible. So, um, I recently went to a debate where our two candidates debated and I heard a lot of concerns about housing, um, college parties, of course, parking at a library, homelessness and public safety. So hopefully we get to elaborate on some of those conversations. Feeling good? Good, good. Okay, so I'll start with you, Sean. Earlier this week I was watching a city council meeting and you guys received an update on the city shelter beds. As we've reported, there are not enough beds available, not even for those who want them. And in June, you offered a series of steps, tools that the city could use to bring more shelters online. There were a lot of recommendations in that page, but I want to, um, have you elaborate on one of them. One of them was eminent domain, um, as we reported Mayor Todd Gloria didn't seem super thrilled about the idea. Um, but can you explain why UV this as an opportunity and maybe can you explain what eminent domain domain is?

Speaker 3 ([00:05:34](#)):

Yes. Uh, thank you, Andrea. Thank you everyone for being here. I appreciate the opportunity. Uh, so as was mentioned, uh, we have a, we obviously have a homelessness crisis, the housing crisis. We don't have enough shelter beds for the folks who want shelter. Um, despite what you may hear, uh, more often than not, in fact, by a wide margin, when people seek shelter, they're not able to receive that shelter. That's unacceptable. No, nobody here should be okay with sleep, with people sleeping on the streets, um, especially when they are seeking shelter. So we put forward a memo with a number of recommendations in there, um, ranging from, um, diversion from our shelter system with non-core options. And one of those options was dividend domain. An I domain is, um, a process, um, along with what we refer to as friendly condemnation, where the government, um, acquires property, um, for fair market value, um, because they see a critical, uh, need for that property and use for that property.

Speaker 3 ([00:06:38](#)):

Well, we're in an emergency. We have people sleeping on streets who, uh, should not be sleeping on streets. Our shelters are full. We have properties in District nine and other parts of the city that have been underutilized, uh, or poorly utilized for years that have been, uh, magnets for crime and vandalism and negative activities that have, uh, hurt the neighborhoods for a long time. And, uh, in my mind, the idea of allowing a resource, a crucial resource like, um, a hotel or a motel or other property to continue to be a negative for the community when we're in an emergency is unacceptable. And so I absolutely think that the city should be pursuing opportunities, um, to engage with property owners, uh, to turn those points of pain that are in our community into points of pride, um, where families and seniors can get the shelter, particularly non congregate shelter that we know is so successful in getting people on a path, not just indoors, but on the path to permanent housing, which I think should be our goal for every single person who's experiencing homelessness in San Diego.

Speaker 2 ([00:07:41](#)):

Do you see this as something that, you know, you could get buy in from? I know the mayor kind of seems not too interested. I'm not,

Speaker 3 ([00:07:49](#)):

I'm not gonna drop it because I, I think it's a, I think this is a values issue again. Um, it is unacceptable to me that we have people sleeping on the streets who are seeking shelter. It's unacceptable to me that some of those people are seniors who have health issues and who the, the traditional congregate shelter setting is simply unacceptable to, uh, people who cannot go indoors because they have incontinence issues or other health issues that don't allow them to, uh, move into a congregate setting either with the dignity that

they deserve or the health and needs that they have. Um, so given that those are the stakes in my mind, I think we have a moral imperative to make the best use of property possible. And friendly condemnation and eminent domain is a tool that we can use to do that. It is also a tool, um, and the city attorney's office agreed with this. It's a tool that provides, um, important leverage to the city in negotiating, um, through our normal transactions. Um, when we take that tool off the table and say that we aren't going to use it, um, that adds leverage, uh, to those property owners who might otherwise, um, give a little bit more in the negotiations with the city.

Speaker 2 ([00:08:58](#)):

Just a little background on that, when Sean released his memo, uh, we reported on that memo and the mention of eminent domain. And, um, the mayor's office did not seem interested in pursuing that option, which then the city attorney responded with her own, um, you know, thoughts that saying no to eminent domain, so publicly was troublesome for current negotiations, um, that have to do with the thousand bed shelter the mayor wants to open in Middletown.

Speaker 3 ([00:09:31](#)):

And if I could just add one other piece for context, within the few weeks prior to that, the release of that memo, the city had utilized Mino domain, uh, to acquire property for an, an important bike path to, uh, for part of our regional bike network. Um, but a couple of those properties that we acquired through that process, the acquisitions happened in very short amount of time in less than a year. And it wasn't part, you know, the, the more arduous, eminent domain process that I think many people think about, which leads to, you know, time in court and trial, but instead a property owner that said, oh, sure, I'll, I'd happily sell that. I've been looking to get this off my hands, or, that seems like a fair price. We have to offer a fair price. And, uh, that, uh, property was able to transition in less than the calendar year. Um, so knowing that we have a history of being able to execute in that amount of time was another reason why I offered that. When I did.

Speaker 2 ([00:10:24](#)):

Terry, you waited on Sean's memo and you admitted that some quote may be practical, um, but you seem to take issue with others. Can you kind of explain what those

Speaker 4 ([00:10:36](#)):

Were? Yeah, I can, again, thank you everyone for coming. I really do appreciate it. And, uh, thank for San Diego for, for hosting this. Um, so our shelter dilemma did not just come up two or three months ago. Our council and our city has known about our dilemma with shelter beds for a long time. So acting like it's now an emergency, they should have done something two years ago, or three years ago, not just now. Um, one of the thing with intimate domains, it, it affects to acquire property, correct me if I'm wrong, but it's supposed to have the possibility of affecting everyone like a bike path. Every anyone can use the bike path. Typically, they do it when they acquire land for highways because the concept is anyone's who's going to use, uh, anyone could use that. However, in this situation, it, it really doesn't apply to everyone.

Speaker 4 ([00:11:37](#)):

So I'm kind of against the strong hand of government. Um, one taken away rights from people, and then two, um, kind of employing their rights when they don't have to. If this would've been looked at in a realistic manner last year, earlier on last year, where you had a year, two years to go and they could have found these properties and negotiated without having to use the threat of, you know, an imminent domain. And from what I understand, uh, part of the issue was, and I think the mayor said this was, and it does take a long time to acquire property. Um, I, I guess that depends upon obviously the, the owner of the

property, um, <laugh>, but the incumbent said this was weren't an emergency, but at the moment, we're not an emergency, we're in a crisis. But no one has said that San Diego is an emergency.

Speaker 4 ([00:12:39](#)):

So I think at this point, um, you know, we have not had a great history of purchasing properties. I mean, 101 Ash Street is a great example. Um, we go out and we buy things really quickly and then we're stuck with 'em. So I think, you know, even if you bought property, it will take a while for it to get up and running. Right. And I don't know if we have any plans inside homeless shelters. That's the thing, that's one of my biggest complaints with the city when they talk about a thousand bed shelter, you know, a great example. I'm like, well, okay, boom, you got the, you got the thousand beds. How are you gonna, how's it gonna work? But gonna house men and women together? No, you have to separate 'em about couples. You have to separate 'em LGBTQ plus you got to separate 'em, transgender, you're gonna have to separate 'em. What about people with animals? You're gonna have to separate 'em. That has not been discussed. There is no plan afterwards. So my biggest thing again, is that this wasn't, this just didn't happen this month, last month, the month before last. Everyone has known these timelines. And now maybe because it's an election year, everyone's kind to come up with, um, possibilities and probabilities and potentials, how to solve it.

Speaker 3 ([00:14:09](#)):

Can I just ask a quick question, Terry? Is your position that the general public does not benefit from homeless individuals receiving shelter?

Speaker 4 ([00:14:16](#)):

Okay, so the, my opponent is trying to say that, you know, that, uh, I'm totally against homelessness. And, um, so when I'm gonna, again, I'm going to finish my, my my thing, um, they do, society does benefit, but you gotta be, you can't be hypocritical about how we approach this. So when the city passed the encamp, the the Camp command, um, my, uh, the incumbent voted against it. Um, but yet at the same time, that's how he's moving people within the district from one side of the road to the other by telling people, get it, use, get it done. Um, another issue is that I'm not really f I'm not really convinced that shelter first is an option, is a viable option. And I don't think housing first is a viable option. Um, I like to utilize Huntington Beach as a perfect role model, I think for housing. I mean, um, excuse me, for homelessness. And what they do is they have a very vibrant navigation center that's run by Mercy House. Um, they really, if you look at their entire scheme, and I'm sure we're gonna talk about it later, but, uh, they do it right. Again, I don't, I'm not for ENT domain. Um, I don't think governments should do that, especially when you had two years to plan for this. Uh, this just didn't happen

Speaker 2 ([00:15:55](#)):

To, to Terry's point. Um, we knew that some of these shelters were going to close. Do you feel that the city was kind of slow to respond to that closure?

Speaker 3 ([00:16:05](#)):

I think the city's been slow to respond to homelessness for decades, but I also think we've done a lot. So we've expand. We have she, uh, expanded shelter capacity. And this is one of the reasons why I'm so committed to, uh, the prevention side of homelessness. Um, shelter is a bandaid. Shelter's not a permanent home. Nobody should live in shelter for the rest of their lives. Um, and it should not be our end goal to simply get everyone who's on the streets into shelter. The end goal for this city should be to have everyone who's experiencing homelessness no longer be experiencing homelessness. So, um, over the course of the last, uh, few years, we've expanded not just the number of beds, but the types of beds we

have converted hotels and motels, um, into, into Shelter. The non congregated shelter. That's particularly, again, that is extremely helpful for families with children and, um, and seniors.

Speaker 3 ([00:16:55](#)):

Um, that non congregate setting is the most efficient for getting someone, giving some, giving someone an opportunity to get their feet under them, get their life settled, get their, or, uh, their business in order so that they can get on onto that path to permanent housing. Um, we've done that. We have experience doing that. Uh, I champion that as soon as I got into office. It takes time for some of these things to come online. So we've expanded the types of shelter. Absolutely right? We need different types of shelter for folks with different types of needs. So we've expanded those options, um, but we need to do more. And, um, the, the, the memo that was put forward in June, um, was one with recent news that beds would be going offline. And two, in anticipation of the consideration of, of the nerine lease that was being proposed by the mayor.

Speaker 3 ([00:17:43](#)):

So, um, the idea that I have not done anything or proposed anything is ludicrous. It either is a lie or a complete misunderstanding of the city. Uh, civics over the last three and a half years, there's been nobody who's offered more types of solutions than I have on council. Um, I will say to point to Huntington Beach as a model for anything that the city of San Diego should do is wild to me. I grew up in Huntington Beach, that is a city governed by ultra rightwing conservatives. It is the Florida of California. Uh, it, and I mean that in the worst way possible, <laugh>, they are completely out of step with the rest of this state. Um, they have had completely unprepared and, um, and, and radical people elected into office, including UFC fighters. It is a Trump city. And again, the idea that we would, we would point to that as a model for how San Diego should follow is unacceptable to me, and I think should open a lot of eyes in this room.

Speaker 4 ([00:18:50](#)):

Terry. So may I respond?

Speaker 2 ([00:18:51](#)):

Yes. Um, you toured Huntington Beach, I did twice, and you saw what they were doing. What is it exactly that you felt, you know, could work here in San Diego?

Speaker 4 ([00:19:00](#)):

Well, briefly, first of all, I don't lie. Um, I didn't spend 26 years in the Marine Corps, very successful at Tam rank of a Sergeant Major, the highest enlisted that I could become, 15 years with San Diego pd. I'm not on any Brady list. I don't lie on the stand. So I speak my mind. The incumbent can see what he wants. But he sent the memo out in June. We knew these beds were going offline way before June. So again, when the city acts slow, no. Um, they did not. And they just didn't take proactive action in this. And now everything is kind of like, uh, um, you know, uh, an emergency. And instead they, they should have taken action before. And if the mayor wasn't going to, then the council should have, which he is the leadership of, he controls everything that comes on the docket.

Speaker 4 ([00:19:57](#)):

And so this could have been brought up and it was not. So be right. Andrea, I did tour, um, Huntington Beach, and I, I found, and I don't know anything about Huntington Beach. So unless he's a Trump supporter, I don't know why he keeps talking about Trump. But, um, but for me, in your newspaper, the North County Times tga TGA wrote an article how, um, some of the mayors of North County went to Huntington Beach to tour their facility. I read the piece and I was pretty impressed. 'cause it just didn't

talk about the, the shelter side of it. It talked about the law enforcement side of it, how they've taken things completely off the plate for law enforcement. They have a, um, like a, and I'll call it a rapid response team, but that's not it, of per technicians that have been trained, uh, in deescalation.

Speaker 4 ([00:20:58](#)):

And, and they'll give you every year, if you just go on their website, look a, um, a number, something like 4,500 times this last year where law enforcement did not respond to a mental health crisis like we do here in San Diego. You know, law enforcement is a 9 1 1 for everything. You gotta, you know, got something happy. If you don't know who to call you, typically it's nine one one or the non-American standard. So, when I talk about how this model is successful, that's what it does. It talks about that. Um, if you look at, and I don't know when the incumbent was last in 19th Beach, um, but when I drove it, because I'm thinking, okay, I know what our shelters look like downtown, right? We know what downtown looks like. I'm thinking around the opera project. This, it's gonna look the same. It does not look the same.

Speaker 4 ([00:22:00](#)):

So I was very impressed. I talked with business owners around the shelter. There's no signage or anything about it. Um, you can't walk up to it. There's little, um, you know, they got like a little bus that takes people places. So you can drive, if you have a car, you just can't ride your bike up, but they'll take you where you want to go with the shuttle. Um, they got storage facilities. And another good thing that we do, and no one's talked about with our, you know, shelter facilities. 'cause we don't have a plan. Um, you know, I, again, I I've talked to thousands of homeless people when I was a police officer. Thousands. I know what works. I know what doesn't work. I know what will entice somebody to take a shelter if they're addicted to something or if they have mental illness. And I know some, and I know things that won't work.

Speaker 4 ([00:22:56](#)):

So, Huntington Beach has a very low barrier. So what I mean is they got things that we require. You must have, they don't. Sobriety is one. If you have an addiction of anything and you're trying to get you to a facility and you can't be, and sobriety isn't, well, sobriety is a requirement. You're not gonna take that. You're not gonna go to that shelter, you're not gonna take that program. So they have a extremely low barrier, uh, for sobriety. Doesn't mean you can't come in there under the influence. It just means you can't do it there. So they have an amnesty box. People come in, they drop alcohol off, they drop drugs off, nothing's asked. They get fed, showered. They get inundated with services.

Speaker 4 ([00:23:50](#)):

They have food that's prepared for 'em. They even have a yoga room. I don't know what they need, a yoga room, but they have a yoga room. When I was there, a person was actually relaxing and, and in his own little world, um, which was good. He was happy. And everyone in there that I spoke with was appreciative because it, it wasn't like, well, you gotta get off the street and then be clean all of a sudden. 'cause that does not work. So having Louis Bay areas work, so when I talk about the homeless, I mean the, uh, the homeless program they have with a very viable navigation system. You know, it's amazing. In other words, they got a huge partnership outside of City Hall. City Hall doesn't really govern what goes on in that shelter, right? So what they have is, let's say that Terry, who is unsheltered and is, uh, the incumbent said maybe only need 50 bucks or a hundred bucks to keep his rent up.

Speaker 4 ([00:25:00](#)):

So they send out an email to all their partnerships, non-profit, faith, the gate, faith-based organizations and, and for profit. And they say, I have an individual, uh, unsheltered named Terry. Alli needs is a hundred dollars to keep his, to keep his rent. Somebody in that partnership, that partnership that picks up

Terry. So I'm not talking about the municipal side of Huntington Beach, I'm speaking merely to the homeless crisis and how they approached it. So for someone to sit there and just without even looking at it, um, I think it says a lot about hope. It opens your eyes.

Speaker 2 ([00:25:43](#)):

I think a lot of the discussion about shelter, we have been writing about how people want shelter. Um, and they often can't secure a bed or try several times before they can get a bed. Now, this conversation has really, um, come to the forefront since the city of San Diego did adopt an unsafe camping ban. Um, which prevented people from camping on the street, um, at all times. And certain places like near schools and near shelters, and then, um, at all times or at times, if there is shelter available. Now, Terry, at a recent debate, you said that you, you didn't necessarily think that, you know, police should like go around and arrest people related to the camping ban. But you mentioned that you believed in nudging. Yes. What is nudging to you?

Speaker 4 ([00:26:36](#)):

Yeah, so, you know, if there's rules on the books where it talks about black was passed by the city, or camping ban is, or camping is prohibited. So the progressive, um, uh, how we deal with it now is in a progressive manner. So if I, if we as a law enforcement officer contact Terry, who's unsheltered the first time is communication. It's just talking. It's like, uh, they, they classify it as education. The next time we'll do a field interview. Again, it's just classified just, uh, education, but it's documented for sure this time. Next time may be a citation. Next time it could be a misdemeanor arrest. It depends what the totality of the situation is. But if I move two blocks down and begin another encampment, that process starts all over again. So what you and I see mostly on the streets are the really homeless that are really addicted to stuff.

Speaker 4 ([00:27:45](#)):

Whether it's mental illness, whether it is some type of, uh, controlled substance or alcohol. You know, they all went through trauma to be where they're at. They don't have trust, they don't have a lot of things. So it's financially unstable for us to continue moving encampments from one side of the street to the other. We're sending, um, ESD to go clean up it, and then the next day it's right back. And two weeks later it's the same. You see it and I see it. So nudging is a way that we take enforcement action, right? And you say you're, you know, criminalizing homelessness. I'm not. Because one of the things that, you know, and one of the other I think classes, um, or discussions is on Prop 47 and, and that kind of stuff, what Prop 47 did to just briefly go through it, it prevented people from getting in drug court for a long time.

Speaker 4 ([00:28:45](#)):

So, in other words, if Terry was a heroin addict and police officer contacted me for whatever reason it was legal, I had it on me possession, it would be a felony, felony book into jail. Everyone knows that those felonies got moved down to, 'cause you're a wobbler, right? So you can book it as a felony, but it normally gets prosecuted as a wobbler. So, but what it did was it, it, it got me into the system where on my way out the judge would give me drug court, drug court. It put me into the system. So what prop 47, 8, it alleviated all that. So I I, I do believe in nudging. Absolutely. I think you have to, you know, we, we talk about quality of life. Um, it's not quality of life for the residents or for the unsheltered to have them live like they live.

Speaker 4 ([00:29:46](#)):

It's just none. I've arrested some, I made great friends with some, I've watched some die. Um, a quick little story of a little, uh, African American lady and Rolando and Milando Park. I've known this lady for years. Years. So one day we're, and she and I go, I'm not gonna tell you anything 'cause that's, that's alright. But I'll say what I tell you all the time. She goes, officer Terry, you tell me you care more about

me than I do about myself. And I would say, yes, I do. And then one day we're talking, she, well, my mom only lives like a mile away in District nine. I'm like, you're kidding me? She's like, don't. And I go, well, how come I don't know that? She goes, I don't know, you're the cop. And I go, fair enough. So I took a selfie of her with me. I went to the house, knocked on the door. Now just picture this for what you have. You want to picture it? The lady came to the door, I'm in uniform, what do you want? I said, Hey, I'm Officer Terry. I'm looking for the family of so and so. What has she done?

Speaker 4 ([00:31:01](#)):

She hasn't done anything. Why are you here? I said, well, I've talked with your daughter for years and I just now realize that her parents live here. So I wanted to see if there's anything I could do in conjunction with you to get her off the streets. 'cause I'm worried about her welfare. She comes outside her house crying. She said, of all the time law enforcement has come to her house about her daughter, this is the first time a law enforcement officer walked up to her house saying, I wanna work with you to get my daughter off the street. So we talked like an hour, and I'm almost done. We talked like an hour. I took a selfie of her, of us together, went back to the young lady that's on the street, and now she didn't come back off. She didn't lead the streets. But it reinforced the fact that you can't treat all homeless people the same. It's not a cookie cutter environment. And that's what people think it is. It's a cookie cutter. So nudging, you have to be able to nudge people for your quality of life and for theirs, or apologize to be.

Speaker 2 ([00:32:21](#)):

Shawn, you voted against the camping ban. Have your feelings changed?

Speaker 3 ([00:32:25](#)):

No. Um, it was a tense meeting. Um, but what I thought then, and what I remember and seeing nothing to change my mind about, is that there are no experts in this field who believe that, that, that that law as written was going to reduce homelessness in San Diego. It was going to move where homelessness is in San Diego, but it was not going to reduce. And, um, I appreciate the story that Terry just told. I think that there needs to be more of that. I think it is tragic. That is the first time that that sort of interaction with, um, that younger woman's family had happened. In that way. The system should be built in such a way where, uh, that is the first place. Um, we can look for folks who are experiencing homelessness to, you know, friends and family, to see if there are ways to connect them to housing.

Speaker 3 ([00:33:13](#)):

And clearly, if that's the first time that happened, the system is not built in that way. The ban. Um, I opposed for a number of reasons. One, I did not think as the Constitution was currently being interpreted by the, at that point in time by the Supreme Court, um, before the radical right wing Supreme Court overturned, um, changed the law with respect to homelessness, um, that it would be upheld in the courts. Uh, I was sad that it did, uh, that it was upheld. Um, two, I thought it was an unreal setting unrealistic expectations for the community as to what they would see as a result. Um, and three, I thought there would be huge implications for neighborhoods, um, that weren't gonna be as high up on the priority list. We do not have, did not have, and do not have the resources to, even if you think the ban is a good idea, we do not have the resources to enforce that equally across the city.

Speaker 3 ([00:34:07](#)):

And if you can't enforce that equally across the city, you should ask yourself. Then werewolf folks end up, where are we trying to push them from and where are they most likely to end up as a result? And we knew in District nine from previous experiences that crackdowns on homelessness in downtown led to increased homelessness, street homelessness in District nine, and areas that did not have any of the social services or, uh, facilities to help those folks get back on their feet. That also and also did not receive the

same sort of attention from the city. Meaning that the impacts were not just a more heavily felt, but longer felt as well. It was that trash that ended up on the sidewalk or in a, in a canyon stayed there longer. Um, so it was a bad deal for district nine and zero experts in the field of homelessness showed up to speak in support of it.

Speaker 3 ([00:34:54](#)):

I tried to be guided, um, by research and expertise. Um, and I do not think that the expectations that were set were going to be, um, able to be, uh, met by the city. I've studied homelessness since I was a law student. I have my own personal experiences with it and never, I I I need to understand what nudging is. I, I understand as a concept. There's, we either have a ban or we don't. We either are going to enforce the ban or we're not going to, you would enforce it. That's not So you, you're supportive of Theban? Yes. Okay. Absolutely. Because it's gotten fuzzy the last couple days. Um, shouldn't have. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:35:35](#)):

Sean. Um, earlier

Speaker 4 ([00:35:36](#)):

You may I say one more thing about that? Yeah. So, you know, it's easy to sit here and say that you don't agree with, you know, the Supreme Court and all the other stuff. That's fine. Well, that's not my, that's not my wheelhouse. Right? Um, my wheelhouse is to do what people tell us that we can do. I mean, I'm not in law enforcement work, but at that time, it's funny that when the mayor said this was gonna be the policy of the city, and now you got the governor who has also stated the same. So I don't think it's so far fetched to say that everybody is kind of tired of the status quo that's been going on. 'cause it hasn't worked had it has not worked.

Speaker 3 ([00:36:17](#)):

Yeah. I think that's a false choice. The idea that the only options in front of this city are that ordinance has passed or the status quo and let, letting things persist as they were, is of absolutely false choice. Um, there are a multitude of, of, what are they again? I'm getting there. Okay. Yeah. So again, prevention, knowing that 85% of people who experience homelessness begin that experience as a result of financial circumstances.

Speaker 4 ([00:36:42](#)):

People you see out on the street, Sean is not like that. The people you see that are in encampments that are, um, extremely fortified, they, it's not that, that's not why they're there, Sean.

Speaker 3 ([00:36:55](#)):

Okay. They know this. So Terry's got, Terry's got his opinion, and then there could be a state, they know this, a statewide study of thousands of individuals who are experiencing homelessness. And everyone who's researched this, 85% of people become homeless. That's not, that's not mean why they're homeless today, right? I don't know about anybody else in this room, but personally, my, my physical and mental health would not hold up so well if I was living on the streets. I know that from a personal experience. I know that from common sense. So the idea that there isn't some sort of de uh, uh, degrading that happens to a person's physical and mental, uh, ability while they're living on the streets, um, that defies common sense. 85% of people become homeless for financial circumstance, for financial reasons. The fastest growing group of people who are becoming homeless are seniors. That means people on fixed incomes who cannot keep up with the cost of living. My, maybe I'm, I'm missing something I have not heard about the senior drug epidemic that is, is has, um, taken over our, our boomer generation. Um,

Speaker 4 ([00:38:01](#)):

Well, it's funny to be comical about

Speaker 3 ([00:38:02](#)):

No, I'm, I'm not done. I I'm not done. I'm not, I'm not You political about it. No, I'm being dead serious about this. 'cause it's a deadly serious issue.

Speaker 4 ([00:38:10](#)):

It's

Speaker 3 ([00:38:11](#)):

The, the, the best way to get ahead on homelessness is through prevention. The city council, which I led and lead, put forward in the budget funding for a prevention program that has incredible success. We've pushed harder and harder and harder to put more funding in that I've worked with philanthropy to establish additional programs for seniors to keep them in their homes. That's the way we get ahead on a monthly basis. San Diego over the last two years, has housed anywhere in the range between 700 and 1200 people per month who are experiencing homelessness. That means they exit homelessness. And in inter permanent housing, every single month, we've had more people fall into homelessness. The problem is not that we don't know how to get people off the streets. The problem is not that we don't know how to get people outta shelter. The problem is that we don't know how to keep them off the streets. And we will not do that in any effective way whatsoever. If we are only willing to respond to the worst version of the problem that we see in front of us, instead of actually thinking a few steps ahead and trying to prevent it, it is a preventable, I will never accept that in the richest country in the world and in one of the, the, the wealthiest cities in the richest country in the world. That homelessness is an inevitable fact that we have to accept. I will not accept that.

Speaker 4 ([00:39:21](#)):

Well, there are, there are reasons that you and I differ, and obviously this is one of them. But when you talk about the elderly, why don't we get with the tenants and say, let's come up with the lady that we were ta I talked about this with. And so we called it the McCann Hoskins Pact, where you get with the tenant, where you have elderly living and say, we're gonna establish the 10 year lease. We're gonna give you tax credits so that you don't raise your rent on the elderly.

Speaker 3 ([00:39:52](#)):

Terry, we passed a tenant protection ordinance, which you oppose, which had additional protections for seniors. Um, and again, we've established homelessness prevention programs for seniors. These are actual policies that we passed and programs we put in place at work. So they're working, we need to invest in them more,

Speaker 2 ([00:40:08](#)):

By the way,

Speaker 4 ([00:40:09](#)):

Talking about numbers that getting housed, what they don't tell you is the reason why the numbers are high. Because they get unhoused, they get into housing and they're not in the proper services that they need. They leave and then all of a sudden they back out on the street and it's like, uh, reci. It's just a revolving door.

Speaker 2 ([00:40:29](#)):

Thank you for introducing housing Terry. 'cause we're not gonna solve the homelessness crisis here today. Absolutely not, unfortunately. Um, Sean, there was a city council meeting again that I was watching. Uh, you guys, I'm sorry, <laugh>. I don't normally, so don't feel bad for me. I was just prepping for this session. Um, but you said that the housing conversation is complex. There's the financing and the per reading side. And, um, when you guys were provided an annual report on homes, you said this, uh, there's a lot of interest. This was in response to what your fellow council members were saying. There's a lot of interest in seeing more affordable development happen, and that won't happen without an investment on our end. What investment do you see is missing?

Speaker 3 ([00:41:18](#)):

Well, I, with the largest scale, I believe in social housing and I, I don't see a way out of California's housing crisis or the, the American housing crisis without massive public investment in housing. That means the public building housing, uh, utilizing social housing model where we have mixed income developments that provide housing opportunities for people up and down the income ladder, uh, dignified housing that receives the same sort of respect that, um, any of our neighborhoods receive. Uh, so that's what I, I am advocating for at the federal and state level. Um, I'm a big supporter of that until we get there. We need local dedicated revenue. Um, at, in the, in the short term, the city is putting money toward affordable housing, like providing loans, providing grants to get that done. The city's, uh, through the city council's leadership as the housing authority, the housing commission has secured, uh, hundreds of millions of dollars for, uh, what we call object home key, which is the conversion of motels and hotels into permanent housing, um, for folks, um, we've done that, um, actually quite successfully over the last couple cycles.

Speaker 3 ([00:42:24](#)):

Um, its investments like that, but ultimately we are going to need ongoing dedicated revenue, which will provide the builders. Um, whether that means the housing commission or, uh, other builders in our community, uh, the knowledge to know that there will be funding there for them to tap into, to, to build what they need. Right now, um, as I mentioned before, uh, we have a public need, a basic human right and housing that is almost solely dependent on private funding and not just private, private for-profit funding. And that model is breaking our society. We are living in a, in a city where fewer and fewer people are being able to see themselves having a future here where young families, um, are having to face the decision of whether or not they, um, should stay in a city that they love or have to move out of state. Uh, where our college students with less and less and less certainty, um, are, are more, I should say, more and more uncertainty are graduating with nothing more than a hope that they'll be able to continue to live here. And so that seems like a very, very good reason for us to have local dedicated revenue to invest in more affordable housing, um, to supplement the, the market rate that you know is being built.

Speaker 2 ([00:43:42](#)):

But you talk about public housing, you mean like the city seeking out funds from other go, like from the federal government?

Speaker 3 ([00:43:50](#)):

Well, yeah, I think that would be a, it'd be a combination of, of funds, the sources that could be, and that's part of some of the policies that need to change at the federal and state level will allow us to ca those together so the public could actually build the housing. Right. Um, so there's publicly owned, there's publicly financed, right. Um, those are, those are different things. And I'm for both.

Speaker 4 ([00:44:14](#)):

So if, if I may just quickly, so as a council member, you gotta be inclusive. You gotta have, you're at it. Your, your, your ability to work within your district has to include everyone, right? So keep that in mind. You gotta be, you can't beat a buyer and separate group. You have focus on everyone together. So a couple months ago, the UT published an article that said there were 2,839 homes available to be purchased in July, available on the market. If you look at a, a recent study, corporate ownership just in D nine itself owned 13 to 14% depending on what little community is this. And of single family neighborhoods, homes and district nine, 13 to 14% are already owned by corporate landlords. And OB as an an example, is one individual has 200 hotels Airbnbs, he has basically bought apartment complexes and turned them into what the article said were, um, de facto hotels. So there's a couple things that we can do immediately. We can close the loophole and the Airbnb policy so that probably 4,500 homes will come on the market immediately.

Speaker 3 ([00:45:45](#)):

Terry gonna get that passed and keep it from being Mirandized. Yes, you are. I

Speaker 4 ([00:45:50](#)):

Will. Yeah. 'cause I am a uniter and I am, I believe in the ability to get people to see, um, the correct thinking, these developers that don't want it passed. So everyone that is on the council who's sports developers,

Speaker 3 ([00:46:04](#)):

Who, that's not who referendum is

Speaker 4 ([00:46:06](#)):

Wire, that's what I think Neils so that you can do that immediately. Those are things that are clear choices that can happen today or tomorrow, Monday, whatever that is.

Speaker 2 ([00:46:18](#)):

Along the lines of housing. Terry, you've been critical of the bonus a DU program. Why is it a failure in your eyes, if that's how you feel?

Speaker 4 ([00:46:29](#)):

Yeah, I do feel that way because one, um, I am a strong supporter of single family neighborhoods. Um, one day everybody may wanna live in a single family neighborhood. You may not, you may want to live in a high rise downtown, and that's, that's fine. But a lot of people like to peace and quiet of single family neighborhoods. The problem with the bonus a U program, first of all, is that it hasn't really made any affordable, um, housing. It's just, um, you know, middle rate or high rate housing. So we could go back to the original state level program for the book, for the, uh, a DA ADUs and J ADUs and it will be sufficed because almost every one of them that have been deeded so far, none of them have been low to moderate income. So when you have to pay 2200 bucks for a studio and you're a student, I don't think that's low.

Speaker 4 ([00:47:33](#)):

I don't think that's low. If you have to pay 2,600 bucks for a one bedroom that's not low. A couple weeks ago we were doing a cleanup on one of the canyons, and a gentleman who I know came down was talking to us and we were actually, it was my campaign manager and them would talking first. And he owns a huge apartment complex. I mean, a huge, actually owns like two or three up on this hill. And you know what he said? He rents his three bedrooms for \$1,600 a month. He says he does this because he knows people can't afford anything else. And if developers come in and flip properties, that \$1,600 will not be

there anymore. So we need to get involved and who's necessarily is purchasing our land. Um, and again, it's developers and, and you know, and developers, they're have to make money. That's fine. No one is trying to stifle anybody from making money. That's the American way. Good for them. But we're, they're doing it now at the backs of people that can't afford it. And that's where we need to step in.

Speaker 2 ([00:48:44](#)):

Is there any sort of data or reports to show that most of these ADUs are being built by developers?

Speaker 4 ([00:48:52](#)):

Uh, yes. Um, well, the kb the pro, the, the Boers A DU program isn't really being utilized. So a lot of the ADUs that are being built, um, they're, they're not affordable. So in other words, if you get the bonus program, you have to have so many affordable or you get offsite. IT case may be but cannot. There's

Speaker 3 ([00:49:16](#)):

Our A ds,

Speaker 4 ([00:49:17](#)):

But they're not apartments, but they're not being, um, low to moderate people. They're higher. So, um, I'm sure the city could pull that data. There's different organizations out there that I got it from. I'm sure if they got it and the city can easily get it.

Speaker 2 ([00:49:38](#)):

Sean, you have thoughts on ADUs that you spoke about on the, at the debate that you guys were at recently that, you know, um, it's about bringing more housing online.

Speaker 3 ([00:49:50](#)):

Yes. Okay. And I really appreciate the last part of that question. At some point, almost every housing conversation starts to drift away from what we're really talking about, which is homes for human beings to live in. And we use, you know, terminology like the eds and units. So houses that human beings will live in, they'll have a roof over their head. Um, that's really important. I think we should keep that in mind when we talk about it in these abstract ways as if apartments are a four-letter word and not places where people live. Um, places where families like mine live. Um, I think we're kind of losing sight of what's really important. And that is providing folks with an essential for a decent life, which is, which is a home I have yet to see any economist with from any ideology say that, that reducing the supply of a high in demand good will reduce prices,

Speaker 3 ([00:50:47](#)):

Fewer homes on the market, the entire prices. And I know about you, but I don't think people can afford to pay more for housing than there we are. Are there ways for us to regulate more? Absolutely. And I have pushed the envelope on that more than any city council member in San Diego with respect to, to tenant protections. Um, which is a, a critical, critical piece of this. Um, we pushed back on what offsighting would happen and where for, but that's a, a different program altogether. There is no offsighting of, of adu. It's not a thing. Um, and what I'm, I hear simultaneously is a cri criticism of the bonus a DE program that it's destroying neighborhoods and that it's not being utilized. So I I don't know which one it is. Is it destroying neighborhoods or is it not being used at all?

Speaker 4 ([00:51:36](#)):

It's, I would look at it as destroying the tapestries of neighborhoods from people that live there and their quality of life. And it's not being utilized in a way that it not, it is not making low income housing.

Speaker 3 ([00:51:54](#)):

Yes. I think, look, there's a, there's a generational divide in this conversation that is an important way. There is no affordable housing in San Diego, with the exception of deep restricted, affordable housing that left years ago. Anyone, any of us who are in this room and have tried to rent in the last five years could tell you affordable doesn't exist. So you're right, \$2,200 a month isn't affordable for most families, but it \$2,200 is less than 26 or 27 or 3000 and I don't know, a family or, or a single individual who would rather pay that 400 or \$500 a month. That doesn't exist. The biggest issues we are facing in San Diego are housing affordability and our cost of living crisis and everything that, that Terry's proposed with respect to housing would drive up costs and make a, a preciously, preciously, uh, limited, uh, need in housing, even more demand and lessen supply.

Speaker 4 ([00:52:54](#)):

We open up more housing. If you close the Airbnb loophole,

Speaker 3 ([00:53:01](#)):

Terry's saying that we're gonna close the Airbnb loophole after the, the legislative history on that item, and then it's just gonna happen overnight. Is is no different than saying I'm gonna drop 5,000 units out of the sky and we're gonna have new homes for people.

Speaker 4 ([00:53:14](#)):

Well, I'm not trying to be facetious. I'm just saying that I, I, from what I understand, talking with certain council members that they would concur with that by closing. That already didn't been discussed. It just hasn't been brought off. And you're the guy with the docket. You confirm

Speaker 3 ([00:53:31](#)):

That I, I am the guy with the docket who brings items forward from committee and then I take them

Speaker 4 ([00:53:36](#)):

Away.

Speaker 3 ([00:53:37](#)):

No, I don't take items away from committee. That's never happened. The

Speaker 4 ([00:53:40](#)):

Docket items in the

Speaker 3 ([00:53:42](#)):

Dock. Okay. I don't, I don't even know what you're talking about at this point.

Speaker 2 ([00:53:45](#)):

Well, we got a lot of questions from you guys. So we're going to start off first though with, um, our first question from Catherine Avila. She, um, is with the Erin Price Fellows Program.

Speaker 5 ([00:54:01](#)):

Nice. Hi.

Speaker 6 ([00:54:07](#)):

Hi, uh, once again, my name is Catherine Avila. I go to Hoover High School. And as someone who lives in the diverse community of City Heights, where many Spanish speaking individuals and, um, like myself and many other language speakers that live in the area, I haven't seen enough bilingual communicators involved in the government. So how can other, uh, language speakers feel involved and heard in the community?

Speaker 3 ([00:54:37](#)):

Uh, it's a great, that's a great question. Um, it's something that our office has worked really hard on. So you go to Uber High School, you know how diverse our community is. Um, it starts with who we hire on our staffs, right? So, uh, we entered office on day one with a staff that could speak to, um, not just English speakers, but to Spanish speakers, to folks Withm communities spoke, uh, folks from the Vietnamese community. That was really important. And from my understanding, um, our staff has had, um, the most linguistic diversity of any staff that's represented District nine. But District nine is even more diverse than we're able to, to hire staff to, to communicate with on our own right. And so that means partnering with community based organizations. That means, um, uh, hiring interpreters for budget forums. Um, we held a budget forum in with Spanish as a primary language.

Speaker 3 ([00:55:29](#)):

And unfortunately we got significant pushback on that from some folks who were in this route thinking that that was unfair of us to host the forum with Spanish as the primary language and, uh, English being translated, um, for them. So, um, it's something that we work on a lot at the district, in the office level, and then at the city council level, um, we've tried to make it easier for translation services to be, uh, uh, to be tapped into our city clerk, um, who reports to the city council. Um, she's bilingual and does an incredible job of some on the fly translation necessary. And then we always, uh, always, uh, when we anticipate that an item will have folks from multiple, uh, backgrounds with different language abilities, um, seek professional translation, um, so that everyone can have their voices heard and that they can understand what's going on as well.

Speaker 4 ([00:56:19](#)):

So that's a great question. And it's not, it shouldn't just apply to Hoover High. It should also apply to Crawford. Um, 'cause it's also an art district. Um, yeah, I hope that you keep that same passion and want and you be the person that comes into the bloody Poland. Agree. Because you're right there, there probably isn't enough, right? I mean, I don't, I didn't take a account. I don't, I don't know, but there probably isn't enough. So there's one su and you would be a success right, for your community. And I'll tell you another person once, so there's a young, well, we may not mouth, but she's a captain in the San Diego Police Department, who is the commanding officer of the Mid-City police station, Martha Saints, born and raised about three blocks from that police station. She is a walking success story. You could be that walking success story, and I hope you are.

Speaker 2 ([00:57:24](#)):

Thank you, Catherine. Okay. Um, we'll start with Sean on this one. This is from the audience. What's your position on prop three? Three and prop 33 is the proposition that would repeal a 1995 law that prevented cities and counties from regulating, um, rents. Right. I got that right

Speaker 3 ([00:57:51](#)):

Ish. Right? That's how I've gotten it in my end. Um, yeah. Um, so the, oh, let's make sure we get the issue right until we pull it up just on

Speaker 2 ([00:58:06](#)):

Yeah. Okay.

Speaker 3 ([00:58:07](#)):

That

Speaker 2 ([00:58:08](#)):

And, and they're asking, what's your position on Prop three three and do you support rent control?

Speaker 3 ([00:58:14](#)):

Okay. So, uh, we'll start with the first part. Red control, um, is a tool that can be useful. Um, I'm supportive of it in certain manner and in certain places in certain times. Um, I don't think it's gonna achieve the outcomes that folks want, but I think we need it probably, we probably need it today in Cal, in, in San Diego. Um, I don't think it's viable politically. And so it's like that part's really important. Um, so I can, I can believe that it'd be helpful. I can believe that it would slow down the increasing cost of rent, which is super important. I don't see a path that to pass or to stay, um, on the books. And so, um, with, I've had conversations with folks in the, um, in the, uh, tenant advocacy role about this, the amount of energy that we would spend trying to do that.

Speaker 3 ([00:59:05](#)):

Um, I'd rather build housing that folks can live it. I, I think there's a similar amount of energy and effort that would need to go into, um, vacant housing, affordable in San Diego. And, um, I, given how steep of a cl uh, hell that seems to climb, given the likelihood that it'd be refer randomized and then pulled off the books once it was passed, if it was passed, um, my preference would be to do something that would stick when we do, and that thing that would stick is by actually creating more affordable homes. Prop 33 though, um, is important, um, because there's, there's a, um, real, um, inability for cities to be able to put those mechanisms in place when they need them. And so, um, freeing up cities to do that when they need to is, is a really, really important tool. Uh, who asked that if I can ask? Is it we're talking about cost to kins? Okay. Yeah. So it, it, it is a, it is a big impediment to, um, making rent more affordable throughout the state. I think this is a statewide issue. We, San Diego can make housing more affordable here as a city. It's a big city. It's an important city in terms of the overall housing ecosystem, but it's not the only city. And so something like Prop 33, which gives more tools, more cities, a important tool to regulate, uh, rent, could be super, super helpful in the overall landscape.

Speaker 4 ([01:00:23](#)):

Thank you Carrie. Yeah, I will be really quick and easy on this. I kind of follow in the lines of Senator Tony Atkins. I oppose it. I oppose Prop three three.

Speaker 2 ([01:00:36](#)):

Do you support rent control?

Speaker 4 ([01:00:39](#)):

No. And I'll tell you why. Because rent control doesn't really affect large corporate apartment owners, but it affects small mom and pops owners. So you have to be very careful and not price out your small mom and pops, um, home providers. 'cause that's what happens, right? It's people has to make money in their investments, right? I, I've yet to see any small mom and pops housing providers try to, uh, overly keep, continue to raise rent, rent, rent. I've seen corporate people do that, but not small mom and pops. So you have to be really careful in that. But, um, I would say no. I think there's other ways to come after corporate greed. Um, instead of establishing a Cogan, um, we <inaudible>

Speaker 3 ([01:01:44](#)):

I just want to, there, there's this part of this conversation about housing I think is super important. And a lot of it stems from the fact that housing is so overwhelmingly owned, um, by the private sector, but we're talking about people's homes, right? And if you choose to, there's certain things that if you choose to invest your money in, you have, you have different responsibilities. If you want to, you know, do it without a conscience, invest in the stock market. Um, do what you want. But if you're gonna own somebody's home and you're gonna make money, make money off that, you're gonna enjoy the benefits of watching the property value rise over time. You have additional responsibilities. And I don't care if you own one rental unit or 1 million rental units, the people who live in those homes deserve to know that they're not going to be unfairly treated.

Speaker 3 ([01:02:31](#)):

Uh, they'll be unfairly priced out of their home and they're gonna be treated with respect. And it's not true that every quote unquote mom and pop landlord is a good actor who takes care of their, their tenants. We know that. In fact, most of the most egregious stories that we hear at City Hall and that I saw as a, as a legal intern, came from smaller property owners who were squeezing every scent they possibly could out of their mostly immigrant and refugee tenants, with the expectation that those folks would not have the legal representation or language skills to, um, hold those folks accountable. And there are certain risks that, quite frankly, corporate landlords do not take that some of our, our smaller landlords do. So it is incredibly important that the, the playing field actually be level here. That everyone be held to the same standard. Because again, I don't know about you, I don't think who owns your home should matter with respect to the, the level of housing security you can depend on, on, on a monthly basis or the respect that you're treated by with, um, with from the person who owns that home.

Speaker 4 ([01:03:35](#)):

So I don't really, um, know I already got up on that because it, we were talking about rent control, not good landlords and, and bad landlords necessarily. But there's gonna be a, you know, there may be some virtuous signaling here just to, uh, word salad and stuff. I, I'm telling you, and in City Heights is a very dense, populated <inaudible>. A lot of those homes, apartments that they live in are owned by Vietnamese people. And I'm telling you right now, if a corporate, uh, and right, I'm not saying, I mean, I don't, I can't say every small mom and pop, um, housing provider is, is a mother Theresa, of course not. But I can say the ones that I've experienced and worked with, they are, they, they understand that they want a good tenant. They don't want to keep having a revolving door of tenants. So they have a good tenant. They will do what they can to keep the price down to maintain good tenants. You don't wanna have an apartment complex empty. So big corporate they can handle that small mom and pops cannot. So again, I think you just gotta be careful when you make that definitive

Speaker 2 ([01:04:51](#)):

Line. We've got a good question here. I wanna, um, make sure we answer. So in the past, the council has moved funds from stormwater infrastructure needs. Given the devastating January storm in the future, how will you ensure the funds for needed infrastructure gets allocated?

Speaker 3 ([01:05:08](#)):

Can you repeat the first part of that question? We've

Speaker 2 ([01:05:10](#)):

Moved in the past, the council has moved funds from stormwater infrastructure needs.

Speaker 3 ([01:05:16](#)):

I don't, I I don't know that that's, that that might be technically accurate, but also not true. At the same time. Money gets moved around in a variety of ways in the city where, um, we might initially be planning to pay for something with cash and then instead use, um, commercial paper or other type of financing mechanism to pay for it. We have funded our stormwater infrastructure much more in my time on council, and we've advocated for more funding for the infrastructure and for the maintenance. Um, I stood on the streets that were flooded. Um, the streets that were worst flooded in in January, um, in December of 2021, calling for more investment in our storm water system, calling for better maintenance of our storm water system because those neighborhoods and neighbors knew, um, that what was being done was not sufficient. This is an issue that, um, we've been absolutely adamant about that.

Speaker 3 ([01:06:18](#)):

Um, we need to spend more, um, we need to invest more in our infrastructure, um, especially our stormwater infrastructure. And this is why it's so important for the city to grow revenue. Um, because again, um, talking points aside, anytime anyone with any budget expertise has looked at our city budget over the last several years, um, they have, and actually over the last couple of decades, they have recognized the lack of revenue that the city has and that we can sit, we simply cannot do all the things that we need to do without growing that. And so, um, I am a hundred percent support of fully funding our square water system. Um, but to think that we can do that without growing revenue is a fantasy.

Speaker 2 ([01:06:56](#)):

Is it safe to say you are supportive of the 1 cent sales tax?

Speaker 3 ([01:07:01](#)):

I'm extremely supportive of the 1 cent sales tax and everyone who wants a well-functioning city should be supportive of the one in sales tax.

Speaker 2 ([01:07:09](#)):

Sherry, it's a question. Do you want me to read it? No,

Speaker 4 ([01:07:12](#)):

I'm good. So, um, as far as infrastructure, the city has failed. All of those victims of the January flood failed. And we're gonna be in a lot of lawsuits. So whoever is the city attorney gonna see one of the candidates back there right now, we'll have to go through that. 'cause we're going to be, it's gonna be litigation. It's already started. Hundreds of hundreds of people will be suing the city at rightfully so we failed them. So I'm against the 1 cent sales tax and this is why, well, a couple reasons why actually. But the bigger thing is the money's gonna go into their general fund and the, the council already uses a shell game, the move money around to purchase things that they want to purchase. 1 0 1 s street, they liquidated all a lot of money from capital improvements that were already there to pay for certain things.

Speaker 4 ([01:08:12](#)):

Now they replaced it, but they put a bond on it. So it's a loan, right? So no, I'm against, um, unless you can put a grandfather clause on it or you can say for sure this money is going where, because I don't want to pay for another ashry. I don't think you do either. And if you agree with me on that, then you'll vote no on these sexes. And you know, when you go to the, I do now when I go to the grocery store, it's difficult choosing, and I make a silly analogy that, uh, cheese cool whip, what do I, what do I need most? Probably cheese. Even though I like being cool up, I can't afford both, right? Because the price of everything is increasing, right? I know it's a cost of life at the moment, right? Everything is increasing. Why do I wanna put that burden on you or other taxpayers? No, I think the time has come where our council, who really hasn't been very fiducially responsible anyways, needs to look internally and put their ship in the right rhetoric and put it in the right direction.

Speaker 2 ([01:09:26](#)):

If you oppose the tax, Terry, then how would you ensure that we, you know, continue to fund infrastructure in a way that would prevent things like what happened in January from

Speaker 4 ([01:09:38](#)):

Happening? Well, you gotta be proactive in how you do your maintenance. Um, you know, the, there have been what I would call unprioritize infrastructure that was not, did not serve the city the best way possible. So you gotta get back to the basics and you got to take care of infrastructure that is important. And so that's how we live

Speaker 3 ([01:10:05](#)):

There. There's just no way to do the maintenance without additional revenue. Maintenance requires workers, workers require pay just the way it is. And, um, we need to be able to fully staff our city, which we are on a better trajectory than we were in the past. Um, we need to be able to pay for the infrastructure itself. And again, the easiest talking point for any politician running for any office is we're just gonna spend better. I don't know how many times San Diegos are gonna be lied to by the elected officials of San Diego or the candidates running for office in San Diego about there being some magical way to fully fund one of the biggest cities America on one of the smallest per capita, uh, uh, revenue, uh, annual revenues that any city has, any big city has. It doesn't work. And the more we fly to ourselves and tell us that it can, the wider that that gap grows and the more painful it's going to be to close it, and the more, uh, harms are going that are going to occur while we're attempting to close

Speaker 4 ([01:11:08](#)):

It. If our council realizes that the money in our revenue, the San Diego's money, it's our money, not their money, it's our money. It's time. They need to tighten the belt, stop doing terrible

Speaker 3 ([01:11:21](#)):

Spinning, the belt's tightened. There's no more notches left. Read the IBA reports, read the auditor's reports I do. Well, if you read 'em and you digested them, you'd see that while they're, while efficiencies can be gained, they are not enough to close the gap.

Speaker 4 ([01:11:35](#)):

Again, you have to gain, you have to gain, Sean. It's not gonna pass because there's no trust and confidence in the city hall at the

Speaker 3 ([01:11:42](#)):

Moment. If I, I did let the voters decide.

Speaker 4 ([01:11:45](#)):

Oh, absolutely. But I'm telling you, there's no trust and confidence and what's happening either at the mayor's office or at the council's office, no trust and confidence it will not pass.

Speaker 2 ([01:11:59](#)):

Next question. Council President recently tried to eliminate virtual comment from, oh, this is hard to read, uh, from moving forward. Are you dedicated to ensuring access to virtual participation from the public?

Speaker 3 ([01:12:19](#)):

I'm committed to guaranteeing access to participation to the public. The idea that Zoom is the only other way to do that besides in person comment, you all we're more creative than that. We're we're smarter than that. Other cities are doing it. We're working with the clerk to provide additional options. We're not pulling it back right now. Um, but I also would really like to recenter the conversation here. I represent the most diverse city council district in San Diego. Um, they have concerns about keeping a roof over their head, putting food on their kids' plates, and making sure that they have decent services in their community. And the amount of time that we are spending on topics that do not, that are, that are, are not at the top of the list of those folks in those communities is incredibly frustrating because we need to get business done at city council in order to make sure those roads get paved, the potholes get filled to make sure that the work expect that people expect us to do can get done.

Speaker 3 ([01:13:19](#)):

And not to allow four or five people to add hours per week to the city council meetings. Not the over, not the public as a whole, but particular individuals who speak on every item and add literally hours to our council meetings on a weekly basis. That's not fair to the public. We are not expanding access by doing that. We're not expanding my ability to communicate with my constituents by doing that. Um, so I'm fully committed to access to city government. I come from a community organizing background where I worked with folks who had never, ever, ever had the opportunity to do that and brought them to City Hall and other forms of government to do that. What I'm not, what I don't believe is that Zoom is the only way for folks to engage outside of, of in-person participation

Speaker 4 ([01:14:05](#)):

So quickly. Um, it's not just Zoom. You can call in on a phone. So you can do a phone caller. I would never, ever try to, to limit the voice of people in my district. When I'm your city council. We have people that can't drive down. They may be handicapped, they may be elderly, they may be can't pay the 20 bucks for four hours of parking every day and maybe just to get there. And it's happened where the council president removed something from the docket. So you've been there for four hours already and then you can't even talk about the subject. So I would, first of all, I individuals have the right to address their city officials. And if you really, really, if you've ever been to a council meeting, um, I hope you haven't, but if you ever did, you, you're gonna realize this.

Speaker 4 ([01:14:56](#)):

Every council member has word salad for like five minutes on everything. That makes no sense. Make, it doesn't, let me rephrase that. It's not that it doesn't make sense, it doesn't contribute to what the topic is. I've seen people, I've seen council members praise the city staff, which is fine. They did do a good job. But to sit there for three or four minutes and praise it, first of all, they're, they did their job right? So thank 'em. Maybe the council president can just thank 'em. He can praise 'em for five minutes, but not everybody else. So there's other ways to streamline it. But one, you should never try to silence the voice

of the people who elect you. And the only person at this stage who started that was the incumbent. He pulled it only because four hours later there was so much opposition into the chambers. He pulled it. Just remember that again, you know, nothing's personal. I like Sean's a great dad. I see him all the time. He, he, you know, has his child. That's awesome. But we're just different. We have different ideologies with both Dems. We just got different Audi ideologies. So when the dust settles, I always tell people this, if you're happy with what's going on, you vote for Sean. If you're not, you vote for change, you vote for charity, easy as pie.

Speaker 2 ([01:16:32](#)):

Well, thank you Sean, and thank you Terry for participating today. And thank you for all of you for your thoughtful questions. I'll try to follow up on some of them with the candidates and maybe include them in my newsletter. So I'll make sure we get most of these answered. But thank you. Thank you.