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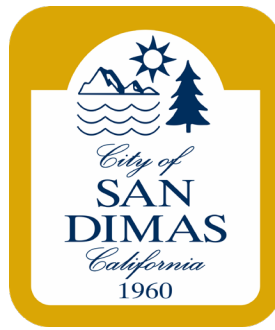
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**Director of Parks and
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Director of Public Works
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**2022 State of the City
San Dimas, CA
Mayor Emmett Badar
June 23, 2022**

Good Morning and welcome to the beautiful City of San Dimas! We truly live in a wonderful city with amazing schools, high quality park and recreation amenities, low crime, and a community that cares about quality of life. It is truly an honor to call San Dimas my home.

When first elected to serve as Mayor, nobody could have predicted that the entire world would be facing the worse pandemic since the 1918, and certainly, nobody could have known what to expect, and what we would experience since March 2020. For San Dimas, we kept the doors open to City government when most other cities were closed. Our staff worked creatively to continue providing services in a safe and effective manner, including continued support for our seniors. Our partners, including the Chamber of Commerce and the business community worked together to support business and navigate the challenge of operating businesses under COVID restrictions. Most importantly, I am thankful to our residents who endured and helped one another through this difficult time. Our community and region lost residents to COVID, and their memory will endure in the strength that we built to stay together as one larger community.

To our City staff and partners, thank you for always stepping up and looking after the best interest of the City. It is and will continue to be the reason we are one of the premier cities in this region.

Our City has been moving forward and is committed to being responsive to the needs of the residents. To this end, the City implemented "my San Dimas," a proven customer service request system, which allows the City to leverage technology to improve how the City responds to the needs of residents. Whether it is graffiti, a street issue, or a quality of life issue, residents can report these conditions through "my San Dimas." For those who prefer to call or email, City staff will enter the request into "my San Dimas."

With any technology, the City is improving its internal processing. As is common to other cities, when a resident emails or calls, many times they are passed from one person to the next before their request may get to the right person. All too often, their request may get lost or delayed. This is frustrating for residents, and it gives the impression that the City does not care. For my San Dimas, the City has been working to improve customer service and responsiveness. City staff are trained to enter service requests into the system even if they are not responsible for the fix. While no technology system is perfect, I can say that “my San Dimas” has been a success. Many residents have given praise to how quick the City is to respond, and they appreciate the back and forth communication with City staff.

Since last July, the City has opened over 1,700 service cases. One of the most frequent reports is graffiti, and this is a good example of how “my San Dimas” has been the catalyst to improve the City’s response to this very negative quality of life issue.

According to a study by Arizona State University, graffiti contributes to the decline in property value, reduced retail sales, and increased blight. Overall, it degrades our community and must be dealt with quickly. 70% of graffiti requests were resolved within 3 days, with almost half of all requests being addressed in less than a day. Clearly, some cases take longer to resolve, but for public spaces, this is an incredible achievement.

I sent a graffiti request when I found someone had tagged a wall in a neighborhood. About an hour and a half later, I received a notification on “my San Dimas” that said the case was addressed. Thinking this was a mistake, I drove back and found it was cleared. This is powerful and a testament to the City being responsive to residents.

Public safety is our top priority. As a former law enforcement officer, I personally understand the impact a lack of public safety has on a community, and I would not want to live somewhere that did not focus on improving safety and security. Therefore, I am proud of the work of that our Los Angeles County Sheriff’s do to keep our community safe.

Overall, the City is improving, and crime is down. We are facing challenges that have become all too common for cities. Catalytic converter thefts have been on the rise nationally due to the price of materials within the device. Therefore, we support Senate Bill 986 which strengthens controls over the sale of catalytic converters. The goal is to close the loophole which has created a market for selling stolen catalytic converters to recyclers without facilitating law enforcement’s ability to investigate and stop those who are doing so illegally. The bill is still in process, and we hope it passes swiftly.

With the help of our good partner Sanders Towing, we have held two Etch and CATCH events. We facilitated the etching of identifying information onto catalytic converters to allow law enforcement to connect what could be a stolen catalytic converter with the actual owner. This provides some help to law enforcement to support efforts to reduce thefts.

Traffic safety is also a priority. The number of accidents is one way to measure traffic safety. In 2021, the City was able to restore the traffic unit using federal grant resources. As a result, we have made real improvements in traffic safety. According to our Station Captain, pre-pandemic and prior to adding a motorcycle officer, the City experienced on average 44 traffic accidents a month and 200 citations written. After the addition, accidents fell to 23 per month and 293 citations written. For accidents, this represented an almost 50% reduction. We hope to continue this success.

Technology plays a major role in the efforts to reduce crime, and the City has been working to deploy technology to assist our deputies. The City installed Flock license plate cameras throughout the City to leverage technology in the fight against crime. The cameras have been very effective in capturing mail theft suspects, identified stolen vehicles entering our City, assisted our deputies in capturing these suspects, and has provided valuable information in other investigations. Due to its success and with recommendation by our Public Safety Commission, the City is adding additional cameras at key locations to expand the system. The City is also expanding its camera system in our City parks to enhance safety for residents.

There are challenges in continuing the fight against crime. Unfortunately for Los Angeles County, we can have the best deputies, but without the support of the district attorney in prosecuting crimes, reducing quality of life crimes such as theft and stolen vehicles becomes challenging. We look to the public to support policies which reduce ongoing crime in our community. As a City, we will continue to evaluate other measures that can enhance our safety.

I commend our Los Angeles County Fire Department who regularly inspects businesses and the wildland interface to ensure that fire risk is reduced. Sometimes, we may forget that fire is a real danger because our Fire Department does an effective job reducing risks, but we should always be mindful of the high quality service they provide. More recently, San Dimas experienced a fire in the Via Verde area, and the Fire Department was effective in protecting all residential structures in this very high fire risk area. We look forward to upcoming Fire Department training to expand our Community Emergency Response Team. These are resident volunteers who are ready to respond to emergencies in our City. A special thank you to Larry Giannone who is our Volunteer Coordinator and who serves as an unpaid volunteer to strengthen emergency response. In the next few months, the City will be bringing on another staff person who will strengthen the City's ability to be prepared for the next disaster and to provide higher quality public information on all City business.

In any City, the most critical assets are their employees, and San Dimas has been fortunate to have some of the highest quality employees around. In the past decade and last few years, there have been many articles and stories showing that businesses have had significant challenges finding and retaining high quality talent. I personally have visited businesses that have reduced service because they were unable to find employees to perform. For other cities, many report these same difficulties, and these cities are trying to improve their compensation,

working environments, and marketing to attract and retain employees. For everyone, this is a challenge that will continue for many years.

In San Dimas, quality employees a priority. As a result, our residents receive amazing quality of service every day.

There are many accomplishments and activity that our City departments are instrumental in achieving which improve our community.

Public Works lead efforts to improve our infrastructure, transportation, engineering, and they oversee implementation of state mandates regarding recycling, trash, and serves as our lead on a number of regional projects including mass transit, stormwater, and sewer.

Public Works has worked with telecommunications companies to ensure the City has access to the fastest internet and communication protocols. There are certain areas where our City lags in internet speeds, and Public Works will be key in ensuring these areas are upgraded to today's standards.

The City budgeted over \$10 million in capital improvement projects to restore and upgrade our public infrastructure. This equates to over 1.2 million square feet of pavement. There is more to be done. Council has authorized staff to pursue more than \$15,000,000 in grant funding to augment City's funds.

Public Works emphasizes safety. In planning our street projects, Public Works implements Active Transportation best practices which are intended to make bike riding and pedestrians safer. Our Traffic Safety Committee addressed 44 locations of concern brought forward by residents and businesses. They reviewed 22 special events and coordinated with sheriff and traffic control to make these events safe not only for the participants, but also for our residents. The City also implemented two permit parking districts to meet the needs of impacted neighborhoods, and the City is ready to implement appropriate measures to deal with parking and traffic impacts where necessary. The City also conducted over 1,500 inspections to make sure that all work in the public right of way was done safely.

I want to highlight a number of accomplishments that our small Public Works staff was able to achieve. This included the City

- Repairing over 1,300 potholes,
- Replacing 654 signs,
- Rehabilitating sidewalk, drive approaches, curb and gutters in key locations,
- Converting City Parking lot lights to LED to increase lighting and reduce costs,
- Increased walkability by upgrading over 20 ADA ramps to modern standards,
- Implemented state mandates related to waste and storm water compliance, and
- Provided access to tabletop organics recycling buckets to assist residents in meeting organics requirements.

Parks and Recreation provides the activities and recreation space that allows our residents to enjoy the outdoors, stay active, and support the needs of our seniors.

The department has a new director that is just celebrating his first year. With the department focused on looking to the future, the department completed several planning documents in the previous fiscal year that included a *Community Recreation Needs Assessment and an Asset Management Plan*. The findings from these documents were summarized into an overall Strategic Plan that included specific goals and objectives to meet the recreation needs of San Dimas residents. We look forward to the department formulating this plan into a coherent document and allowing for future discussions with the community.

City staff worked with the Senior Commission to develop a strategic plan tailored to senior services. The plan addresses specific marketing strategies, programming and services that are unique to senior residents and intended to continue the high quality programming that our seniors have come to expect.

City staff worked with the Parks and Recreation Commission to update the City's Field Allocation Policy that is used to allocate and facilitate the use athletic fields for youth and adult sports organizations. The City is also updating the Community Forest Management Plan that is used to maintain the City's community forest consisting of approximately 9,000 trees. The plan is still being revised, but an important element to plan needs to be adequately accounting for the full cost of ownership of our community forest.

The City has held amazing events, offers robust programming for the seniors, children, and other residents. Parks and Recreation has done so well that we boast many non-residents that come to partake in our programs and services. We welcome having such a great reputation and applaud the efforts of our City staff and recreation partners who allow our families to have many opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, sports, and many other activities.

The Community Development Department oversees the City's planning, building, code enforcement and housing.

We should be proud of a number of development projects the City supported and continues to support. In the downtown, we held a groundbreaking in May for the Dixie Rose BBQ which will add another restaurant to the downtown. We also are benefiting by the opening of Popeyes, Total Wine and More, and Burlington. City staff continues to move forward on other development projects and are excited to work closely with the Chamber of Commerce to support future businesses in our City.

In Housing, the City provided rehabilitation assistance for 12 single family homes and 17 mobile homes. The City implemented a mobile home chair lift program that facilitated the installation of lifts for 9 senior mobile homes. Additionally, the City provided rent credits to eligible mobile home residents to reduce their cost of living. In San Dimas, our seniors are able to live in our mobile home park for a rate that is lower than almost any other park in the immediate area.

In Planning, the City has initiated the Downtown Specific Plan process with the intent of establishing a community-driven plan for downtown. The plan will define development in the Bonita corridor from Arrow Highway to Walnut and will impact the downtown for more than 30 years. We also hope to increase the number of dining options downtown.

The City is working with the California Housing and Community Development Department to finalize our Housing Element. This element will establish where the City will prioritize future housing development and mechanisms which support more housing in San Dimas. It is important to be smart about this type of development and to encourage housing options so that our children can afford to live in San Dimas.

Going forward, the City is looking to upgrade its permit systems to allow for online permitting and plan checking. This will make it easier for residents, businesses, and developers to submit, review, and seek approval for permits and plans instead of having to come in person. Just like “my San Dimas,” online permitting can remove some of the inconveniences and barriers to the building and planning processes. The City is moving forward with a performance audit of the permit and development processes to identify opportunities to improve.

This year, the City established and filled a new Housing Manager position to focus on key housing and community quality priorities. One important priority is to update our Homelessness Prevention Plan to be realistic and balancing compassion with accountability. Every city has been facing challenges with homelessness, but for our City, we are experiencing more impacts today and this will increase with the opening of the Gold Line. The City must have a well thought out plan to address this priority.

Our City has historically been very prudent with our resources, and this continues. The City recently passed the 2022-23 operating and capital budget with over \$50 million spent for programs, services, and capital needs. More than half of these expenditures are in our General Fund which supports core City programs and services. We expect to continue our focus on financial sustainability. This year, we fully funded our obligations for some of our retiree liabilities, a feat few have been able to achieve, and we have set aside over \$6 million to fund future replacement needs which are usually burdens to cities. We are investing in our streets and continuing our high quality programs and services.

We also should be mindful that headwinds are ahead of us. The economy is changing, inflation is running at its highest level in decades, gas prices are up dramatically, and construction costs have outpaced the ability for cities to keep up. I have faith that the City will skillfully navigate the road ahead, and I look forward to the City developing a plan that maps out how the City will remain sustainable into the future.

There are many positive activities occurring in the City of San Dimas, and I am very thankful to all those who are a critical part to the success of the City. Our partners such as the Chamber of Commerce, Foothill Transit, Pomona Valley Transportation Authority remained flexible to serve our San Dimas community, and they are ready and willing to support the City in the future.

Our regional partners, such as Supervisor Kathryn Barger's and the Bonita Unified School District have contributed greatly to supporting the high quality of life in San Dimas. Our schools are among the best in the region, our supervisor is responsive to our needs, and we are aligned in our direction to keep San Dimas great.

We navigated the most challenging pandemic in over 100 years well, and I fully expect that our brightest road is ahead of us. Thank you to all of you who have help San Dimas become and remain the best City to call home and raise your family. I look forward to the year ahead. Thank you.