



City of Santa Ana
20 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana, CA 92701
Staff Report
November 2, 2021

TOPIC: Status of Santa Ana Unified School District Facilities Use for Neighborhood Meetings

AGENDA TITLE:

Status and Future Option for Neighborhoods to Access School Facilities at Santa Ana Unified School District Schools for Neighborhood Association/Community Meetings

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive and file.

DISCUSSION

For decades, the Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) has supported and sponsored Santa Ana's neighborhood associations and groups by allowing them to use their campus facilities for neighborhood and community meetings free of charge. This has been a long-standing practice of SAUSD that benefits the constituents served by the City and the SAUSD. These school venues have served as an important, safe, and nearby location to convene residents to discuss and organize themselves on quality-of-life issues.

Although the City of Santa Ana identifies 64 unique neighborhoods in Santa Ana, approximately 20 of those neighborhoods regularly use SAUSD facilities for their meetings. Of the remaining neighborhoods, some use their own space (i.e., a resident's home), reserve space at a City of Santa Ana-owned facility (such as a park or community center), or do not convene meetings at all because those neighborhoods have not or do not self-organize into an active neighborhood. The Neighborhood Initiatives Division works to provide auxiliary support to Santa Ana's various neighborhoods, which all operate independently and are independent of the City of Santa Ana and SAUSD. These constituents are not mutually exclusive to either one of these local government organizations. Based on past practice, there has been a strong desire to support the constituents outside the City's and SAUSD traditional role of serving the community.

One of the ways in which the Neighborhood Initiatives Division works to support neighborhood groups is to facilitate facility use reservations between the neighborhood

groups and the representatives from SAUSD. Recently, City staff has encountered mixed communication with SAUSD staff regarding collaboration for neighborhood association/community meetings. For example, SAUSD staff offers to improve the process via sponsorship by the Superintendent's Office while other staff request full payment for reservation fees in advance. City staff have also observed an inconsistent fee structure applied toward the SAUSD online reservations platform, Facilitron, in addition to an increase rate of cancelled reservations for nonpayment. This recent experience moves away from the 30+ year arrangement by the City and SAUSD to provide facilities for neighborhood/community meetings. The attached exhibit references information regarding the venues accessed by neighborhood groups for neighborhood meetings prior and during COVID-19.

Considering that the City of Santa Ana and SAUSD serve the same constituents, the City appreciates the opportunity to have discussions with representatives from SAUSD to identify the problems, improve communication, and work toward a solution that will work for our shared constituents—particularly our neighborhood groups.

Next Steps

This item is an informational report only and no action is required. Staff recommends that the School Collaboration City Council subcommittee consider this matter and discuss options to collaborate with officials from the Santa Ana Unified School District to provide a sustainable method of ensuring continued access to SAUSD facilities for Santa Ana constituents to convene neighborhood meetings.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

There is no environmental impact associated with this action.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact association with this action.

EXHIBIT(S)

1. Inventory – Santa Ana Neighborhoods and Meeting Locations Oct. 2021

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Approved By: Kristine Ridge, City Manager