



**West of Twin Peaks Central Council**

*A Resource for Neighborhood Organizations West of Twin Peaks in San Francisco since 1936*

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<http://www.westoftwinpeaks.org/>

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July 1, 2015

Hon. Norman Yee  
Supervisor, District 7  
City Hall, Room 244  
San Francisco CA 94102

Dear Supervisor Yee:

As a district supervisor, you were elected to serve the constituents of District 7 as one of eleven on the Board of Supervisors, the legislative branch of government, as our voice in City Hall.

The West of Twin Peaks Central Council, comprised of 20 homeowner associations and neighborhood organizations, sent a detailed letter to the Board of Supervisors stating our unanimous support for the population-based police staffing resolution, after discussion and a vote at our June 22, 2015, meeting. The matter was on the board's calendar for the next day, and the organizations present at our meeting wanted our position to be known to you. Additionally, your legislative aide, Matthias Mormino, attended the WTPCC meeting and seemingly supported the statements by a delegate that, as the elected District 7 Supervisor, you understood clearly that your duty and responsibility is to represent our interests in City Hall. That's why your vote – opposing the resolution to increase police staffing—came as such a disappointment to us. We have read your statement explaining why you voted against the resolution. With all due respect, we believe that it does not adequately address our concerns, as set forth below.

A taxpayer funded, independent study by the City Controller, published on June 10, 2015, clearly outlines the relationship between increased population and decreased police staffing. Moreover, the resolution had the support of a majority of your colleagues, so what was to be gained by opposing a non-binding resolution supported by your constituents?

The Controller's audit clearly stated that San Francisco's total crime rate (violent and property) per resident and daytime population in 2013, was the second highest among the six other cities studied. The property crime rate was also the second highest in the survey group, only lower than Oakland's rate. At the same time, the staffing levels of San Francisco's sworn staff per 100,000 residents (239 officers) and daytime population (201 officers) were lower than the peer group averages. San Francisco was the most densely populated city, and compared to others, it falls below the peer trend line for number of sworn officers per square mile. The resolution simply supports the data gathered by City Hall's trusted auditors. So aligning your vote with a minority of members on the Board of Supervisors is perplexing.

We stated that we support investment in community policing. As neighborhood leaders, we also support programs and philosophies that promote organizational strategies that enhance the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues, such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime. Our members know public safety issues are complex and how important it is for our neighborhoods to prevent crime and try to eliminate the atmosphere of fear it creates. Earning the trust of the community enables law enforcement to better understand and address both the needs of the community and the factors that contribute to crime.

San Francisco Police Department staffing is a continuous, increasingly complex challenge, given our City's rapid population increase, compounded by overall affordability issues, making recruiting and retention of officers difficult. We understand that police staffing in a time of increasing attrition, expanding law-enforcement responsibilities, and decreasing public perception of police, is no small matter for City government.

As your constituents, we simply want to ensure that the number of police officers meet the demands placed on them in a cost-effective and ethical manner for the safety and peacefulness of our neighborhoods and property. We sincerely hope you will do the same.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss this matter further.

Yours truly,

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Roger Ritter,  
President,  
West of Twin Peaks Central Council