



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

### AGENDA ITEM

**DATE:** May 23, 2023

**32**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

#### **SUBJECT**

**ADOPTING A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ADDITION OF UNINCORPORATED AREA REPRESENTATION TO THE SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Board of Directors is comprised of elected officials representing the region's eighteen cities and the County of San Diego who are authorized to vote on issues considered by the SANDAG Board. In addition to these voting members, the SANDAG Board permits ten additional non-voting representatives to serve as advisory board members. Voting and advisory board members provide the region's jurisdictions and other interested parties a "seat at the table" when discussing policy matters and funding decisions. Currently, the County Board of Supervisors represents the unincorporated area and brings a regional perspective to SANDAG's Board. However, more than half-a-million residents living in the County's unincorporated area do not have a single dedicated representative to present their unique perspective on their behalf.

SANDAG has publicly stated its commitment to equity and inclusion and has frequently added advisory Board members to include unique insight and alternative perspectives during the SANDAG Board's decision-making process. In alignment with this assurance and action, we recommend the adoption of a resolution requesting the addition of a non-voting advisory member to the SANDAG Board of Directors. If approved, this advisory member would be a resident of the County's unincorporated area and would serve as a dedicated representative for unincorporated community members.

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

##### **CHAIRWOMAN NORA VARGAS AND SUPERVISOR JOEL ANDERSON**

1. Adopt a Resolution entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO SUPPORTING THE ADDITION OF AN ADVISORY MEMBER TO THE SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DEDICATED TO REPRESENTING THE UNINCORPORATED AREA RESIDENTS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

**SUBJECT: ADOPTING A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ADDITION OF UNINCORPORATED AREA REPRESENTATION TO THE SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to assist the County’s community planning groups in selecting two unincorporated area residents to serve as a primary representative and an alternate representative to the SANDAG Board of Directors, representing the County’s unincorporated area communities, if the SANDAG Board approves adding this advisory position to its Board. The selection process to be used will mirror the process used to select the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission’s special district representatives.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Although representatives of the region’s eighteen incorporated cities each have a vote when serving as members of the SANDAG Board of Directors, there is no single dedicated Board representative for the County’s unincorporated area residents, totaling over half-a-million individuals. The intent of adding an advisory member to the SANDAG Board to represent unincorporated residents is to further uplift these communities’ perspectives in regional planning and funding decisions made by the SANDAG Board.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Many of the decisions made by the SANDAG Board directly impact the infrastructure investment and livelihood of those living in unincorporated communities and commit limited resources for several decades. These decisions affect regional planning and critical transportation funding used to connect the region’s residents with places of employment, schools and other destinations. The proposal to add an advisory member to the SANDAG Board, dedicated to representing the unique perspectives of this population, will help ensure the requests and needs of those living outside of our region’s cities are considered by the Board during the decision-making process.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with these recommendations. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years. If additional resources are needed, staff would return to the Board with identified costs and proposed funding source(s) for consideration and approval.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

On May 12, 2023, the SANDAG Board approved their agency’s proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 budget which totals over \$1.2 billion. Funding from the FY 2024 SANDAG budget will be used to pay for more than \$500 million in capital projects and several hundred million in TransNet projects, local system improvements and transit operations. Nearly 20% of the SANDAG budget gets distributed to local jurisdictions with about \$21.5 million to San Diego County’s unincorporated area. The proposed projects commit regional tax dollars for multi-year projects located throughout San Diego County. By enhancing the representation of our unincorporated area residents, we can better ensure that SANDAG decisions will include consideration of these communities’ perspectives.

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

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N/A

**BACKGROUND**

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Board of Directors is comprised of elected officials representing the region’s eighteen cities and the County of San Diego who are authorized to vote on issues considered by the SANDAG Board. In addition to these voting members, the SANDAG Board permits ten additional non-voting representatives to serve as advisory board members. Voting and advisory board members provide the region’s jurisdictions and other interested parties a “seat at the table” when discussing policy matters and funding decisions. Currently, the County Board of Supervisors represents the unincorporated area and brings a regional perspective to SANDAG’s Board. However, more than half-a-million residents living in the County’s unincorporated area do not have a single dedicated representative to present their unique perspective on their behalf.

SANDAG’s leadership has stressed its intent to be inclusive for all San Diegans and backed up its interest in social equity by adopting a Commitment to Equity statement to serve as a foundation for the organization’s Equity Action Plan. In addition, SANDAG staff shared with the SANDAG Board their goal of ensuring that those who have been traditionally unrepresented should have a seat at the table. These commitments provide an opportunity for all County residents, even those living outside of our cities, to meaningfully participate and be represented in SANDAG’s decision-making process.

California law and SANDAG’s Board Policy No. 004 permit their board of directors to add advisory members to its governing board to provide beneficial advice and information on matters of interest to the region. The process of adding advisory board members requires interested agencies or groups to meet certain criteria and to take specific actions, including the selection of an individual to represent them as an advisory member of the SANDAG Board.

To enhance the perspective of the current SANDAG Board, we recommend adding an advisory board member who is well versed in the unique challenges and needs of our County’s unincorporated communities. This individual can provide the SANDAG Board with insight into the views and interests of our unincorporated area residents and serve as a single dedicated representative and voice for those who reside outside of our region’s cities. In addition to supporting the inclusion of an unincorporated area representative on the SANDAG Board, the County can assist with the process to select an individual to fill this role.

Pursuant to SANDAG Board Policy No. 004, an agency or group interested in being represented by an advisory member of the SANDAG Board is required to submit a written request to SANDAG, commit to participating in meetings and be able to agree on the form of representation and who the representative will be. There are eighteen County community planning groups responsible for considering unincorporated area planning and land use-related matters and advising County staff and the Board of Supervisors. Because the community planning group members are elected by their community members to represent their interests, these officials should have a primary role in selecting an advisory member to represent the unincorporated area, if the Board of Supervisors’ request to add an advisory member is approved by SANDAG. As County staff

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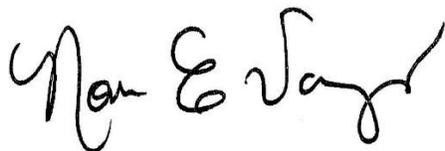
currently play an official role in supporting the community planning groups, it would be appropriate for the County to also assist in the selection of an unincorporated area resident to serve as the advisory member on the SANDAG Board.

We believe the most inclusive, fair and transparent selection process would be similar to that used by the San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to select representatives of the region's special districts. Under this process, nominations would be submitted by community planning groups for a primary member and alternate member to serve on the SANDAG Board. After the nominations are received by County staff and distributed to the community planning groups, County staff will coordinate the selection of the primary and alternate unincorporated area advisory members to serve on the SANDAG Board. The chair/presiding officer of each community planning group will cast one vote for the primary representative and one vote for the alternate representative. The individuals receiving the highest number of votes for each position will be authorized to serve as the non-voting advisory primary and alternate members to the SANDAG Board representing the County's unincorporated area.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

The proposed actions support the County's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan Equity (Economic Opportunity) Initiative by dismantling barriers to expanding opportunities in traditionally underserved communities and businesses, especially communities of color and low income. The actions also support this initiative by advancing opportunities for economic growth and development to all individuals and the community. Additionally, the proposed actions support the Community (Engagement) Initiative by inspiring civic engagement, the Community (Communications) Initiative by creating proactive communication, and the Community (Partnership) Initiative by facilitating meaningful conversations, shared programming, potential grant opportunities, or other opportunities to maximize resources through community partnerships to benefit the region.

Respectfully submitted,



CHAIRWOMAN NORA VARGAS  
Supervisor, First District



JOEL ANDERSON  
Supervisor, Second District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO SUPPORTING THE ADDITION OF AN ADVISORY MEMBER TO THE SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DEDICATED TO REPRESENTING THE UNINCORPORATED AREA RESIDENTS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO