



**JOEL ANDERSON**  
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** December 9, 2025

**28**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT**

**ADOPT A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STATE LEGISLATION TO ENHANCE REPRESENTATION FOR UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES ON THE SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

**OVERVIEW**

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is the regional planning agency for the County of San Diego and is responsible for allocating money towards housing plans, transportation, planning and building infrastructure. The SANDAG Board of Directors is composed of 21 members (19 voting members) who are elected officials representing the County of San Diego and the 18 incorporated cities located in the County.

The County is represented on the SANDAG Board by two members of the County Board of Supervisors, one of whom is the primary voting member, and a secondary member. One of these County Supervisors is required to be a representative of a district that is substantially an incorporated area while the other must be a representative of a district that is substantially an unincorporated area. The County Board of Supervisors also appoints two alternate Board members to represent the County when the primary and secondary members are unavailable to attend SANDAG Board and committee meetings.

Although the SANDAG Board voted on December 8, 2023, to add an advisory member to the SANDAG Board to represent the unincorporated area's communities and residents, this representative is not authorized to vote during SANDAG meetings. As a result, there is no voting member of the SANDAG Board required to live in the County's unincorporated area or specifically represent the unique interests of the nearly 550,000 people living there.

State legislation was introduced in 2025 to provide San Diego County's rural communities a greater role in participating in the decisions made during SANDAG meetings. However, this legislation was not approved this year by the California State Legislature. It would be appropriate for the County to support similar State legislation in 2026 to enhance representation for unincorporated communities and their residents. The new process to select the County's second alternate representative should be similar to the process used to select special district

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representatives to the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission. Under the new process, the County's second alternates to the SANDAG Board would be selected by a majority of voting members of the special districts and community planning groups located in the County's unincorporated area. This legislation would require the second alternate to be an elected official residing in an unincorporated community.

Once selected by the unincorporated area special districts and community planning groups, the second alternate would represent the County at SANDAG Board and committee meetings when the County's primary and secondary representatives, and primary alternate are unable to attend a SANDAG Board or committee meeting.

I am, therefore, recommending that the Board adopt a resolution supporting State legislation to update the process used to select the second alternate County representative to the SANDAG Board of Directors.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**SUPERVISOR JOEL ANDERSON**

1. Adopt a Resolution entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO SUPPORTING STATE LEGISLATION TO ENHANCE REPRESENTATION FOR UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES ON THE SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to express the County's support for State legislation that would establish a process allowing the County's second alternate to the San Diego Association of Governments Board of Directors to be selected by a majority of voting members of the special districts and community planning groups located in the County's unincorporated area, consistent with Board Policy M-2.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Residents of the County's unincorporated area, totaling nearly 550,000 individuals, currently lack direct voting representation on the SANDAG Board of Directors, even though representatives from each of the region's 18 incorporated cities are authorized to vote on behalf of their constituents. Although State legislation was introduced this year to provide San Diego County's rural communities a greater role in participating in the decisions made during SANDAG meetings, it was not approved by the State Legislature. If similar legislation is introduced and enacted this year, it could provide unincorporated area residents, many of whom live in rural and lower income areas, a greater role in participating in the decisions made during SANDAG meetings. This action would enhance their ability to contribute to regional decisions regarding transportation, infrastructure, mobility, housing, and land use policy and funding.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Decisions made by the SANDAG Board have long-term effects on the region's sustainability, transportation infrastructure, and overall quality of life. These decisions guide how regional resources are invested in mobility, housing, and climate initiatives that connect residents to jobs,

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schools, and essential services. Allowing an elected official who resides in the County's unincorporated area to serve as the second alternate to the SANDAG Board will help to ensure that the perspectives of all San Diego residents are considered and acted upon while shaping regional priorities. The region can better align transportation and land-use planning with sustainability goals, promote equitable access to infrastructure, and support a more resilient and inclusive future for San Diego County.

**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.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

At its May 9, 2025, meeting, the SANDAG Board of Directors adopted a \$1.3 billion Final Program Budget for Fiscal Year 2026. The budget includes \$104.6 million for the Overall Work Program, \$86.6 million for Regional Operations and Services, and \$682.9 million for the annual portion of the Capital Program, with \$187.2 million allocated for work performed by outside agencies on SANDAG capital projects. SANDAG's budget funds a wide range of regional transportation, infrastructure, and economic development projects that generate significant business activity and job opportunities throughout the region. Enhancing the unincorporated area representation on the SANDAG Board will help to ensure SANDAG decisions will include consideration of these communities' unique perspectives.

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is the regional planning agency for the County of San Diego and is responsible for allocating money towards housing plans, transportation, planning and building infrastructure. The SANDAG Board of Directors is composed of 21 members (19 voting members) who are elected officials representing the County of San Diego and the 18 incorporated cities located in the County. The County is represented on the SANDAG Board by two members of the County Board of Supervisors, one of whom is the primary voting member, and a secondary member. The County Board of Supervisors also appoints two alternate Board members to represent the County when the primary and secondary members are unavailable to attend SANDAG Board and committee meetings.

State law requires one of the County's appointees to the SANDAG Board to be a County Supervisor representing a district that is substantially an incorporated area and its second appointee to be a County Supervisor representing a district that is substantially an unincorporated area. When the County Supervisor who is authorized to vote as a member of the SANDAG Board resides in an incorporated city, there is no direct voting representative for the nearly 550,000 people living in the County's unincorporated communities. If the County's unincorporated area population was incorporated, these residents would comprise the second most populous city in our region. The following are the number of unincorporated area residents

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living in each Supervisorial district: First District – 63,046; Second District – 210,234; Third District – 17,101; Fourth District – 75,087; Fifth District – 174,181.

Additionally, because there is no requirement that either County representative on the SANDAG Board reside in an unincorporated community, this allows for the possibility that both County representatives, regardless of which one is authorized to vote, may live in and primarily represent incorporated areas and interests. This can disenfranchise all of our region's unincorporated area residents who are significantly affected by SANDAG's decisions, and who contribute to regional transportation and infrastructure funding, despite having no direct voting representative on the Board.

On December 8, 2023, the SANDAG Board of Directors recognized the need to enhance the unincorporated area's presence at SANDAG and voted to add a new advisory board member to represent unincorporated communities and their unique interests. Although this action provided a voice for the region's 550,000 unincorporated area residents, it did not provide them a voting representative on the SANDAG Board. Because the composition of the SANDAG Board is governed by the California Public Utilities Code, a change to state law is necessary to alter the appointing process for the County's representatives to the SANDAG Board.

State legislation was introduced in 2025 to provide San Diego County's rural communities a greater role in participating in the decisions made during SANDAG meetings. However, this legislation was not approved this year by the California State Legislature. It would be appropriate for the County to support similar State legislation in 2026 to enhance representation for unincorporated communities and their residents. The new process to select the County's second alternate representative should be similar to the process used to select special district representatives to the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission. Under the new process, the County's second alternates to the SANDAG Board would be selected by a majority of voting members of the special districts and community planning groups located in the County's unincorporated area. This legislation would require the second alternate to be an elected official residing in an unincorporated community.

Once selected by the unincorporated area special districts and community planning groups, the second alternate would represent the County at SANDAG Board and committee meetings when the County's primary and secondary representatives, and primary alternate are unable to attend a SANDAG Board or committee meeting.

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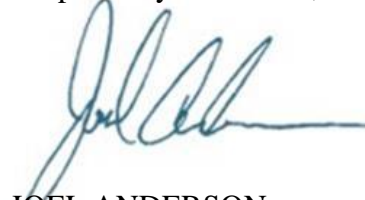
**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

This item supports the Equity (Economic Opportunity), and Community (Engagement) initiatives within the County of San Diego's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan by advancing opportunities for economic growth and development to all individuals and the community, and inspiring civic

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engagement by providing information, programs, public forums and other avenues that increase access for individuals or communities to use their voice, their vote, and their experience to impact change.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joel Anderson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

JOEL ANDERSON  
Supervisor, Second District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Attachment A: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS SUPPORTING STATE LEGISLATION TO ENHANCE REPRESENTATION FOR UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES ON THE SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Attachment B: May 23, 2023 (32), Board Letter and Resolution supporting the addition of an unincorporated area advisory member to the SANDAG Board of Directors

Attachment C: December 8, 2023, SANDAG staff report #13 and Board meeting minutes