



Meeting Date: September 30, 2025
Agenda Item No. 14
Distribution Date: September 29, 2025
Batch No. 05

Visceral
3631 5th Ave
San Diego, CA 92013
thisisvisceral.com

9/27/2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: **Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal**

Dear Chair Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

On behalf of Visceral, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposal to establish an **Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Sustainable Fiscal Planning**, brought forward by Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

San Diego County is facing serious fiscal uncertainty due to unprecedented state and federal disinvestment in essential programs. Cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, housing, Medi-Cal, and other core services—alongside unfunded mandates and increased local burdens—risk destabilizing the safety net and undermining the County's ability to meet urgent community needs.

As a small business owner, certified B Corporation, and member of Business For Good San Diego, we know firsthand how vital County services are to the well-being of residents, especially low-income communities, families, older adults, and people with disabilities. These services cannot be left vulnerable to external political decisions made in Washington or Sacramento.

The proposed Strategic Fiscal Planning Subcommittee offers a proactive, community-centered approach to:

- Safeguard essential services,
- Explore equitable local financing solutions,
- Protect vulnerable residents, and
- Maintain the County's strong financial standing.

We are particularly encouraged by the proposal's focus on key priority areas, including healthcare access, behavioral health, in-home supportive services, child care, food assistance, public safety, wildfire prevention, and environmental sustainability.

Visceral urges the Board of Supervisors to approve this proposal and begin the process of developing a robust fiscal strategy that reflects community priorities and protects San Diego's future.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to responsible, equitable governance.

Sincerely,

Jay Buys
Chief Executive Officer
Visceral



A STELLAR COMPANY LLC

325 W Washington St.
San Diego, CA 92103

September 27, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors

1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal

Dear Chair Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

On behalf of A STELLAR COMPANY, LLC, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposal to establish an **Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Sustainable Fiscal Planning**, brought forward by Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

San Diego County is facing serious fiscal uncertainty due to unprecedented state and federal disinvestment in essential programs. Cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, housing, Medi-Cal, and other core services—alongside unfunded mandates and increased local burdens—risk destabilizing the safety net and undermining the County’s ability to meet urgent community needs.

As a small business owner committed to [briefly describe what you are passionate about—e.g., economic justice, health equity, food security, environmental justice,immigrants rights, etc.], we know firsthand how vital County services are to the well-being of residents, especially low-income communities, families, older adults, and people with disabilities. These services cannot be left vulnerable to external political decisions made in Washington or Sacramento.

The proposed Strategic Fiscal Planning Subcommittee offers a proactive, community-centered approach to:

- Safeguard essential services,
- Explore equitable local financing solutions,
- Protect vulnerable residents, and
- Maintain the County’s strong financial standing.

We are particularly encouraged by the proposal’s focus on key priority areas, including healthcare access, behavioral health, in-home supportive services, child care, food assistance, public safety, wildfire prevention, and environmental sustainability.

A STELLAR COMPANY urges the Board of Supervisors to approve this proposal and begin the process of developing a robust fiscal strategy that reflects community priorities and protects San Diego’s future

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to responsible, equitable governance.

Sincerely,

Jessa Spainhower
Founder
A STELLAR COMPANY



September 28, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal

Dear Chair Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

On behalf of Townspeople, I'm writing to express our strong support for the proposal to establish an Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Sustainable Fiscal Planning, brought forward by Board of Supervisors Chair Terra Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

With federal and state budget cuts threatening critical programs across San Diego County, it's clear that we are in a period of heightened fiscal vulnerability. Unfunded mandates, compounded by cuts to Medi-Cal, SNAP, housing assistance, and other core services, are placing enormous pressure on the very systems meant to safeguard our communities.

Townspeople provides permanent supportive housing, shared housing, and wraparound services for San Diegans facing homelessness, chronic illness, and economic instability. Our work is only possible because of strong public investment and partnership, and right now, that foundation is at risk. Across our programs, we're already seeing the impact: increased demand, fewer flexible dollars, and more residents caught in the gap between need and access.

The proposal to form a Strategic Fiscal Planning Subcommittee offers a smart, forward-looking response. By prioritizing cross-sector dialogue, exploring local solutions, and protecting essential services, the County has an opportunity to lead with both responsibility and compassion.

We're especially encouraged by the proposal's focus on safeguarding behavioral health care, housing access, childcare, in-home supportive services, and other essential supports that help people live with dignity. This kind of proactive, community-rooted planning is exactly what San Diego needs in the face of so much uncertainty.

As a member of the Basic Needs Coalition, Townspeople urges the Board of Supervisors to approve the proposal and begin building a comprehensive, equity-driven fiscal strategy that centers the needs of our region's most vulnerable residents.

Thank you for your continued leadership and for standing with community-based organizations in ensuring no one falls through the cracks.

Sincerely,

Melissa Peterman

Melissa Peterman
Executive Director, Townspeople



From: [Potter, Andrew](#)
To: [FGG, Public Comment](#)
Subject: Fw: Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal
Date: Monday, September 29, 2025 7:28:14 AM
Attachments: [Letter of Support Ad Hoc Subcommittee Fiscal Planning Andrew Potter.pdf](#)

From: Rick Richardson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 9:43:18 AM
To: Potter, Andrew <Andrew.Potter@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: [External] Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal

Dear Andrew Potter, Executive Officer/Clerk of the Board of Supervisors,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Sustainable Fiscal Planning. This initiative represents a thoughtful and strategic approach to ensuring long-term financial stability. Find attached a letter of support.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to responsible, equitable, governance. Should you require any additional information or clarification, feel free to reach out to me directly. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Rick Richardson
CDA | President and CEO



We create positive change!

***** **Confidentiality Notice** *****

This electronic transmission and any attached documents or other writings are confidential and are for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) identified above. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential, or otherwise protected under applicable law. If the receiver of this information is not the intended recipient, or the employee, or agent responsible for delivering the information to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any use, reading, dissemination, distribution, copying or storage of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this information in error, please notify the sender by return email and delete the electronic transmission, including all attachments from your system.



Our mission is to empower and promote the well-being of families, child care providers, and the greater community through financial and support services.

September 24, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal

Dear Andrew Potter, Executive Officer/Clerk of the Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of CDA, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposal to establish an **Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Sustainable Fiscal Planning**, introduced by Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

San Diego County is facing significant fiscal uncertainty as a result of unprecedented state and federal disinvestment in essential programs. Cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, housing, Medi-Cal, and other core services—combined with unfunded mandates and growing local responsibilities—threaten to destabilize the safety net and undermine the County's ability to meet urgent community needs.

As a community-based nonprofit, CDA is dedicated to ensuring every family has fair access to the resources they need to thrive. Through child care subsidies, child healthy nutrition, and family resource referrals, we strengthen families, empower child care providers, and uplift the broader community. Each day, we see how essential County programs are to residents' well-being.

The proposed Strategic Fiscal Planning Subcommittee offers a proactive, community-centered approach to:

- Safeguard essential services,
- Identify equitable local financing solutions,
- Protect vulnerable residents, and
- Preserve the County's long-term financial stability.

We are particularly encouraged by the proposal's focus on critical priorities such as healthcare access, behavioral health, in-home supportive services, child care, food assistance, public safety, wildfire prevention, and environmental sustainability. CDA urges the Board of Supervisors to approve this proposal and begin developing a robust fiscal strategy that both reflects community priorities and protects San Diego's future.

Thank you for your leadership and for your continued commitment to responsible, equitable governance. Should you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rick Richardson'.

Rick Richardson
CDA President & CEO

September 25, 2025

The Hon. Terra Lawson-Remer, Chair
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego CA 92102

RE: Expert Comments on Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) – Safety, Ignition, and Evacuation Risk in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone

We are wildfire scientists and safety professionals with expertise in Southern California chaparral landscapes. We are providing these comments on the proposed Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project to inform the Board's decision-making regarding public safety. Based on peer-reviewed research and state and national fire safety guidance, we find that the project would expose residents and surrounding communities to extreme wildfire risk.

Below we summarize three primary areas of concern:

- A. Increased ignition likelihood from new development,
- B. Evacuation times that would exceed wildfire arrival times, and
- C. The absence of any viable population-level protection strategy if evacuation fails.

A. New development will increase ignition likelihood in a highly flammable landscape

Adding hundreds of homes in this location would measurably increase the number of human-caused ignitions in the region, compounding risk to both the new development and existing communities.

- Over 95% of ignitions in cismontane San Diego County are human-caused, and most occur near development and along roads¹ (Keeley & Syphard 2018; Syphard & Keeley).
- Developments surrounded by vegetation, especially at low-to-intermediate densities, experience higher ignition and loss risks² (Syphard et al. 2012, 2019).
- However, once a fire reaches a developed area, high-density development then becomes a risk factor through structure-to-structure spread^{3 4} (Zamanialaei et al. 2025; Knapp et al)
- The site lies within CAL FIRE's Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) and has a history of wind-driven, ember-dominated fires (e.g., the 2014 Cocos Fire, Del Dios Fire, Harmony Grove Fire, etc.).
- The proposed project is accessed primarily via Country Club Drive, a two-lane collector bordered by vegetated corridors that funnel traffic toward a limited-capacity intersection network.

¹ Keeley, J.E. and Syphard, A.D., 2018. Historical patterns of wildfire ignition sources in California ecosystems. *International journal of wildland fire*, 27(12), pp.781-799.

² Syphard, A.D., Keeley, J.E., Massada, A.B., Brennan, T.J. and Radeloff, V.C., 2012. Housing arrangement and location determine the likelihood of housing loss due to wildfire. *PloS one*, 7(3), p.e33954.

³ Zamanialaei, M., San Martin, D., Theodori, M., Purnomo, D.M.J., Tohidi, A., Lautenberger, C., Qin, Y., Trouvé, A. and Gollner, M., 2025. Fire risk to structures in California's Wildland-Urban Interface. *Nature Communications*, 16(1), p.8041.

⁴ Knapp, E.E., Valachovic, Y.S., Quarles, S.L. et al. Housing arrangement and vegetation factors associated with single-family home survival in the 2018 Camp Fire, California. *Fire Ecology* 17, 25 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s42408-021-00117-0>.

- New construction, landscaping, and fuel breaks promote flammable invasive grass growth, further raising ignition risk^{5 6 7 8 9} (Fusco et al.; West et al. 2023; Brennan & Keeley 2017; Syphard et al. 2018, 2019).

B. Evacuation time likely to exceed wildfire lead time under common wind scenarios

Under plausible wind-driven fire scenarios, evacuation clearance times would exceed wildfire arrival times, creating foreseeable conditions for mass entrapment.

- The road network is constrained to narrow, vegetation-lined two-lane collectors feeding into a limited-capacity intersection network.
- If built, approximately 3,500 vehicles¹⁰ would rely on the same primary route (Country Club Drive), adding ~1,000 new vehicles to an already burdened corridor¹¹ that has seen evacuation challenges in the past.¹²
- Analyses using the County’s own capacity assumptions estimate 6.9–10+ hours to clear the area, while a Santa Ana-driven fire could reach the community in under one hour under conservative, realistic assumptions.¹³
- The project lacks true secondary access.¹⁴ A variance to the State Fire Safe Regulations’ dead-end road standard was granted despite the site being in a VHFHSZ surrounded by approximately 15,000 acres of contiguous open space.
- State and local Fire Safe Regulations (§1273.08)¹⁵ prohibit dead-end roads longer than 800 feet unless two independent evacuation routes are provided. Widening a single route does not satisfy the standard’s intent, as confirmed by a CAL FIRE–sponsored review of the regulation.¹⁶
- Any single obstruction — a crash, downed utility pole, or advancing fire front — could cut off all egress, preventing thousands of residents from safely evacuating.

⁵ Fusco, E.J., Balch, J.K., Mahood, A.L., Nagy, R.C., Syphard, A.D. and Bradley, B.A., 2022. The human–grass–fire cycle: how people and invasives co-occur to drive fire regimes. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, 20(2), pp.117-126.

⁶ West, K.R., 2023. *Satellite-derived estimates of herbaceous fractional cover and its influence on fire regime in San Diego County, California, USA shrublands* (Doctoral dissertation, San Diego State University).

⁷ Brennan, T.J. and Keeley, J.E., 2017. Impacts of mastication fuel treatments on California, USA, chaparral vegetation structure and composition. *Fire Ecology*, 13(3), pp.120-138.

⁸ Syphard et al. 2018

⁹ Syphard et al. 2019

¹⁰ Dr. Tom Cova, PhD, University of Utah, 2024, “Harmony Grove Village South would compromise wildfire public safety” (p.4) ([link](#))

¹¹ Cova (p.4)

¹² KPBS, May 2014, “Harmony Grove Residents Worry About Fire Evacuation Routes” ([link](#), retrieved 9/5/2025)

¹³ Cova (p.5)

¹⁴ June 2017, “Harmony Grove Village South – Draft EIR, Wildfire Risk Analysis and Mitigation Measures” Dr. Matthew Rahn, PhD, MA, JD, California State University San Marcos, Director, Wildfire Science and Urban Interface Program (p. 11) ([link](#))

¹⁵ Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 14, § 1273.08 - Dead-End Roads and County of San Diego Consolidated Fire Code (2023) Sec. 503.1.2 Secondary Access

¹⁶ February 2016, W. David Conn et al, “Single-Access Subdivisions Assessment Project” *California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo* (Executive Summary, p. iv) ([link](#))

C. “Shelter in place” is not a viable population-level safety strategy

The project proposes to rely on sheltering in place if evacuation becomes infeasible, but this approach has no basis in U.S. fire safety standards and cannot protect thousands of residents in a fast-moving wildfire.

- While Chapter 7A construction reduces the probability of structure ignition, it does not prevent structure-to-structure fire spread under extreme conditions, particularly with homes that are closely spaced.
- For example, 56% of homes built to Chapter 7A standards were destroyed in the 2018 Camp Fire¹⁷.
- There are no U.S. population-level SIP standards for WUI fires, and no operational evidence that thousands of residents could survive entrapment inside standard homes.
- SIP is an emergency tactic for isolated individuals, not a population protection strategy.

Conclusion

The record indicates that adding a large population to a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone at the terminus of a constrained, vegetation-lined two-lane corridor creates foreseeable conditions where evacuation clearance times could exceed wildfire lead times during common wind events. Because the project cannot evacuate residents within fire arrival times, it does not meet fundamental fire safety principles and presents an elevated and preventable life safety risk to new and existing residents.

We urge County leaders to place **public safety above speculative development**, and to require that large-scale projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones provide **true secondary access** before approval or reject them entirely.

Respectfully,

Vytenis (“Vyto”) Babrauskas, PhD — Adjunct Teaching Professor (Fire Protection Engineering), Worcester Polytechnic Institute; President, Fire Science & Technology, Inc. Cited 8,400+ times.

Janice L. Coen, PhD — Project Scientist, Mesoscale & Microscale Meteorology Laboratory, NCAR; developer of the CAWFE model; Associate Editor, *Int. J. Wildland Fire*. Cited 5,900+ times.

Louise K. Comfort, PhD — Visiting Scholar, UC Berkeley Civil & Environmental Engineering; Professor Emerita, Graduate School of Public & International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh; Former Director, Center for Disaster Management (2009–2017). Cited ~13,400 times.

Megan K. Jennings, PhD — Research Scientist and Assistant Adjunct Professor of Biology, San Diego State University; Co-Director, Institute for Ecological Monitoring and Management, San Diego State University. Cited 891 times.

Matthew E. Rahn, PhD, J.D. — Program Director, Wildfire Science & the Urban Interface, California State University San Marcos. Cited ~107 times.

Alexandra D. Syphard, PhD — Adjunct Professor of Geography, San Diego State University; Senior Research Scientist, Conservation Biology Institute. Cited ~13,436 times.

Tiffany A. Yap, PhD, D.Env. — Senior Scientist, Center for Biological Diversity; expert on impacts of land use planning on wildfire risk and wildlife connectivity. Prior research cited 300+ times

¹⁷ Knapp, *et al* (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s42408-021-00117-0>.

Our Purpose

Jewish Family Service partners with people of all backgrounds to build stable and dignified lives.

Together, we create a stronger and healthier community where everyone can thrive.



**Jewish
Family
Service**

**Moving Forward
Together**

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Shreya Sasaki

September 29, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors

1600 Pacific Highway

San Diego, CA 92101

RE: **Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal**

Dear Chair Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

On behalf of Jewish Family Service of San Diego (JFS) I am writing to express our strong support for the proposal to establish an **Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Sustainable Fiscal Planning**, brought forward by Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

San Diego County is facing serious fiscal uncertainty due to unprecedented state and federal disinvestment in essential programs. Cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, housing, Medi-Cal, and other core services—alongside unfunded mandates and increased local burdens—risk destabilizing the safety net and undermining the County's ability to meet urgent community needs.

As an organization committed to addressing the complex issues of homelessness, the lack of affordable housing, food insecurity, raising a family, and the challenges of aging, we know firsthand how vital County services are to the well-being of residents, especially low-income communities, families, and older adults. These services cannot be left vulnerable to external political decisions made in Washington or Sacramento.

We support the creation of a Strategic Fiscal Planning Subcommittee which will provide a proactive, community-centered approach to:

- Safeguard essential services,
- Explore equitable local financing solutions,
- Protect vulnerable residents, and
- Maintain the County's strong financial standing.

We have reviewed the key priority areas and **respectfully request that the committee focus first on preserving and maximizing the impactful programs and services the County is currently doing.** This includes the essential services providing housing assistance and homelessness prevention, healthcare access, behavioral health, in-home supportive services, food assistance, and services for older adults, such as transportation, nutrition and rental assistance.

JFS urges the Board of Supervisors to approve this proposal, while focusing the priorities on stability of existing services. This will allow the County **to develop a robust fiscal strategy that maximizes current programs and creates a future of sustainability to provide core services to meet the basic needs of all San Diegans.**

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to responsible, equitable governance.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana Toppel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D".

Dana Toppel, LCSW, MBA

Chief Executive Officer



Serving the lesbian,
gay, bisexual
& transgender
community of
San Diego County
since 1972.

September 29, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal

Dear Chair Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

On behalf of The San Diego LGBT Community Center, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposal to establish an **Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Sustainable Fiscal Planning**, brought forward by Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

San Diego County is facing serious fiscal uncertainty due to unprecedented state and federal disinvestment in essential programs. Cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, housing, Medi-Cal, and other core services—alongside unfunded mandates and increased local burdens—risk destabilizing the safety net and undermining the County’s ability to meet urgent community needs.

As an organization committed to enhancing and sustaining the health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ communities across San Diego County, we know firsthand how vital County services are to the well-being of residents, especially low-income communities, families, older adults, and people with disabilities. These services cannot be left vulnerable to external political decisions made in Washington or Sacramento.

The proposed Strategic Fiscal Planning Subcommittee offers a proactive, community-centered approach to:

- Safeguard essential services,
- Explore equitable local financing solutions,
- Protect vulnerable residents, and
- Maintain the County’s strong financial standing.

We are particularly encouraged by the proposal’s focus on key priority areas, including healthcare access, behavioral health, in-home supportive services, child care, food assistance, public safety, wildfire prevention, and environmental sustainability. In particular, identifying housing services as a key priority area is incredibly important and necessary as San Diego continues to experience a housing crisis. Additionally, funding to immigration services remains essential as the administration continues to threaten the safety and livelihood of immigrant families. Maintaining funding to these services is essential to maintaining a more equitable and just San Diego region.

The San Diego LGBT Community Center urges the Board of Supervisors to approve this proposal and begin the process of developing a robust fiscal strategy that reflects community priorities and protects San Diego’s future.

Mailing Address

Street Address



Serving the lesbian,
gay, bisexual
& transgender
community of
San Diego County
since 1972.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to responsible, equitable governance.

Sincerely,

Gloria Cruz Cardenas (she/they)

Chief Impact Officer

The San Diego LGBT Community Center

Mailing Address

[Redacted]

Street Address

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]