



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## LAND USE AGENDA ITEM

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Fourth District

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Fifth District

**DATE:** January 28, 2026

**XX**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

### SUBJECT

**ADOPT A RESOLUTION DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS AND EXECUTE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT DISASTER RECOVERY AND MITIGATION RESILIENCE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING PROGRAM FUNDS AND CEQA FINDING (DISTRICTS: 1, 2, 4) ~~(DISTRICTS: ALL)~~**

### OVERVIEW

In January 2024, the San Diego region experienced successive storms from an atmospheric river event that, in the community of Spring Valley, delivered unprecedented levels of rainfall and significant flooding. Other local communities also experienced heavy rainfall and flooding. The ensuing damage resulted in a Presidential disaster declaration for San Diego County and other areas in California.

The State of California, Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is administering the Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program funds allocated to California by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Those funds are supporting long-term recovery efforts through the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act due to the 2023 and 2024 severe winter storms, flooding, landslides and mudslides. HCD also allocated grant funding for a Mitigation Resilience Infrastructure and Planning Program (CDBG MIT-RIPP) to San Diego County (County). HCD defines mitigation activities as those that increase resilience to future disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship. These two programs, DR & MIT-RIPP are combined into one application. The County of San Diego has received a preliminary combined allocation of \$15,900,752 for the January 2024 storms. This includes \$10,210,410 under the CDBG-DR program to address long-term recovery efforts as a direct result of the 2024 floods and \$5,690,342 under the CDBG MIT-RIPP program to increase the county's resilience in future disasters. Cost estimates for CDBG-DR candidate projects approximately matched the amount of funding available. CDBG MIT-RIPP candidate projects were considered and ranked based on their ability to meet the intent of the funding, the timeline for completing work (June 2030), the program goal of benefitting census-established low-to-moderate income areas, submitting County program's priorities, and community interest. County staff developed candidate project lists, which were shared and discussed with HCD staff in advance of formal submission to improve the County's application

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quality and responsiveness. Projects are listed in order of priority, with rankings based on multiple scoring criteria identified by the State. HCD staff recommended that the County's application include eligible projects that exceed the initial \$15,900,752 combined allocation should additional funds become available. Accordingly, the County's application will include eligible projects totaling \$24,590,000. Final selection and award for all the projects listed below will be determined by the HCD.

As a result of the 2024 January floods in the region, and after careful evaluation of the technical requirements of the grant for eligibility, the County is proposing the following projects for submission to CDBG-DR.

1. **Tijuana River Valley (TJRV) Smuggler's Gulch Sedimentation Basins (\$10M):** This project, located in District 1, would construct sedimentation capture basins at the south end of Smuggler's Gulch which will help capture trash and sediment carried from Mexico, flowing into the U.S. side of the Pacific Ocean.
2. **Rio Way Culvert Repair (\$210,410):** This project, located in the District 4 community of Spring Valley, would repair portions of an existing pipe that has holes and corrosion.

To increase the region's resilience to future environmental disasters, and after careful evaluation of the technical requirements of the grant for eligibility, the County is proposing the following projects for submission to CDBG-MIT.

1. **TJRV Saturn Boulevard (\$2.5M):** The project, located in District 1, provides short-term mitigation to address air quality issues in the Tijuana River Valley. Currently, turbulent flows of the Tijuana River at the Saturn Boulevard crossing result in releases of dissolved gases, including hydrogen sulfide, which are found within the polluted Tijuana River Water. The project will install temporary pipe extensions to reduce turbulence and the resulting aerosolization of pollutants.
2. **Lang Avenue Culvert Repair (\$200,000):** This project, located in the District 1 community of Spring Valley, would repair portions of an existing corrugated steel pipe (CSP) that has holes and corrosion.
3. **Pecan Park Lane Erosion Repair (\$1.5M):** This project is located in District 2 in unincorporated El Cajon and intended to repair severe bank erosion along a portion of Los Coches Creek.
4. **Special Drainage Area 1 Master Plan Update (\$750,000):** SDA-1 is located in the unincorporated communities of Spring Valley and Casa de Oro in District 1 and District 4, and this project will include updating the drainage facility inventory, conducting condition assessments, completing hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, and evaluating mitigation alternatives.

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5. **Bancroft Drive Area Drainage Study (\$200,000):** The project, located in the District 1 community of Spring Valley, is to perform a drainage study for the Bancroft Drive area between Valencia Street and Avocado Street.
6. **Whitaker Road Stormwater Master Plan (\$250,000):** This project, located in District 2, is to develop a master plan which aims to mitigate stormwater impacts and reduce flooding and property damage.

The following additional projects are also proposed in case additional CDBG-MIT funding becomes available:

1. **Estrella Drive Drainage Improvements (\$1.2M):** This project, located in the District 4 community of Casa de Oro, intended to rehabilitate and upgrade the existing stormwater culvert impacted by tree roots.
2. **Sweetwater Road Green Street Project (up to \$6M):** Located in the District 1 community of Spring Valley, this project would implement green infrastructure, such as tree wells, along Sweetwater Road (between St. George Street and Jamacha Boulevard).
3. **San Miguel Creek Floodplain Study (\$200,000):** The project, located in the District 1 community of Bonita, would produce a detailed floodplain analysis, which provides an elevation of flooding analysis to be used by the community for purposes of protecting people, structures, and the environment.
4. **Lamar Park Green Infrastructure (\$1.34M):** This project, located in the District 4 community of Spring Valley, requests the acquisition of a privately owned parcel located adjacent to Lamar Park to develop a planned trash capture project. It would divert water from an existing culvert located immediately north of the park into a below-ground full-trash capture unit, removing approximately 1,760 gallons of trash annually from the Sweetwater Watershed.

Today's action requests the Board of Supervisors authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the Land Use and Environment Group, Director of Public Works and Director of Parks and Recreation and any other County Department Director when necessary to apply for or secure funding, to apply for and execute agreements and other documents to secure State of California, Department of Housing and Community Development 2023-24 Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Mitigation Resilient Infrastructure and Planning (MIT-RIPP) Program funds with the projects listed in this Board letter. To reduce complexity in the application process, the County will apply for funds for projects that will be owned and managed by the County and the San Diego County Flood Control District (District). Subsequent agreements between the County and District may be necessary to provide for the completion of funded projects by or on behalf of the District.

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**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

1. Find that the requested Board action to seek available State disaster assistance funds for possible projects is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of CEQA Guidelines because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the action may have a significant effect on the environment.
2. Adopt the Resolution entitled: A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDING AND THE EXECUTION OF A STANDARD AGREEMENT AND ANY AMENDMENTS THERETO, AND CERTAIN RELATED LOAN OR GRANT DOCUMENTS AND ANY AMENDMENTS THERETO, RELATED TO ANY AWARD MADE PURSUANT TO SUCH APPLICATION (ATTACHMENT A).
3. Adopt the Resolution entitled: RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO CERTIFYING THE “URGENT NEEDS” NATIONAL OBJECTIVE IS BEING MET IN THE APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM THE CDBG-DR AND MIT PROGRAMS (ATTACHMENT B).
4. Authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the Land Use and Environment Group, Director of the Department of Public Works and the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, and any other County Department Director when necessary to apply for or secure funding, or their designees to accept all funds awarded and to execute all grant related documents, including any annual extensions, amendments and/or revisions thereto that do not materially impact or alter the services or funding level.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program funds services and facilities to benefit the most vulnerable in our communities. The allocation of these federal grant funds is aligned with screening criteria that considers socioeconomic data, and eligibility calculations including census tract income levels. The projects deliver benefits to households that are considered Low-Moderate Income (LMI). Construction is administered in conformance with federal standards for labor practices, wage requirements, safety standards, Working Families Ordinance and are subject to ongoing reporting and verification of compliance with these federal provisions. Further, the CDBG projects require construction contractors to hire and train workers from Section 3 (low- and very-low income) households. These employment opportunities must be both gender and race neutral. Both the administration of the infrastructure construction project and the use of the newly installed facilities are focused on maximizing benefits within our underserved communities.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Repairing and improving culverts, addressing erosion and making improvements to protect against storm and flooding are all projects that promote the health and well-being of residents, and provide

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environmental sustainability benefits of the region. These improvements will help to ensure we have resilient communities and infrastructure that serves our future needs.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with today's recommendation to apply for the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery and Mitigation funds in the current Fiscal Year 2025-26. If the grant is awarded and approved for all eligible projects, today's request will result in costs and revenue of \$15,900,752. If additional grant funding is made available and is awarded for the additional projects identified in the Overview and Background sections of this Board letter, it could result in up to \$24,350,410 in costs and revenue. If awarded, appropriations and revenue for the funded projects will be included in the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Operational Plan and future Operational Plans for the Department of Public Works (\$11,600,410) and the Department of Parks and Recreation (\$12,750,000.00). The funding source will be the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery and Mitigation program from the State of California Department of Housing & Community Development. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

### **BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

### **ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

### **BACKGROUND**

In January 2024, the San Diego region experienced successive storms from an atmospheric river event that, in the community of Spring Valley, delivered unprecedented levels of rainfall and significant flooding. Residents across the region experienced an unprecedented amount of rainfall that led to flooding in many communities, severely impacting the unincorporated area. Crews were mobilized to clean and sanitize effects of sewer spills and increased the monitoring of sewer systems. Upon receiving alarm notifications of high-water level conditions, County staff mobilized to sites to survey flow conditions of maintenance holes and continuously monitored sewer flows. Cones and warning signs were placed to restrict access to any impacted roadways and debris and any residual wastewater was removed and transported to secure storage for disposal. Over 35.96 tons of flood-damaged debris were collected from unincorporated area and safely disposed of 24,761 lbs of flood-affected Household Hazardous Waste (HHW), such as chemicals, paint, batteries, and electronics. The County also undertook 15 emergency projects to repair damaged drainage infrastructure.

The State of California, Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is administering the Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program funds allocated to California by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Those funds are supporting long-term recovery efforts through the Disaster Relief

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Supplemental Appropriations Act due to the 2023 and 2024 severe winter storms, flooding, landslides and mudslides. HCD also allocated grant funding for a Mitigation Resilience Infrastructure and Planning Program (CDBG MIT-RIPP) to San Diego County (County). HCD defines mitigation activities as those that increase resilience to future disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship. These two programs, DR & MIT-RIPP are combined into one application. The County of San Diego has received a preliminary combined allocation of \$15,900,752 for the January 2024 storms. This includes \$10,210,410 under the CDBG-DR program to address long-term recovery efforts as a direct result of the 2024 floods and \$5,690,342 under the CDBG MIT-RIPP program to increase the county's resilience in future disasters. Cost estimates for CDBG-DR candidate projects approximately matched the amount of funding available. CDBG MIT-RIPP candidate projects were considered and ranked based on their ability to meet the intent of the funding, the timeline for completing work (June 2030), the program goal of benefitting census-established low-to-moderate income areas, submitting County program's priorities, and community interest. County staff developed candidate project lists, which were shared and discussed with HCD staff in advance of formal submission to improve the County's application quality and responsiveness. Projects are listed in order of priority, with rankings based on multiple scoring criteria identified by the State. HCD staff recommended that the County's application include eligible projects that exceed the initial \$15,900,752 combined allocation should additional funds become available. Accordingly, the County's application will include eligible projects totaling \$24,590,000. Final selection and award for all the projects listed below will be determined by the HCD.

As a result of the 2024 January floods in the region, the County of San Diego is proposing the following projects for submission to CDBG-DR. Cost estimates for these candidate projects approximately matches the amount of funding available. Final selection and award will be determined by State HCD.

1. **Tijuana River Valley (TJRV) Smuggler's Gulch Sedimentation Basins (\$10M):** This project protects coastal communities and sensitive habitats by capturing trash and sediment before they flow into the Tijuana River Valley and the Pacific Ocean, reducing pollution, beach closures, and cleanup costs. Improvements to construct sedimentation capture basins at the south end of Smuggler's Gulch will help capture trash and sediment carried from Mexico, flowing into the U.S. side of the Pacific Ocean. This site was previously impacted by the storm of January 22, 2024 causing significant floods and trash pollution. The project is partially funded by a State Coastal Conservancy grant and is currently in the final design phase and funding would allow it to be completed within five years.
2. **Rio Way Culvert Repair (\$210,410):** This project is in Spring Valley and would repair portions of an existing pipe that has holes and corrosion. This site was previously impacted by the storm of January 22, 2024, which required emergency repair work. The site was

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stabilized after the rain with the intention of returning later and installing a more robust and permanent repair.

To increase the region's resilience to future environmental disasters, the County of San Diego is proposing the following projects for submission to CDBG-MIT. Candidate projects were considered based on their ability to meet the intent of the funding, the timeline for completing work (June 2030), the program goal of benefitting census-established low-to-moderate income areas, submitting County program's priorities, and community interest. County staff developed candidate project lists, which were shared and discussed with HCD staff in advance of formal submission to improve the County's application quality and responsiveness. Projects are listed in order of priority, with rankings based on multiple scoring criteria identified by the State. Final selection and award will be determined by State HCD:

1. **Tijuana River Valley (TJRV) Saturn Boulevard (\$2.5M):** This project protects the nearby community by reducing the aerosolization of pollutants found within the Tijuana River water at the location where Saturn Boulevard crosses the Tijuana River. The project is a short-term solution that would be in place while a long-term solution is designed and implemented. The short-term project would install infrastructure to reduce churning of water from the Tijuana River and reduce turbulence. By addressing turbulence, subsequent aerosolization of pollutants that affect the local community would be reduced.
2. **Lang Avenue Culvert Repair (\$200,000):** This project is in Spring Valley and would repair portions of an existing corrugated steel pipe (CSP) that has holes and corrosion.
3. **Pecan Park Lane Erosion Repair (\$1.5M):** This project is in unincorporated El Cajon and intended to repair severe bank erosion along a portion of Los Coches Creek within a natural bottom rock lined channel - contained within a San Diego County Flood Control District easement. The bank failure has affected both public and private properties including the loss of a portion of an adjacent private backyard within the Pecan Park Mobile Home Community into the creek.
4. **Special Drainage Area 1 Plan Update (\$750,000):** SDA-1 is in Spring Valley and Casa de Oro, two of the hardest-hit communities during the January 2024 storms. The drainage area plan is over 15 years old and requires an update to properly inform future investments in stormwater infrastructure. Work would include updating the drainage facility inventory, conducting condition assessments, completing hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, evaluating mitigation alternatives, and engaging the community and stakeholders.
5. **Bancroft Drive Area Drainage Study (\$200,000):** This project is in Spring Valley and will perform a drainage study for the Bancroft Drive area between Valencia Street and Avocado Street. The Spring Valley Community Planning Group has identified as its highest-priority flood control project due to persistent flooding. This study will analyze the existing drainage deficiencies and evaluate potential design alternatives to mitigate flooding.

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6. **Whitaker Rd Stormwater Masterplan (\$250,000):** This project is in Lakeside and helps the community by identifying critical stormwater needs in an area that lacks infrastructure and was heavily impacted by recent storms, providing the data needed to guide future investments that will protect the community and local environment from flooding. This project encompasses an unincorporated area in the community of Lakeside that was significantly impacted during January 2024 and August 2023 storms. The area does not have stormwater infrastructure and is required to properly inform future investments in stormwater infrastructure.

The following additional projects, which did not rank as highly as those listed above, are also proposed, in case additional CDBG-MIT funding becomes available:

1. **Estrella Drive Drainage Improvement (\$1.2M):** This project is in Casa de Oro and is intended to rehabilitate and upgrade the existing stormwater culvert impacted by tree roots. It will require project planning and studies to identify alternatives that will address underground utility conflicts and determine most effective way to convey stormwater to an existing downstream open channel. Funding is needed for studies, project planning and development, project design, and construction.
2. **Sweetwater Road Green Street Project (up to \$6M):** This project is in Spring Valley, this project would implement green infrastructure, such as tree wells, along Sweetwater Road (between St. George Street and Jamacha Boulevard).
3. **San Miguel Creek Floodplain Study (\$200,000):** The project is in Bonita and would produce a detailed floodplain analysis for San Miguel Creek, a tributary of the Sweetwater River. The analysis would include a floodplain boundary and elevation of flooding to be used by the community for purposes of protecting people, structures, and the environment.
4. **Lamar Park Green Infrastructure (\$1.34M):** This project is in Spring Valley and pursues the acquisition of a privately owned parcel located adjacent to Lamar Park to develop a planned trash capture project. It would divert water from an existing culvert located immediately north of the Park into a below-ground full-trash capture unit, removing approximately 1,760 gallons of trash annually from the Sweetwater Watershed.

In accordance with federal law, all CDBG-DR funded activities must meet a National Objective as required under 24 CFR 570.200(a)(2). Under section 101(c) of the authorizing Act (42 U.S.C. 5301) the CDBG program must ensure that the funded activity meets one of the named National Objectives. The two qualifying National Objectives are:

- Benefiting low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons; and
- Meeting a need having a particular urgency (referred to as Urgent Need).

This does not apply to CDBG-MIT Planning projects, such as the proposed:

- Special Drainage Area 1 Master Plan Update

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- Bancroft Drive Area Drainage Study
- Whitaker Road Area Drainage Study; and
- San Miguel Creek Floodplain Study.

For CDBG-DR and MIT Infrastructure projects, the following projects have preliminarily been estimated as having an LMI level over 51%:

- Tijuana River Valley (TJRV) Smuggler's Gulch Sedimentation Basins
- Rio Way Culvert Repair
- Los Coches Creek Erosion Repair at Pecan Park Lane
- Tijuana River Valley (TJRV) Saturn Boulevard
- Sweetwater Road Greenstreet Project
- Lamar Park Green Infrastructure, Flood Mitigation, Water Quality Improvements

In compliance with grant requirements, the proposed action today would also declare an Urgent Need Resolution for the below projects that have been estimated to have an LMI under 51%. This asserts that the County of San Diego certifies that no existing funding is already committed or has been earmarked for the projects and there is still a remaining unmet need. The design of the project is certified to alleviate existing conditions which pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community which are of recent origin, or which have recently become urgent.

- Lang Ave Culvert Repair
- Estrella Drive Drainage Improvements

Today's action requests the Board of Supervisors authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the Land Use and Environment Group, Director of Public Works and Director of Parks and Recreation, and any other County Department Director when necessary to apply for or secure funding, or designees, to accept all funds awarded and execute all grant related agreements, including any annual extensions, amendments and/or revisions thereto that do not materially impact or alter the services or funding level, to secure State of California, Department of Housing and Community Development 2023-24 Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Mitigation Resilient Infrastructure and Planning (MIT-RIPP) Program funds with the projects listed in this Board letter. To reduce complexity in the application process, the County will apply for funds for projects that will be owned and managed by the County and the San Diego County Flood Control District (District). Subsequent agreements between the County and District may be necessary to provide for the completion of funded projects by or on behalf of the District.

In accordance with Board Policy B-29, the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the Land Use and Environment Group, Director of Public Works and the Director of Parks and Recreation certify that the activity would be worthy of County funding if external financing were unavailable. In addition, there are no matching fund requirement for these grants.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines exempts projects from CEQA review where it “can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.” The proposed action is to delegate authority to allow for the submittal of applications and approval of agreements and other documents to secure grant funding. The action does not award construction contracts, result in the acquisition of property, or the completion of other similar action that is necessary to implement a project. These later actions, if they occur, would be subject to further CEQA review. Since the proposed action involves delegation of authority to accept grant funding without a commitment to adopt or implement any particular project, the action is exempt from CEQA review because it can be seen with certainty that the activity will not have a significant effect on the environment.

## LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today’s proposed actions support the Strategic Initiatives of Sustainability, Equity, and Community in the County of San Diego’s 2026-2031 Strategic Plan by improving the resilience of communities and our County infrastructure in underserved areas. The proposed action also leverages interagency collaboration and grant funding to maximize resources through partnerships that strengthen regional environmental disaster resilience.

Respectfully submitted,



DAHVIA LYNCH  
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

## ATTACHMENT(S)

A: RESOLUTION APPROVING AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDING AND THE EXECUTION OF A STANDARD AGREEMENT AND ANY AMENDMENTS THERETO, AND CERTAIN RELATED LOAN OR GRANT DOCUMENTS AND ANY AMENDMENTS THERETO, RELATED TO ANY AWARD MADE PURSUANT TO SUCH APPLICATION

B: RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO CERTIFYING THE “URGENT NEEDS” NATIONAL OBJECTIVE IS BEING MET IN THE APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM THE CDBG-DR AND MIT PROGRAMS