

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 22

SUBJECT: TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY AUDIT OF HOMELESSNESS SPENDING REGIONWIDE (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

Over the past decade, homelessness across California has grown into a humanitarian, public health, and fiscal crisis. While taxpayers have invested billions of dollars in programs, the results have been deeply inadequate: more people are living on the streets, shelters are strained, and the public has lost confidence in government's ability to address this issue effectively.

The County of San Diego has taken important steps to improve transparency in its homelessness response. In early 2026, the County will launch a public-facing dashboard displaying key data such as the number of homeless individuals in the unincorporated area and participation levels in County programs. These efforts have contributed to measurable progress, including an 11 percent reduction in homelessness in the unincorporated area, as reflected in the most recent Point-in-Time Count.

However, homelessness is a regional challenge that demands regional accountability. Without greater transparency in how homelessness dollars are spent across jurisdictions, taxpayers will continue to lose faith, and lives will continue to be lost on our streets. This is unacceptable.

Recent state audits have revealed major deficiencies in how funds are tracked, measured, and evaluated. Between 2018 and 2023, more than \$24 billion in state homelessness funding was spent without consistent statewide tracking of outcomes or effectiveness. The California State Auditor concluded that the lack of oversight, transparency, and measurable outcomes is preventing meaningful progress.

Taxpayers are being asked to sustain an ever-expanding bureaucracy without clear performance metrics, accountability, or tangible results-failing both the public and those most in need of support.

Today's action directs the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to work with County staff to explore the feasibility of a regionwide audit to determine annual homelessness-related spending. The purpose of this audit which could be a collaborative effort with other entities is to clearly identify how much money was received, how much was spent, by which entities, and where funds remain unaccounted for.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

SUPERVISOR JIM DESMOND

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to work with County staff to explore the feasibility of a regionwide audit to determine annual homelessness-related spending and report back to the Board within 90 days. The report back should include options for an audit that could be a collaborative effort with other entities and should also include:
 1. All homelessness-related public funding allocated annually in the San Diego region.
 2. Annual expenditures by category from Cities, the County, and non-governmental organizations.
 3. Identification of any funding that remains unspent or is not being disclosed to the public.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

This proposed audit supports equity by increasing transparency in how homelessness resources are distributed across communities. Marginalized populations are disproportionately represented in the homeless population, and understanding where resources have been allocated-or withheld-will help guide future efforts to ensure funds are distributed equitably and fairly across all areas of San Diego County.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

This initiative aligns with the County of San Diego's Sustainability Goals related to social equity, fiscal responsibility, and public accountability. By accounting for all funds allocated to homelessness-related efforts, the County will be better equipped to evaluate resource use, inform future planning, and ensure tax dollars are being managed efficiently and sustainably. Increased transparency enhances public trust and supports long-term governance that is equitable and resilient.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for today's recommendations are included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Operational Plan based on existing staff time in various departments in the Finance & General Government Group and Health & Human Services Agency funded by General Purpose Revenue. Additional costs associated with conducting a feasibility assessment or potential audit will be evaluated by County staff and brought back to the Board as part of a future action. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years as a result of today's Recommendations.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ACTION:

ON MOTION of Supervisor Desmond, seconded by Supervisor Aguirre, the Board of Supervisors took action as recommended.

AYES: Aguirre, Anderson, Montgomery Steppe, Desmond

NOT PRESENT: Lawson-Remer

State of California)
County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



Signed

by Andrew Potter

