



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

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Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: April 30, 2024

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TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

CANNABIS SOCIAL EQUITY PROGRAM (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

On January 27, 2021 (4), the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed staff to implement measures to provide economic access and equity in the cannabis industry. These measures included components of a Social Equity Program (SEP), Zoning Ordinance amendments, and a licensing/permitting system. The Board further directed that grant funding be secured to support implementation of the SEP, which would include numerous elements to prioritize equity, access, and business opportunities to help rectify the injustices caused by the War on Drugs and be in place prior to issuance of the first cannabis business license.

Further, on March 3, 2021 (11), the Board directed the Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ) to lead the development of the framework and strategy, including grant funding options, needed to initiate a SEP and coordinate this with the land use permitting system being developed by Planning & Development Services (PDS).

The goal of the SEP is to ensure that those negatively or adversely impacted by cannabis criminalization are provided with the opportunity to successfully participate in the regulated cannabis market and for people and communities impacted by the War on Drugs to receive assistance and benefits. This assistance and benefits will be vital to the success of these future entrepreneurs and beneficiaries. OERJ will continue to work with PDS on ensuring social equity is a priority for all programming related to cannabis.

Today's action provides an update on the coordinated development of the Cannabis Social Equity Program focusing on and development of the SEP components of the Social Equity Entrepreneurs Program and the Social Equity Beneficiaries Program. The recommendations include receiving an update on the program, providing policy direction on the social equity eligibility criteria, and the SEP related ordinance components, as well as approving the structure of the program's oversight body.

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RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Receive the updates on development of the Social Equity Program from the Office of Equity and Racial Justice.
2. Consider and adopt the Social Equity Criteria Tiers. The main criteria is focused on being incarcerated, deported, arrested or convicted for a cannabis related crime in San Diego, and meeting a low income threshold.
3. Consider and provide policy direction on the attached Cannabis Social Equity Ordinance Matrix (Attachment B, on file with the Clerk of the Board) focusing on four main topics:
 - a. Social Equity Ownership Requirements (51% minimum ownership);
 - b. Timeframe for Social Equity Businesses to Open Prior to Non-Social Equity (3-year timeframe);
 - c. License Ceiling for Cannabis Storefront Businesses (25 total storefront licenses, no ceiling for other license types); and
 - d. Social Equity Storefront Retail Licenses (minimum 50% storefront retail licenses reserved for social equity businesses).
4. Consider and adopt the Cannabis Oversight Community Collaborative Resolution entitled **RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ESTABLISHING THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY CANNABIS OVERSIGHT COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE** (Attachment C, on file with the Clerk of the Board).

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Throughout the country, a disproportionate number of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals remain incarcerated for the criminalization of cannabis. In San Diego County specifically, as analyzed in the Social Equity Assessment for Commercial Cannabis (Equity Assessment – Attachment A, on file with the Clerk of the Board), from 2012-2017 cannabis-related arrest data shows that Black San Diegans were arrested at a rate that is 5 times the White arrest rate; Pacific Islander San Diegans are arrested at a rate that is 3 times the White arrest rate; Latinx San Diegans are arrested at a rate that is 2 times the White arrest rate; and Indigenous San Diegans are arrested at a rate that is 30% higher than the arrest rate for White San Diegans. As cannabis is legalized and permitted in San Diego County, the Socially Equitable Cannabis Program will help guide the County's approach to this new market and paradigm shift for how cannabis is perceived and regulated.

In support of the Program, the Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ) commissioned the development of a comprehensive Social Equity Assessment which included several community outreach sessions to inform the Social Equity Program and a Program for Social Equity Entrepreneurs. Womxn's Work Consulting, LLC collected qualitative and quantitative data, and conducted research into best practices and lessons learned, throughout the state, to inform the Equity Assessment. A total of 28 semi-structured interviews were conducted with community members, activists, politicians and cannabis growers and retail owners. Additionally, 5-semi structured focus groups were completed with a diverse set of stakeholder groups. A total of 271 responses were received for the community survey. OERJ also held seven outreach and listening

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sessions from October 2022 through February 2024 with cannabis and social equity stakeholders to gain additional feedback on Social Equity Assessment recommendations, possible program eligibility requirements and program benefits. Additionally, OERJ and PDS staff partnered to host six webinars and seven small group stakeholder sessions centered around select June 15, 2022 (7) Board-directed measures including Measure 9, the establishment of a Community Equity Contribution Program. The Cannabis Social Equity Program survey was open on the Engage San Diego County platform from February through June of 2023 and focused on gathering feedback from participants on the program's programming goals and objectives. It should be noted that less than 10% of the respondents challenged the purpose of the program, citing they did not want additional cannabis businesses in the unincorporated area. There were over 90% neutral and positive responses provided by respondents stating that the County's efforts should focus on grants for social equity businesses, permit fee waivers, economic development, educational programming, technical assistance and other behavioral health services to facilitate access to the cannabis industry and those harmed by the War on Drugs. Over 60% of respondents either work or live in the unincorporated area. And 75% are interested in participating in the upcoming Social Equity Program. This was a small sample size and would not be considered a representative sample of the unincorporated County population, though this survey provides insight into the thoughts of the participants. As such, it cannot be used as a definitive method of determining all public sentiment around each of the suggestions or topics.

All recommendations have been reviewed and feedback from stakeholders has been considered in the development of the framework for the social equity program, including the program for social equity entrepreneurs and social equity beneficiaries. The Equity Assessment proposed a detailed plan for advancing racial equity, continuing community engagement in a manner that is both empowering and healing, evaluation, and most importantly, County accountability to the most-harmed communities in the development and implementation of the Socially Equitable Cannabis Program.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed actions to receive an update on the Social Equity Program, approve recommendations related to social equity ordinances, eligibility and cannabis oversight group contributes to many of the County of San Diego Sustainability Goals: engage the community; provide just and equitable access; transition to a green and circular economy; and protect health and wellbeing. In terms of sustainability in equity, economy, and health/wellbeing, it will impact the communities and socio-economic groups historically burdened by the War on Drugs and the over criminalization of marijuana by reinvesting in those communities and providing support, resources, and opportunities for those who were most impacted. Extensive community engagement through surveys and focus groups has been a critical piece of this work. The goals of the social equity programming will work to reinvest in communities that were harmed by the War on Drugs and provide sustainable opportunities for growth and positive outcomes of those individuals and communities.

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FISCAL IMPACT

Funding of \$350,000 for grants directly to social equity applicants was received from the State in June 2023 from the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development for Cannabis Equity Grants Program for Local Jurisdictions and is included in the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Operational Plan in the Chief Administrative Office, Office of Equity & Racial Justice. A portion of this grant funding is available to the County for administrative costs, estimated in an amount sufficient to recover full cost as required by Board Policy B-29: Fees, Grants, Revenue Contracts—Department Responsibility for Cost Recovery. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

Funding for the creation of a Cannabis Oversight Community Collaborative oversight body is included in the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Operational Plan in the Chief Administrative Office, Office of Equity & Racial Justice. If approved, this request will result in costs of approximately \$2,500 in Fiscal Year 2023-24, and annual costs of approximately \$5,000 beginning in Fiscal Year 2024-25 and will be included in future Operational Plans. The funding source is existing General Purpose Revenue. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

Total cost and funding source for Social Equity Beneficiaries Programming has yet to be determined and will be included in the CAO Recommended Operational Plan Fiscal Years 2024-25 & 2025-26 in the Chief Administrative Office, Office of Equity and Racial Justice. There may be fiscal impacts associated with future related recommendations which staff would return to the Board for consideration and approval.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

On January 27, 2021 (4), the County of San Diego (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Administrative Officer to develop a Zoning Ordinance amendment that allows for a variety of cannabis uses. The Board also directed staff to develop a new Social Equity Program and secure grant funding to support implementation that will include numerous elements to prioritize equity, access, and business opportunities to help rectify the injustices caused by the War on Drugs and be in a place prior to the issuance of the first permit. The Board requested that all program components (a Social Equity Program, a Zoning Ordinance amendment, and a permitting system) be developed concurrently to create a comprehensive Socially Equitable

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Cannabis Permitting System. The following is a timetable of activities that have informed the development of the Social Equitable Cannabis program thus far.

On October 20, 2021 (8), the Board of Supervisors voted to remove the sunset date from the permits of the five operating dispensaries, allowing them to relocate and expand facility size. According to a report conducted by the Office of Business Research and Analysis (OBRA) at California State University San Marcos there are nine (9) cities within San Diego County that do not permit the commercial sale of cannabis in its jurisdiction. Those cities include Coronado, Del Mar, El Cajon, Escondido, Poway, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach, and National City. Cities within San Diego County that do permit medicinal-only cannabis businesses include Lemon Grove, Oceanside, and Vista. Cities that permit both medicinal and adult-use cannabis businesses include Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Encinitas, and San Diego.

In February 2022, Womxn's Work Consulting, LLC (Womxn's Work) was contracted to complete the Social Equity Assessment for Commercial Cannabis (Equity Assessment – Attachment A) for the County of San Diego. The Equity Assessment includes feedback received through the robust public outreach activities conducted by Womxn's Work, extensive data analysis, and research of California jurisdictions' cannabis programs and other states jurisdictions' cannabis programs. The final Equity Assessment includes numerous recommendations for the development of a socially equitable commercial cannabis program for unincorporated San Diego County and for addressing and repairing the harms from the War on Drugs within the region. Womxn's Work Consulting conducted six community listening sessions, interviews, focus groups, and a survey.

On October 28, 2022, the Social Equity Assessment for Commercial Cannabis was finalized after initial reviews and edits. The Board received this Equity Assessment on December 13, 2022. The assessment includes feedback received through the outreach activities, extensive data analysis, and research of California jurisdictions' cannabis programs and other state jurisdictions' cannabis programs. The final equity assessment included numerous recommendations for addressing and repairing the harms from the War on Drugs.

At the direction of the Board, Measure A – Cannabis Business Tax was placed on the ballot for the November 8, 2022, Gubernatorial General Election. The measure was proposed as a general tax, requiring a simple majority of votes cast in order to pass. Voters approved the measure, which became effective January 1, 2023. Rates were then set by the Board and became effective on July 1, 2023. The Treasurer-Tax Collector is responsible for collecting the new tax, which had the first deposit in October 2023 to the General Fund as General Purpose Revenue to be made available for allocation by the Board.

On January 23, 2024, in coordination with Land Use & Environment Group, Planning & Development Services, and the Office of Financial Planning, a memorandum was submitted detailing updates to the cannabis taxation program, Social Equity Program, cannabis ordinance amendments – both regulatory and zoning, programmatic environmental analysis, along with measures from the June 2022 Board Memo. Specifically related to the Social Equity Program,

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updates were provided on the entrepreneurs program and beneficiaries program and also highlighted outreach for program development.

The County has contracted with the Cannabis Education Project to assist with the implementation of the Social Equity Program. The team is made up of individuals who have roots in San Diego County and provide a strong connection with the local communities and people impacted by the War on Drugs. The team has shown leadership in cannabis initiatives from expungement clinics to policy related items and public forums while also participating on numerous local boards, commissions, and committees. This team will be assisting OERJ with the application verification process, creating content, hosting workshops and webinars, and will work one-on-one with applicants to provide guidance on the best path to success.

Social Equity Program

Social Equity Program Eligibility

When shaping the Social Equity Program eligibility, OERJ considered Womxn's Work Consulting's eligibility recommendations, stakeholder input, best practice research among other jurisdiction's eligibility criteria, and other jurisdictions' pending lawsuits surrounding their social equity eligibility parameters. The eligibility criteria have been separated into two tiers. Tier A, the most impacted tier, may receive additional benefits that may be determined at a later time. Benefits are explained in the sections below. Applicants will apply and once approved will receive various benefits. OERJ worked closely with County Counsel on finalizing eligibility parameters; below is staff's recommendation:

Tier A

Incarcerated for San Diego County arrest or conviction for any crime under the laws of the State of California or United States related to the sale, possession, use, manufacture, or cultivation of Cannabis that occurred prior to November 8, 2016.

Tier B

Deported or convicted for arrest in San Diego County crime under the laws of the State of California or United States related to the sale, possession, use, manufacture, or cultivation of Cannabis that occurred prior to November 8, 2016, AND

Low Income – 80% or below of the Area Median Income (San Diego County) determined by US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Social Equity Entrepreneurs Program and Social Equity Beneficiaries Program have the same eligibility criteria.

The Board has the opportunity today to direct staff to use this social equity eligibility criteria or any other parameters the Board sees fit, if any.

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Social Equity Ordinance Options

The options below are believed to provide the greatest chance for social equity applicants to be successful and are rooted in stakeholder and community feedback received throughout the process of program development. An overview of these options is available in matrix format - Attachment B.

Social Equity Ownership Requirements

Staff recommendation: Minimum 51 percent equity share in a cannabis business will allow the social equity business owner(s) to have majority control in their business. In many instances, social equity applicants will have to take on investment from other companies, business partners or investors. Numerous other jurisdictions require minimum 51 percent social equity ownership such as City of Los Angeles, City of Sacramento, City of Long Beach, City of Coachella, State of Arizona, State of Illinois, among others. The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development's Cannabis Equity Grants Program for Local Jurisdictions award the most points for jurisdictions that have a minimum social equity ownership of 51 percent. In order to receive social equity benefits such as being eligible for grant funding and to apply during the recommended social equity three-year social equity window for a cannabis business license, the business must meet these minimum requirements. OERJ would verify annually if a business meets these equity ownership requirements through submission of business-related documents like articles of incorporation, partnership agreements, profit sharing documents, and ownership statements.

The Board has the opportunity today to direct this percentage be used or any other percentage the Board sees fit.

Timeframe for Social Equity Businesses to Open Prior to Non-Social Equity

Staff recommendation: Social equity cannabis businesses should be provided with a three-year social equity window to start their cannabis licensing process once licensing becomes available. All non-social equity businesses cannot start cannabis licensing process until this three-year social equity timeframe has concluded. This will allow for social equity businesses to find viable properties, find partners, secure capital and hopefully open their doors prior to much larger, well-funded non-social equity operators gaining the opportunity to open a cannabis business in the County. Opening a cannabis operation is not going to be an easy task for these social equity operators and lowering barriers to entry is a major priority of this program.

The Board has the opportunity today to direct staff to use this timeframe or any other timeframe the Board sees fit, if any.

License Ceiling for Cannabis Storefront Businesses

Staff recommendation: Implement an equity license ceiling for cannabis storefront retailers only or microbusinesses that include storefront retailers as one of their components. An equity license ceiling is not a cap, but a policy decision that can be raised in the future. This equity license ceiling is a term that was developed by County staff and is administrative in nature and is intended

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to help facilitate cannabis entrepreneur a place into the market. We are not proposing an equity license ceiling for other cannabis license types (manufacturing, distribution, delivery, cultivation, and testing) due to stakeholder feedback and industry feedback. In other jurisdictions such as the cities of Sacramento, Los Angeles, Oakland, and Long Beach, it has been common for a limited number of storefront licenses to be allotted during a timeframe with potential for expanding the number of storefront licenses in the future. In the April 27, 2022, HdL report – Fiscal Revenue Analysis of the Commercial Cannabis Industry, it was noted that the unincorporated County would be able to accommodate 20 additional storefront retailers. If we allowed for an unlimited number of storefront retailers, it would hurt all of the operators as there is only a limited customer base. Currently, there are five operating storefront retailers within the County and the addition of 20 more would equal a total of 25. Determining the process on when and how raising the ceiling for storefront retail licenses could be lifted has not been decided at this time. Options could include an economic study or similar analysis to help determine how many additional licenses the County could accommodate. Staff is continuing to gather options and as these options progress, a recommendation would be brought forth for future Board consideration. Staff will work with other departments, its new contractor and the Cannabis Oversight Community Collaborative to come up with future options.

The Board has the opportunity today to direct this license ceiling for cannabis storefront retailers or provide discretion to remove this ceiling, and/or increase/decrease the ceiling depending on the agreed number. County staff may revisit to provide additional analysis at a later time.

Social Equity Storefront Retail Licenses

Staff recommendation: At least 50 percent of storefront retailer licenses should be reserved for social equity applicants. As stated earlier, the HdL report states the County would be able to accommodate 20 additional storefront retailers in addition to the existing 5 storefront locations. It is understandable that if there is a ceiling that a minimum of 50 percent of these storefront retailers should be reserved for social equity applicants to provide them an opportunity to participate in this marketplace. This would mean there would be a minimum of 13 storefront retailers reserved for social equity. In other jurisdictions this has been the most popular and sought-after license type. If the Board directs there to be 13 storefront retail licenses reserved for social equity owners, only those 13 storefront retailers would be able to start the licensing process during the social equity three-year window to start a cannabis business. If the storefront retailers do not start their business within the three-year timeframe, it would then go onto another social equity applicant. This process will be defined and determined at a later time. Also, these storefront retailer licenses would not be able to be sold or transferred during a three-year window. The process to decide storefront retailers would be through a lottery for social equity eligible participants.

The Board has the opportunity today to direct this percentage be used or any other percentage the Board sees fit.

Cannabis Oversight Community Collaborative

The cannabis oversight body – Cannabis Oversight Community Collaborative – was recommended in our Cannabis Social Equity Assessment. This oversight body will report back to the Board of

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Supervisors on an annual basis to provide transparency – informing and updating the Board on how the cannabis social equity program is doing, what the community feels is working and what the community has expressed dissatisfaction for. This oversight body can assist in informing OERJ on the design, implementation and evaluation of the social equity program, how to utilize grant funding, what programming is necessary to be added, and what programming may not be necessary. They can be a sounding board for cannabis social equity related items such as future ordinances, collaboration with PDS and other components of the Socially Equitable Cannabis Program.

As stated in the Social Equity Assessment the community collaboratives should be made up of 50% social equity eligible applicants. This group or various groups (subcommittees) can leverage relationships and resources, can assist in research, work with community-based organizations to assist with outreach, work with local tribes, and focus on expungement and enforcement. The main role of this group will be to help ensure compliance and responsibility of OERJ's social equity program.

Staff's recommendation is to create a Cannabis Oversight Community Collaborative made up of nine maximum members. One member would be appointed by each Board Office and the other four seats would be appointed through an OERJ application process. This oversight body will be a Brown Act body. The Board has the opportunity today to direct staff to create this Cannabis Oversight Community Collaborative or any other oversight body the Board sees fit.

Social Equity Entrepreneurs Programming

The Department of Cannabis Control states that the largest challenges to entering the cannabis industry are getting access to capital, understanding the complex regulatory requirements, finding locations where cannabis businesses can operate, developing business relationships, and getting technical support. The goal of the below programming is to assist in alleviating these barriers to entry.

Record Expungement Services (County's Fresh Start Program)

Expungement Services will be offered in collaboration with the Public Defender's Office and will aim to expunge social equity applicants' and beneficiaries' records for crimes related to cannabis along with other offenses when applicable. A criminal record can make finding employment, housing, enrolling in and funding education, and securing other civic opportunities very difficult. The Public Defender's Fresh Start Program will assist in reducing felonies to misdemeanors and expunging records.

Grants Directly to Social Equity Applicants

In June 2023, the County acquired grant funding from the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development for Local Jurisdictions. This grant funding is intended for direct distribution to support social equity entrepreneurs to support their business startup expenses and

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includes funding for technical assistance and grant administration by the County, in alignment with Board Policy B-29: Fees, Grants, Revenue Contracts—Department Responsibility for Cost Recovery. This \$350,000 grant funding is broken into three groups – \$35,000 for administrative support, \$35,000 for technical assistance and \$280,000 for grants directly to social equity entrepreneurs to assist with covering costs including rent, equipment, licensing fees, regulatory compliance, and legal assistance. These grants are crucial to initiating new cannabis businesses into the County, and there are plans to seek additional grant funding in the future. Below is staff's recommendation on how the grant funding may be dispersed to social equity applicants.

\$280,000 of grant funding will be dispersed to social equity entrepreneurs via qualified lottery process. All applicants who meet established social equity eligibility criteria, apply through online portal, and are approved by specified summer 2024 date would be eligible for the lottery process. Applicants would also have to be eligible to apply for cannabis business licenses once available. Grant funding must be utilized for cannabis business startup costs only and cannot be used for any other circumstance. An attestation may need to be signed to participate in the lottery. Other criteria may include a business proposal or plan to understand the steps an applicant would take to start their cannabis business. OERJ would find support from Clerk of the Board to roll out the lottery process, as the Clerk of the Board has administered lottery-based selection processes in the past and would act as neutral party. The ten lottery winners would be awarded a \$28,000 grant. All grant funding must be dispersed by October 2024.

Content Creation

Subject matter experts will conduct workshops, webinars and pre-recorded videos offering business and technical assistance. Covered topics span licensing and permitting both at the state and local levels, encompassing policies, regulations, rules, enforcement, fees, compliance, and penalties. Additionally, content focused on business startup and management will be included. Topics may include accounting, contracts, business structure, real estate, marketing, finance, cannabis business types & supply chain, market analysis, start-up costs, compliance, ancillary businesses, forms of capital, business plans, pitch preparation, insurance, HR, payroll, security, banking, and software systems. This initiative aims to provide catalog of diverse workshops and accompanying user-friendly collateral.

One-on-One Assistance

The program will place significant emphasis on coaching and mentoring, providing tailored guidance to applicants throughout the business startup process. These programs are designed to elevate participants' business skills and awareness while helping them establish clear timelines. This support is invaluable in bolstering their prospects for creating a successful cannabis business.

Behavioral Health Services

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The County's Behavioral Health Services (BHS) department provides a broad continuum of services for people of all ages with mental health and substance use conditions. BHS promotes recovery; discovery; resiliency and well-being through prevention; harm-reduction; treatment; and intervention, as well as through integrated services. BHS provides various levels of care ranging from crisis intervention, inpatient & residential care, to outpatient or case management services, as well as services designed uniquely for specific populations in San Diego County. In addition, BHS works as a public health entity to influence the region's behavioral health at a population health level.

Behavioral Health Services serves as a Behavioral Health Plan for people enrolled in Medi-Cal for severe mental health conditions and substance use conditions, primarily through over 300 contracted providers as well as administering services directly in locations such as the San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital and County-operated clinics.

BHS is currently implementing a Substance Use Prevention and Life Skills curriculum (Project Alert) through a contract with the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE). The Substance Use Prevention and Life Skills curriculum (Project Alert) for students in grades 6 and 7 is evidence-based and includes cannabis prevention messaging. Project Alert is a third-party skills development program to reduce the prevalence of substance use among youth through building resiliency and refusal skills.

The primary access point for individuals seeking behavioral health services and resources is the San Diego Access and Crisis Line (ACL).

Social Equity Beneficiaries Programming

In OERJ's long-term budget planning, an additional funding need has been projected to assist the Cannabis Social Equity Program in future fiscal years. This funding would be vital to bolstering the Cannabis Social Equity Beneficiaries Program which would assist individuals and communities impacted by the War on Drugs. Below are various possible programmatic offerings.

Job Placement and Assistance

Not every applicant or beneficiary aims to start a cannabis business, some may seek job training and assistance in finding employment. Collaborating with both cannabis and non-cannabis businesses, the goal is to help identify job opportunities, facilitate job placements, and provide support in resume building, interview preparation, and the job search process. This assistance can make people aware of current County and non-County job opportunities.

Continuing Education Support

Continuing education can play a vital role in the upward mobility of our applicants and can assist with moving forward not only in the cannabis industry but numerous other industries. San Diego City College offers a wide range of courses, certificate programs, and programming that can lead

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to transfer to four-year university, certificates of completion, job placement or internship opportunities. The goal would be to assist our social equity entrepreneurs and beneficiaries with getting acclimated with programming that fits their needs and future aspirations. Various programs could be desirable, for example, the Alcohol & Other Drugs Studies Program provides those who finish with a certificate of achievement that they can then parlay into an internship or job placement to be a substance abuse counselor. This program is roughly \$1,750, plus the cost of books and is eleven to twelve classes in total. Another program is centered around Business Operations as it relates to Cannabis Dispensaries. This certificate of performance program is only five classes and is less than \$500, plus the cost of books.

San Diego State University (SDSU) also offers cannabis programming through a third-party provider Ed to Go for a Certificate in Medical Cannabis. The cost is \$97 and takes only eight hours or up to six weeks. SDSU also offers numerous other certificate programming and costs vary up to \$5,000. Professional Certificate Programming offerings include Human Resources, Grant Writing, Contract Management, Project Management, Business of Craft Beer, Meeting & Event Planning, Enterprise GIS, Lean Six Sigma and Construction. In the near future, SDSU also plans to launch cannabis programming similar to their craft beer program.

Non-Cannabis Small Business Grants

Starting a cannabis business is not for everyone, having a path forward to start a non-cannabis business would be beneficial. Funding could be utilized to start their own business. Small business grants could assist with incorporation costs, rent, equipment, or staffing to name a few.

OERJ will explore options for funding these proposals, including cost and funding source, which will be requested from the Board in the coming fiscal year's CAO Recommended Operational Plan.

Today's item is a request for the Board to receive staff's update on the development of the Social Equity Program, consider and adopt the Social Equity Criteria Tiers, Cannabis Social Equity Ordinances, and the Cannabis Oversight Community Collaborative.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's actions support the Strategic Initiative in the County of San Diego's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan by facilitating meaningful conversations, inspiring civic engagement, and contributing to a system of restorative justice through increasing the well-being of our residents and environments to support social equity for individuals and neighborhoods impacted by the War on Drugs in the Unincorporated County.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Aghassi".

SARAH E. AGHASSI
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment A – Cannabis Social Equity Assessment

Attachment B – Cannabis Social Equity Ordinance Matrix

Attachment C - RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ESTABLISHING THE
SAN DIEGO COUNTY CANNABIS OVERSIGHT COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE