



**JIM DESMOND**  
SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** September 9, 2025

**21**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT**

**ADVANCING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN OUR HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

**OVERVIEW**

The County of San Diego has made substantial investments to address homelessness across the region. This includes funding for emergency shelters, bridge housing, affordable housing development, behavioral health services, substance use recovery programs, and wrap-around support. These efforts reflect a strong commitment by this Board to reduce homelessness and ensure vulnerable residents have a pathway toward stability and self-sufficiency.

The 2025 Point in Time Count shows an 11% reduction in homelessness in the unincorporated area. While this is a significant improvement, there are still around 200 people living on our streets. This is unacceptable, and it underscores the urgency of continuing to refine our strategies, close service gaps, and ensure no one is left behind.

To inform our policy moving forward, we need to know what is working, and what is not. To accomplish this, we need transparent, consistent, and actionable updates on progress in our efforts to house every homeless person in the unincorporated area. Without this data, our ability to evaluate the effectiveness of our strategies is hampered. The unincorporated area faces unique challenges, and it is our responsibility to ensure that we understand those challenges and adapt our strategies as needed. Utilizing the By-Name-List will be critical to this effort.

Today's action directs the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to explore the feasibility of providing a monthly memo to update the Board of Supervisors and the public on how many homeless individuals are in the unincorporated area, the barriers each individual faces, how many were connected to emergency shelter/the Regional Housing Assistance Program, and how many exited to permanent housing. The return to the Board should address barriers to acquiring data, explorations of other relevant data and information, and include a draft format for the proposed monthly memo.

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**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**SUPERVISOR JIM DESMOND**

Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to explore the feasibility of providing a monthly memo to the Board of Supervisors detailing progress on efforts to house every homeless individual in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County and return to the Board within 90 days with a draft memo. This memo should include, but is not limited to:

- The number of homeless individuals.
- The number of individuals who exited homelessness.
- The number of individuals in the Regional Housing Assistance Program.
- The number of homeless individuals at the end of the month.
- Include data on how individuals are exiting homelessness (permanent housing, family reunification, entering a treatment program etc...)
- Identify the primary barrier(s) to housing for each homeless individual.
- Track the number of contacts made with each homeless individual.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The proposed action aims to ensure equitable oversight of County of San Diego's (County) housing initiatives for people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated area. These communities often lack access to the same level of infrastructure and supportive services available in urban cores. By requiring regular, transparent tracking, this action promotes equity by holding the County accountable for delivering services to historically underserved populations and geographies.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

This proposed action contributes to the County of San Diego's Sustainability Goal of protecting the health and well-being of all San Diegan residents by working towards housing solutions for the entire homeless population.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds for the actions requested are included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Operational Plan for the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA). If approved, this request will result in the use of existing staff time in the County of San Diego (County) HHSA Housing and Community Development Services. The funding source is existing General Purpose Revenue. 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**

The County of San Diego has made addressing homelessness a priority through significant investments in housing, behavioral health services, and coordinated care strategies. These efforts include the expansion of emergency shelters and the development of bridge and permanent

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supportive housing. The County has also made significant investments in behavioral health resources.

A foundational tool in these efforts is the By-Name List (BNL), a real-time, person-specific database that allows the County and its partners to monitor and manage each homeless individual. First initiated by the Board of Supervisors (Board) on August 16, 2022 (2) and subsequently approved by the Board for implementation on January 24, 2023 (3), the BNL enables County staff and service providers to track housing placements, service connections, and barriers faced by each individual.

For example, The Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) developed and manages the Veterans regionwide BNL. In addition to existing Veteran’s BNL, and as part of County initiated efforts, RTFH reached out to all the regional Cities and provided training and education on managing the BNL. Many Cities like Oceanside, Vista and Lemon Grove in partnership with RTFH were successful in establishing BNLs within their jurisdictions which better match people experiencing homelessness to the available resources. Additionally, these efforts were leveraged to secure State Encampment Resolution Grant funding which brings essential resources to the region. This system is crucial for tailoring interventions, avoiding duplication of services, and measuring long-term outcomes.

In addition, the Regional Homeless Assistance Program (RHAP) is an emergency housing program for homeless individuals in the unincorporated area. RHAP leverages participating hotels/motels as emergency housing and plays a critical role in housing individuals temporarily until a long-term solution is identified through wraparound services, case management and housing navigation provided by the program. RHAP complements the BNL by acting as a housing resource bridge. RHAP has been very successful to date, with 40% of participants placed in permanent housing.

Despite these initiatives, the unincorporated area faces unique logistical and infrastructural challenges, including dispersed geography, limited transit access, and fewer service hubs. These factors require a targeted, data-driven strategy to ensure resources are aligned with need and that progress can be measured effectively. While substantial investments have been made, real-time assessment of outcomes based on BNL—such as the number of people housed, barriers to placement, and service utilization—is essential to ensure these efforts are having their intended impact.

Attachment A provides a visual guide and example of a monthly report on homelessness within the City of Vista.

Today’s action seeks to establish a regular, transparent reporting mechanism that will provide the Board and the public with a clear understanding of how homelessness is being addressed in the unincorporated area. By receiving monthly updates, the County can more effectively assess its strategies, adjust resource allocation as needed, and strengthen its commitment to ending homelessness.

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

Today's proposed action supports the Equity Initiative of the County of San Diego's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan by making health and housing a focus by reducing disparities and disproportionality and ensuring access for all through a fully optimized health and social service delivery system and upstream strategies while utilizing policies, facilities, infrastructure, and finance to provide housing opportunities that meet the needs of the community.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Desmond", written in a cursive style.

**JIM DESMOND**  
Supervisor, Fifth District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

ATTACHMENT A- City of Vista Homeless Report