



County of San Diego
Application for Destruction of Records

To: Auditor and Controller
Office of Audits & Advisory Services (OAAS)
Mail Stop O-305

Control No.: 9279
(for A&G/OAAS use only)

The undersigned, according to the law(s) cited below, is making application for an order to destroy the following records. Approval of this application relieves this department from further responsibility for these records.

Record's File Number (Must match the retention schedule)	Audit/Legal Hold? (Yes or No)	Media Type: (Paper/Optical (CD)/ Microfilm Tape/Disk (floppy), etc.)	Period Covered (Actual Date of Record)	Box Number/ CD Number/ Microfilm Reel Number
Fiscal-4000-100	No	Paper	From 7/1/2019 To 6/30/2020 5	N/A
Fiscal-4000-100	No	Paper	From 7/1/2019 To 6/30/2020 5	N/A
Fiscal-1000-522	No	Paper	From 7/1/2014 To 6/30/2015 10	N/A
Fiscal-1000-106	No	Paper	From 7/1/2017 To 6/30/2018 7	N/A
Fiscal-4000-183	No	Paper	From 7/1/2019 To 6/30/2020 5	N/A
Operational-6100-308	No	Paper	From 7/1/2016 To 6/30/2017 8	N/A
Operational-4500-100	No	Paper	From 7/1/2022 To 6/30/2023 2	N/A
Fiscal-4000-199	No	Paper	From 6/30/2019 To 6/30/2020 5	N/A

Total Cubic Feet (total of boxes) 8 (Attachment Acceptable)

☐ Off-Site (Account #):

☒ On-Site (Account/Location):

☒ This application is to destroy paper records

☐ This application includes a request for the destruction of paper records which have been digitized (via imaging). I hereby attest that I have proof of the following:

- 1) The system in which the electronic images are being stored has been certified as a "Trusted System".
- 2) A Quality Assurance process has been followed which authenticates that the electronic image is a true and correct image of the original document.

☐ This application for the destruction of electronic records. These records are stored at (name of computer application or system of record)

State of California)
County of San Diego) ss.

I, ANN MOORE, for CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Department Head or Authorized Representative Department & Unit
of the County of San Diego, declare under penalty of perjury that I have read the above application and can attest to its accuracy.

Please send processed department copy to:

KATHERINE ILAGAN

Mail Stop: A-45

Title: ASSISTANT CLERK OF THE BOARD

Signature:

(Department Head or Authorized Representative)

(For P&C Records Services use only)

Received by P&C/Records Services:

Forwarded to Iron Mountain/Dept. for Destruction:

Disposition in DRM:

We do not anticipate any further need for the above records for audit purposes.

RECEIVED

Tracy Drager
Auditor and Controller

JUL 16 2025

OFFICE OF AUDITS &
ADVISORY SERVICES

By:

OAAS, Chief of Audits

UNIT	FILE NUMBER	RECORD (Description)	SHORT DESCRIPTION (Period Covered)	ACCOUNT/CONTAINER NAME	BOX/ BARCODE #
Finance and Budget	FISCAL-4000-100	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE (PO invoices, Map transfers/refunds, money order disbursements, general claims, travel claims, returned checks) .	7/1/2019 thru 6/30/2020	N/A	N/A
Finance and Budget	FISCAL-4000-100	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE (Board of Supervisors Trust Fund)	7/1/2019 thru 6/30/2020	N/A	N/A
Finance and Budget	FISCAL-1000-522	Bank Statements and Records	7/1/2014 thru 6/30/2015	N/A	N/A
Finance and Budget	FISCAL-1000-106	DEPOSIT PERMITS -	7/1/2017 thru 6/30/2018	N/A	N/A
Finance and Budget	Fiscal-4000-183	Inventory Records	7/1/2019 thru 6/30/2020	N/A	N/A
Finance and Budget	OPERATIONAL-6100-308	LEM REPORTS	7/1/2016 thru 6/30/2017	N/A	N/A
Finance and Budget	OPERATIONAL-4500-100	LOGS AND LOGBOOKS (Cash vault logs)	7/1/2022 thru 6/30/2023	N/A	N/A
Finance and Budget	FISCAL-4000-199	P-CARD HOLDER RETAINED DOCUMENTATION .	7/1/2019 thru 6/30/2020	N/A	N/A

ON SITE DESTRUCTION CONFIRMATION FORM
PLEASE RETURN TO RECORDS_SERVICES@SDCOUNTY.CA.GOV

AUD # 9279


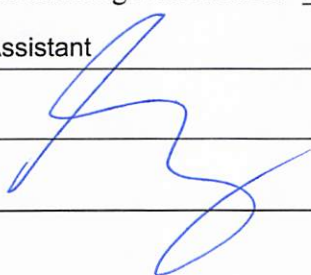
On 7/28/25, the following records were destroyed based on the identified retention policy:
(Date of Destruction)

Attachment acceptable

Account Number or Media Type	Division ID	Box Number or Record Name	Retention Policy
PAPER	COB	N/A	Fiscal-4000-100
PAPER	COB	N/A	Fiscal-4000-100
PAPER	COB	N/A	Fiscal-1000-522
PAPER	COB	N/A	Fiscal-1000-106
PAPER	COB	N/A	Fiscal-4000-183
PAPER	COB	N/A	Operational-6100-308
PAPER	COB	N/A	Operational-4500-100
PAPER	COB	N/A	Fiscal-4000-199

Total Number of Boxes/Records Destroyed: 8

1. Are these items in Records Manager (FRMS)? Yes ☐ No ☒ Account # _____
2. Were these items ever stored Offsite (Corodata)? Yes ☐ No ☒
 - a. If so, was a Permanent Withdrawal done? Yes ☐ No ☒
3. If you've answered yes to questions 1 and 2, please attach an excel worksheet of the Barcodes for each box or folder.

Name of Destroyer: <u>Katherine Ilagan</u> (Print Full Name)	Dept: <u>COB</u>
Title: <u>Administrative Analyst II</u>	Date: <u>8/21/25</u>
Signature: 	
Name of Individual Confirming Destruction: <u>Savannah Perez</u> (Print Full Name)	
Title: <u>Senior Board Assistant</u>	Date: <u>8-22-25</u>
Signature: 	

8-11-82



County of San Diego
Application for Destruction of Records

To: Auditor and Controller
Office of Audits & Advisory Services (OAAS)
Mail Stop O-305

Control No.: 9280
(for A&C/OAAS use only)

The undersigned, according to the law(s) cited below, is making application for an order to destroy the following records. Approval of this application relieves this department from further responsibility for these records.

Record's File Number (Must match the retention schedule)	Audit/Legal Hold? (Yes or No)	Media Type: (Paper/Optical (CD)/ Microfilm Tape/Disk (floppy), etc.)	Period Covered (Actual Date of Record)	Box Number/ CD Number/ Microfilm Reel Number
Administrative-6000-119	No	Paper	From 5/1/2022 To 6/30/2022 3	N/A
Administrative-5000-108	No	Paper	From 7/1/2017 To 7/7/2018 7	N/A
			From To	
			From To	
			From To	
			From To	
			From To	
			From To	

Total Cubic Feet (total of boxes) 2 (Attachment Acceptable)

☐ Off-Site (Account #):

☒ On-Site (Account/Location): COB

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Department Head or Authorized Representative of the County of San Diego, declare under penalty of perjury that I have read the above application and can attest to its accuracy.

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KATHERINE ILAGAN Mail Stop: A-45

Title: ASSISTANT CLERK OF THE BOARD

Signature:

(Department Head or Authorized Representative)

(For P&C Records Services use only)

Received by P&C/Records Services:

Forwarded to Iron Mountain/Dept. for Destruction:

Disposition in DRM:

We do not anticipate any further need for the above records for audit purposes.

Tracy Drager
Auditor and Controller

RECEIVED

JUL 16 2025

OFFICE OF AUDITS &
ADVISORY SERVICES

By:

OAAS, Chief of Audits



UNIT	FILE NUMBER	RECORD (Description)	SHORT DESCRIPTION (Period Covered)	ACCOUNT/ CONTAINER NAME	BOX/ BARCODE #
Board General Offices	Administrative-6000-119	Department Personnel Records	5/1/2022 thru 6/30/2022	N/A	N/A
Disclosure Services	ADMINISTRATIVE-5000-108	STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTEREST FORM 700	7/1/2017 thru 7/7/2018	N/A	N/A

ON SITE DESTRUCTION CONFIRMATION FORM
PLEASE RETURN TO RECORDS_SERVICES@SDCOUNTY.CA.GOV

AUD # 9280

On 8/11/25, the following records were destroyed based on the identified retention policy:
(Date of Destruction)

Attachment acceptable

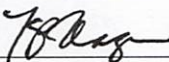
Account Number or Media Type	Division ID	Box Number or Record Name	Retention Policy
PAPER	COB	N/A	Administrative-6000-119

Total Number of Boxes/Records Destroyed: 1

1. Are these items in Records Manager (FRMS)? Yes ☐ No ☒ Account # _____
2. Were these items ever stored Offsite (Corodata)? Yes ☐ No ☒
 - a. If so, was a Permanent Withdrawal done? Yes ☐ No ☒
3. If you've answered yes to questions 1 and 2, please attach an excel worksheet of the Barcodes for each box or folder.

Name of Destroyer: Katherine Ilagan Dept: COB
(Print Full Name)

Title: Administrative Analyst II Date: 8/21/25

Signature: 

Name of Individual Confirming Destruction: Ann Moore
(Print Full Name)

Title: Assistant Clerk of the Board Date: 8/21/25

Signature: 

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten signature]

COSD CLERK OF THE BOARD
2025 AUG 21 PM 5:20

ON SITE DESTRUCTION CONFIRMATION FORM
PLEASE RETURN TO RECORDS_SERVICES@SDCOUNTY.CA.GOV

AUD # 9280


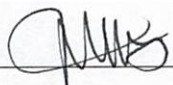
On 7/28/25, the following records were destroyed based on the identified retention policy:
(Date of Destruction)

Attachment acceptable

Account Number or Media Type	Division ID	Box Number or Record Name	Retention Policy
PAPER	COB	N/A	Administrative-5000-108

Total Number of Boxes/Records Destroyed: 1

1. Are these items in Records Manager (FRMS)? Yes ☐ No ☒ Account # _____
2. Were these items ever stored Offsite (Corodata)? Yes ☐ No ☒
 - a. If so, was a Permanent Withdrawal done? Yes ☐ No ☒
3. If you've answered yes to questions 1 and 2, please attach an excel worksheet of the Barcodes for each box or folder.

Name of Destroyer: <u>Katherine Ilagan</u>	Dept: <u>COB</u>
(Print Full Name)	
Title: <u>Administrative Analyst II</u>	Date: <u>8/21/25</u>
Signature: <u></u>	
Name of Individual Confirming Destruction: <u>Jocelyn Porter</u>	
(Print Full Name)	
Title: <u>Senior Board Assistant</u>	Date: <u>8/21/25</u>
Signature: <u></u>	



COSD CLERK OF THE BOARD
2025 AUG 22 PM3:53

POTRERO COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP VACANCY NOTICE

This notice is to announce that vacancies have occurred on the Potrero Community Planning Group (CPG) for Seats #1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 of the 9 member group. The County's BOARD OF SUPERVISORS makes this appointment.

You may refer to the Roster of Boards, Commissions and Committees on the County's website at www.sandiegocounty.gov/cob/ for information about this CPG. Vacancies for this CPG are filled in compliance with Policy I-1 of the Board of Supervisors. The CPG may make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, who can then appoint the interested, qualified community member.

Those wishing to apply to become a member of the Potrero CPG are requested to inform the group's Chairperson Carl Meyer, 619-820-6429 or csmeier@nethere.com of their desire to serve. They shall then present themselves in person to the group at a CPG meeting to inform the group in a five-minute presentation of their credentials and their desire to serve.

Community Planning Group applicants must reside in the Planning Group area to be eligible for appointment to the group. Candidates must provide a completed application, be at least 18 years of age, be registered to vote in the area they wish to represent, and disclose any financial interest in real estate or business in the Potrero Community Planning Group area other than their home (if any).

cc: ___ Group Chairperson
 ___ County Supervisor's Office
 ___ Posted Copy – BCC@sdcounty.ca.gov
 ___ Planning & Development Services – CommunityGroups.LUEG@sdcounty.ca.gov

POSTING DATE:
August 15, 2025



THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SPECIAL VACANCY NOTICE

This is to announce the vacancy that has occurred on the **ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION, Seat No. 5**. The **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** makes this appointment. Please refer to the Roster of Boards, Commissions and Committees on our web site at <http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/cob/> for further information on the qualifications for this Board.

In compliance with section 54974 of the Government Code, this appointment can be made after **August 29, 2024**.

Applications for this position can be downloaded from the web site; questions regarding this vacancy should be directed to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, County Administration Center, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 402, San Diego, CA 92101-2471.

cc:

- ☐ Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, Chair, A-500
- ☐ Giang Meyers, A-247
- ☐ San Diego Public Library, 330 Park Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92101
- ☐ Posted Copy – Board Chamber
- ☐ Posted Copy – South Entrance of County Administration Center
- ☒ Communications Received

POSTING DATE:
August 14, 2025



COSD CLERK OF THE BOARD
2025 AUG 14 AM 9:55

THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL VACANCY NOTICE

This is to announce the vacancy that has occurred on the **CHILD AND FAMILY STRENGTHENING ADVISORY BOARD OF SAN DIEGO, Seat No. 19**. The **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** makes this appointment. Please refer to the Roster of Boards, Commissions and Committees on our web site at <http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/cob/> for further information on the qualifications for this Board.

In compliance with section 54974 of the Government Code, this appointment can be made after **August 28, 2025**.

Applications for this position can be downloaded from the web site; questions regarding this vacancy should be directed to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, County Administration Center, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 402, San Diego, CA 92101-2471.

cc:

- ____ Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, A-500
- ____ Torrey L. Giaquinta, 3625 Ruffin Rd, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92123
- ____ San Diego Public Library, 330 Park Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92101
- ____ Posted Copy – Board Chamber
- ____ Posted Copy – South Entrance of County Administration Center
- ____ Communications Received

POSTING DATE:
August 15, 2025



COSD CLERK OF THE BOARD
2025 AUG 15 AM 9:47

THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL VACANCY NOTICE

This is to announce the vacancy that has occurred on the **SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD, Seat No. 5**. The **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** makes this appointment. Please refer to the Roster of Boards, Commissions and Committees on our web site at <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/cob/> for further information on the qualifications for this Board.

In compliance with section 54974 of the Government Code, this appointment can be made after **August 29, 2025**.

Applications for this position can be downloaded from the web site; questions regarding this vacancy should be directed to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, County Administration Center, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 402, San Diego, CA 92101-2471.

cc:

- ____ Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, A-500
- ____ Cara Ferrer, Health and Human Services Agency, W-414
- ____ San Diego Public Library, 330 Park Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92101
- ____ Posted Copy – Board Chamber
- ____ Posted Copy – South Entrance of County Administration Center
- ____ Communications Received



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 206, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2417
(619) 515-6555

KIMBERLY GIARDINA, DSW, MSW
DEPUTY CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PATTY KAY DANON
CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

August 20, 2025

COSD CLERK OF THE BOARD
2025 AUG 21 PM 2:32

To: Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, Chair
Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe, Vice Chair
Supervisor Paloma Aguirre, Chair Pro Tem
Supervisor Joel Anderson
Supervisor Jim Desmond

From: Kimberly Giardina, DSW, MSW, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Health and Human Services Agency

**UPDATE ON PRIORITIZING OUR VETERANS: ESTABLISHING A CENTER FOR
MILITARY AND VETERAN REINTEGRATION IN EAST COUNTY**

On September 27, 2022 (29), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved actions to support efforts to explore the establishment of a Center for Military and Veteran Reintegration in East County. Specifically, the Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer to:

1. Competitively procure a consultant specializing in Veterans wellness to assess the feasibility of implementing the Center for Military and Veteran Reintegration (CMVR) model, enhancing services at existing Military and Veteran Resource Centers (MVRCs), and establishing a new East County Veterans Center;
2. Identify potential sites including existing County of San Diego (County) facilities in San Diego County's Second Supervisorial District for a reimagined CMVR with associated Veterans housing, and present an implementation plan within one year;
3. Implement a pilot program to enhance Veterans services at a new East County facility and the Central MVRC, with plans to expand improvements to MVRCs countywide; and
4. Build partnerships, secure funding, and collaborate with the California Department of Veterans Affairs, local military leadership, and State and federal agencies to gain recognition of County-operated Veterans service facilities as key transition hubs for military personnel entering civilian life.

On November 7, 2023 (8), staff returned to the Board with updates on progress related to competitive procurement of a consultant (awarded to National Veterans Transition Services, Inc.), to assess the CMVR model as well as potential sites within the Second Supervisorial District to establish a CMVR with associated Veterans housing. This memorandum provides the final consultant report that includes the assessment, proposed outcomes, and recommendations to implement the CMVR model and expanded and novel services at existing MVRCs, and to establish an East County Veterans Center.

The report sought to assess the Veteran service landscape across the San Diego region, and 1) assess current Veteran services, identify current gaps, and include recommendations and solutions; 2) provide a comprehensive written report that includes identifying the differences between the current MVRCs and the CMVR model (e.g., MVRCs focus on benefits counseling, while CMVRs offer comprehensive, coordinated services including health care, housing, employment, and peer navigation), along with identifying existing MVRC services which could be improved; 3) identify opportunities for establishing stronger partnerships with military leadership and spread awareness of the MVRCs; and 4) conduct a site search and recommend an implementation plan for proposed locations for a CMVR in the Second Supervisorial District. Over the course of a year, the consultant conducted research and analysis involving the following:

- Veteran needs assessment;
- Service provider survey;
- Gap analysis on Veteran needs, organizational capacity, military relations, Veteran services, and MVRCs and CMVRs;
- Key informant interviews with Military and Veteran Advisory Council members and local organizations;
- Site evaluations in East County (El Cajon, Santee, Lemon Grove, and La Mesa) to assess potential locations;
- Review of published literature on best practices; and
- Development and distribution of a survey for military leaders.

More information on the consultant's research and findings can be found in the report titled, *2025: Prioritizing Veterans in East County* (Attachment A).

The consultant report highlights recommendations to improve and expand Veteran services (including transitioning existing MVRCs from benefits-focused centers into CMVRs that serve as comprehensive, integrated hubs). These recommendations present an opportunity to prioritize actions and make enhancements to the current ecosystem of Veterans services in the short, medium, and long-term. There are several recommendations provided in the report that the County can act upon with existing structures and resources, while other recommendations are outside of the County's scope due to core service domains already being provided by other organizations in the region.

The following table outlines several recommendations in the report grouped by short, medium, and long-term timeframes based on actions that the County can take to align with recommended improvements.

Short-Term (0-6 months)	
Consultant Recommendation	Aligned County Action
Establish a Guiding Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage the San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council and San Diego Veterans coalition to convene a focused Veterans Subcommittee to address East County outreach, coordination, and service navigation.

Establish a Joint Outreach and Communication Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand media, web, and social media outreach to better inform active-duty service members, transitioning military personnel, Veterans, and their families about available services and resources in East County.
Establish Mobile MVRCs/CMVRs and Kiosks for Remote and Virtual Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the role of the County's Live Well on Wheels buses by expanding Veteran-focused services, such as benefit enrollment and health outreach, and increasing their presence in underserved areas of East County to better reach transitioning service members and Veterans. This would pilot the CMVR model, which goes beyond the MVRC's benefits assistance role to offer coordinated on-site and referral services for housing, health care, employment, and family support in East County.
Improve Military and Community Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen County partnerships with existing Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs), military family support networks, coalitions, and Transition Assistance Programs (TAPs) to promote coordination and collaboration. Increase access to County programs and services such as enhancing job training and placement programs to help Veterans transition smoothly into civilian careers. Coordinate closely with partner organizations such as the San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council, the VA, Veterans of East County Alliance, Chamber of Commerce, and others to foster stronger collaboration, improve referral pathways, and enhance understanding of each organization's unique strengths and resources. This will help ensure that Veterans receive comprehensive, complementary support tailored to their needs.
Mid-Term (6-18 months)	
Consultant Recommendation	Aligned County Action
Establish A Temporary MVRC/CMVR and Establish "Warm Hand-offs" Between Military and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance Veteran's services through piloting a resource hub at a San Diego East County Library, expanding the County's existing VetConnect program, as well as establishing a presence in a high-traffic public library in El Cajon or Santee, which would serve as a one-stop in-person access point. The hub would employ peer navigators with lived military experience who can provide warm hand-

	<p>offs/connections to onsite benefits counseling, employment assistance, and referrals to housing, financial counseling, legal assistance, and more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Host regular workshops, resource fairs, VA mobile clinic days, and act as a welcoming and highly visible entry point to the County's larger Veteran ecosystem.• Provide opportunities to participate, contribute, and support events in the Veteran community.
Mid-Term (6-18 months)	
Consultant Recommendation	Aligned County Action
Develop Joint Digital Mobile Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate with partner organizations in utilizing existing resources to develop a centralized digital platform that connects military installations, TAPs, County departments, VSOs, and community groups to improve referral coordination and service delivery.

By advancing these recommendations, the County can bolster its commitment to those who have served, create a replicable and best-practice model, and significantly improve the Veteran reintegration experience. Veterans Transition Services, Inc. has completed their assessment, and the final report and assessment of the overall region with recommendations is attached for reference. The Health and Human Services Agency will continue to partner with Veteran-serving organizations to support Veterans in the community and continue to advance innovative solutions as a region. For any questions, please contact Richard Wanne, Director, Self Sufficiency Services, via phone at (619) 338-2869 or email at Richard.Wanne@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Respectfully,



KIMBERLY GIARDINA, DSW, MSW
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Health and Human Services Agency

Attachment A - Report titled 2025: *Prioritizing Veterans in East County*

c: Ebony N. Shelton, Chief Administrative Officer
Caroline Smith, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Andrew Potter, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

2025 PRIORITIZING VETERANS IN EAST COUNTY



Lee Whittington, Dr. Richard Nicholson, Maurice Wilson, Kalem Riley
National Veterans Transition Services, Inc.
8880 Rio San Diego Drive, San Diego, CA 92108

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OVERVIEW

San Diego County, home to the largest concentration of military personnel in the nation, is also the 5th largest county in the United States, serving over 235,000 Veterans and their families. The region is supported by a robust Veteran service community, with over 450 Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) offering a wide range of services to military members, Veterans, their spouses, and families. Despite these strengths and the presence of highly capable organizations and leaders, a critical need remains: the establishment of an integrated, community-led coalition of public, private, and nonprofit entities to cohesively address the complex and evolving needs of the military and Veteran community.

The Center for Military and Veteran Reintegration (CMVR) Report seeks to address this need by assessing the strengths and areas for improvement of San Diego's current Veteran service ecosystem and offering tangible recommendations and solutions. The report addresses four objectives: 1.) Assess current Veterans services, identify current gaps, and include recommendations to expand services including evaluating the CMVR model for potential implementation. 2.) Provide a comprehensive written report that includes identifying the differences between the current Military and Veteran Resource Centers (MVRC) and the CMVR model, along with identifying existing MVRC services which could be improved. 3.) Identify opportunities for establishing stronger partnerships with military leadership and spread awareness of the MVRCs. 4.) Conduct a site search and recommend an implementation plan for proposed locations for a Veteran Center in San Diego County's Second Supervisorial District. The ultimate goal is to position San Diego as a model region for Veterans' services and support in the nation, building on its existing resources and fostering greater alignment, innovation and service.

Methodology:

Utilizing academic, descriptive and experiential research and data collection, the report revealed:

Strength: San Diego County's Veteran service ecosystem is a vibrant community of over 450 VSOs, with a strong foundation of support from public and private sectors, and a large network of passionate stakeholders.

Gap: Less than optimal alignment and integration among service providers and Veteran ecosystem stakeholders resulting in inefficiencies, fragmented access to services, and suboptimization of the system.

Opportunity: Opportunity exists for establishing a unified, community-led coalition to drive collaboration and shared vision, while aligning and leveraging existing resources to create a more seamless and effective system providing a high-quality consistent Veteran experience.

Summary Recommendations:

Recommendations to improve and expand Veteran services include but are not limited to:

- **Establish a Guiding Coalition:** Create a leadership group of influential public, private, military, and nonprofit stakeholders to align efforts and champion a shared vision for the military and Veteran community.

- **Develop an Integrated Network of Service Providers:** Build a horizontal and vertical network connecting VSOs to enhance communication, coordination, and seamless service delivery.
- **Implement a Unified Outreach and Communication Plan:** Develop a joint outreach strategy that utilizes both traditional and digital platforms to ensure inclusivity and effectiveness.
- **Transform Existing Military and Veteran Resource Centers (MVRC) to CMVR:** Expand services for current MVRCs as well as establishing a temporary CMVR in East County, with the long-term goal of developing a permanent CMVR with transitional housing.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For ease of reading, an executive high-level overview is provided for each contract objective, including the current baseline, future vision, and recommendations. Additional detailed data and recommendations are provided in the respective expanded sections and appendices that follow.

Military and Veteran Resource Centers

Overview/Discussion:

There are four MVRCs across San Diego County. The North Coastal MVRC is located in Oceanside, and the North Inland MVRC is located in Escondido. The North Central MVRC is located in Kearney Mesa, and the South Region MVRC is located in National City.

The MVRCs focus on the following Veteran services:

- Benefits counseling
- Claims submission
- Appeals
- Networking

Current Baseline:

The MVRCs serve Veterans through in-person and phone-based services. The MVRCs are co-located in Live Well Centers across San Diego County. The characteristics of the MVRCs include:

- Focus on Veterans benefits administration
- On-site Veteran Service Representative (VSRs) assist with benefit claims
- Memorandums of Understanding established with service providers
- Limited on-site Veteran services
- Metrics include appointment wait time
- Follow-up calls made after appointment
- No MVRC in East County

Future Vision:

In the future vision, the MVRCs have been converted into CMVR offering a comprehensive range of services tailored to meet the evolving needs of Veterans and their families. The CMVRs provide a centralized hub for Veteran services in the region through an integrated network of service providers. On-site services are provided for the highest priority services indicated on Veteran surveys, including health services, mental health counseling, and benefits administration. The CMVRs are staffed by Veteran peer navigators that connect Veterans to services that include:

- Housing assistance
- Career services
- Family support
- Legal support
- Financial advising

- Life planning
- Substance abuse programs

CMVRs provide a high-quality, consistent customer experience by sharing best practices, using shared metrics and a common intake and referral process.

The CMVR staff is committed to personalized care, ensuring feedback loops, regular follow-ups, and a crisis communication protocol for emergencies.

Recommendations:

The following improvements are recommended for the short term - within 1 year; and the long term - over 1 year:

Short Term:

- Converting existing MVRCs to CMVRs: The four existing MVRCs could be converted to full service CMVRs. These CMVRs could include a peer navigator for referrals and specific on-site services.

Long Term:

- CMVR mobile units: The dedicated CMVR facilities across San Diego County could be augmented by CMVR mobile units that deliver Veteran services to remote areas within the region.
- CMVR kiosks: Large touch-pad kiosks could be installed at public libraries to provide virtual access to Veteran services. These kiosks could be easy to operate and provide live video chat capability with the CMVR or Courage to Call peer navigators.

Veteran Needs

Overview/Discussion:

The report baseline begins with the Veterans physical and emotional needs. Current local academic research was utilized including the leading University of Southern California (USC) Veteran research (The State of the American Veteran: The Southern California Veterans Study, 2023). These findings have been corroborated with the National Veterans Transition Services, Inc. (NVTSI aka REBOOT) report team's data collection from local Veterans, local Veteran service providers and experience.

Current Baseline:

The USC Veterans Study (The State of the American Veteran: The Southern California Veterans Study, 2023) identified ten key findings:

1. There are still too many Veterans unprepared for their transition from military to civilian community with 66% of transitioning service members without a job.
2. Many Veterans in the study reported experiencing moderate to severe physical pain.
3. A significant number of Veterans in the study indicated experiencing loneliness and a lack of social support.
4. Far too many Veterans continue to remain at risk of dying by suicide.
5. Food insecurity among Veterans is high.

6. Military sexual trauma remains a major concern, particularly for women Veterans.
7. Veterans believe that their exposure to airborne toxins, such as burn pits, has caused them physical harm.
8. Many Veterans do not seek care for mental health issues, despite the health benefits of doing so and the numerous resources available to them.
9. While the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system is viewed very positively by most Veterans, there are far too many Veterans who report negative perceptions about the VA, as well as reporting logistical barriers to receiving VA care.
10. Despite challenges Veterans may be experiencing, many report living purposeful, fulfilled and meaningful lives.

Notable Additional Findings in the USC Study:

- Being a Veteran was an important part of self-image and had a lot of meaning; this was equally true for both men and women.
- Three out of four Veterans had careers different from their military occupation.
- Lack of a comprehensive holistic physical and emotional needs assessment.
- Lack of transition and reintegration training process that results in a new civilian identity and purpose, life-skills, purpose-driven job search and follow-up.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression remain major mental health issues among Veterans.
- Problematic alcohol use was a concern among Veterans in the study.
- Women were more likely than men to report severe physical health symptoms, although symptoms were high in both groups.
- Cannabis misuse was low in the study...but a potential rise in misuse.
- A significant number of Veterans reported experiencing major sleep problems.

Future Vision:

In the future vision, Veterans are efficiently assessed for immediate and long-term physical and emotional needs. A warm handoff is made to the appropriate Veteran service providers in a network to meet those needs in a timely manner.

Physically and emotionally stable Veterans participate in education and civilian life-skills training to create their new civilian identity, purpose, and areas of interest in order to achieve purpose-driven career choices. This may include immediate job search or reskilling/upskilling and continuing education as most Veterans want careers that are different from their military occupations.

Recommendations:

- Identify or create an assessment tool to efficiently connect Veteran needs with Veteran service providers and provide a warm hand-off with the community.
- Identify holistic transition and reintegration training that includes creating a civilian identity, purpose, life skills and purpose-driven career placement.

Veteran Service Providers

Overview/Discussion:

San Diego County offers a comprehensive range of services to support Veterans and their families. Over 300 nonprofit VSOs provide services in healthcare, mental health counseling, housing support, employment, entrepreneurship, education, family support, financial counseling, and legal support. Several Veteran service collaboratives provide coordination across service domains. The Courage to Call program offers a 24/7 support line operated run by Veterans for Veterans.

Current Baseline:

While Veteran service providers are passionately working on their individual missions, they still face several challenges that hinder overall effectiveness. These findings include:

- Fragmentation of services where support is often provided in silos making it difficult for Veterans to navigate the complex landscape of available resources.
- Limited participation in Veteran collaboratives such as the San Diego Veterans Coalition (SDVC) and Live Well.
- Veterans are unaware of the services available to them.
- Housing remains a persistent problem with many Veterans struggling to find affordable and stable living conditions.
- Navigation to find the necessary resources and services is difficult.
- Comprehensive Veteran services are not available at many transitional housing facilities.
- Veterans face difficulties transitioning to civilian careers and the unemployment of transitioning service members is high.
- Access to services is limited in remote areas, especially for Veterans with transportation challenges
- Legal services are high in demand but there are limited service providers.
- Lack of a warm hand-off between Veteran service providers
- No common metrics
- Overall unwillingness to use the 2-1-1 referral system (CIE)

Future Vision:

The future vision for Veteran services in San Diego County encompasses a fully integrated and accessible support system that ensures no Veteran is left behind. This includes:

- An integrated network of service providers and regional CMVR that deliver comprehensive services to Veterans and their families.
- Transitional and affordable long-term housing has eliminated Veteran homelessness and provides comprehensive Veteran services at housing locations.
- Enhanced job training and placement programs help Veterans transition smoothly into civilian careers.
- Comprehensive healthcare services are readily available, addressing both physical and mental health needs.

- A robust network of peer support and community engagement initiatives fosters a sense of belonging and purpose among Veterans.
- All Veterans tracked and monitored for success

Recommendations:

To improve Veteran services in San Diego County and move toward the future vision, a more integrated and streamlined approach is essential. The following improvements are recommended for the short term - within 1 year; and the long term - over 1 year:

Short Term:

- Establish a high-level Veteran Guiding Coalition to drive a shared vision and mission. This Coalition could include San Diego County's Office of Military and Veteran Affairs (OMVA), service provider collaboratives, and military leadership.
- Develop an integrated network of service providers that uses common tools, processes, and metrics.
- Create and implement a joint outreach and communications plan to increase awareness of Veteran services.
- Secure adequate funding to implement improvements outlined in this report.

Long Term:

- Establish a Quality Management System for a structured framework to ensure OMVA can consistently deliver products and services to Veterans in San Diego County with a positive Veteran experience.

Military Relations and Partnerships

Overview/Discussion:

The relationship between military installations and the San Diego region plays a pivotal role in ensuring a seamless transition for military personnel and their families into civilian life. While military service organizations and regional providers are deeply committed to supporting this transition, significant gaps remain in communication, resource alignment, and service awareness. Addressing these shortcomings is essential to improving the overall transition experience, fostering stronger collaboration, and ensuring effective service delivery across military, government, and civilian sectors in the San Diego region.

Current Baseline:

Despite a strong foundational framework, several challenges persist in the integration and collaboration between military installations and service providers in the region. Key issues include:

Limited Awareness of Community Services: Many service members and their families are unaware of the full range of local resources available to support their transition.

Complex Navigation of Services: The multitude of services and providers often creates confusion and difficulty in accessing the right resources.

Coordination and Communication Gaps: Insufficient collaboration between military leaders, county officials, and community organizations hampers efficiency and effectiveness.

Inadequate Transition Support: Transition programs often lack the depth and breadth needed to fully address the challenges faced by service members and their families.

Lack of a Warm Hand-off: From the DoD to an established community reintegration system

Lack of a Veteran Reintegration Policy

These barriers reduce the overall impact of reintegration efforts and highlight the need for a more unified approach. Strengthening communication, resource alignment, and strategic partnerships is critical to enhancing the transition process and building a more cohesive support network for military personnel in the San Diego region.

Future Vision:

The future vision is a collaborative, integrated support ecosystem that ensures seamless transitions for military personnel into civilian life. This system emphasizes personalized, efficient services, facilitated through strong partnerships and streamlined communication between military organizations and community service providers. Key elements of this vision include

- **Enhanced communication and digital platforms:** Advanced tools and platforms that provide clear, centralized information, increasing service awareness and simplifying navigation for transitioning service members and their families.
- **Stronger partnerships:** Deepened collaboration between military installations, San Diego County, and nonprofit organizations to optimize resource sharing and eliminate service gaps.
- **Community-centric engagement:** Coordinated efforts with regional CMVRs create a holistic, community-based approach to reintegration.

The future vision prioritizes mental health, employment, and reintegration services ensuring timely and effective support tailored to the unique challenges of military personnel and their families. In this future vision, transitioning service members experience "warm hand-offs" that connect them directly and seamlessly to the community resources they need. This comprehensive support system fosters resilience, independence, and successful reintegration into civilian life while strengthening ties between the military and the broader San Diego community.

Recommendations:

Short Term:

- Establish "warm hand-offs" between: 1) Command career counselors and civilian transition assistance advisors, and; 2) Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC) and regional CMVRs.
- Strengthen Partnerships: Develop stronger collaborative relationships with military leadership, nonprofits, and the private sector to expand the scope and accessibility of Veteran services

- **Expand Targeted Awareness Campaigns:** Launch campaigns to inform service members and Veterans about available resources and services, especially focusing on mental health, employment assistance, and community reintegration programs (improve relationships).
- **Establish a Regional Veteran Reintegration Policy:** Implement a policy that provides standards and guidelines to all municipalities throughout the region.

Longer Term:

- **Create a Centralized Communication Platform:** Establish a digital platform that facilitates efficient information sharing among military installations, county services, and community support organizations. This will help address the communication gaps identified in the current baseline.

East County CMVR

Overview/Discussion:

San Diego East County is home to a significant number of military Veterans, with approximately 57,500 Veterans residing in the area. There are several Veteran service providers located in the area that provide support to local Veterans and their families. The Veterans East County Alliance provides advocacy and support for Veteran-owned businesses in East County. There are in-person VA benefits support two-days a month at the El Cajon County Library. Veteran Resource Centers at Grossmont and Cuyamaca Colleges provide help with education benefits for Veteran students. A new family wellness center in Ramona provides limited support for Veterans benefits. Local American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and Disabled American Veterans chapters provide social support for local East County Veterans.

Current Baseline:

Despite having one of the largest Veteran populations in San Diego County, there are limited Veteran services available in the region.

- No centralized hub for Veteran services in the area, like a MVRC.
- No VA-operated clinic or Veteran center in East County. Veterans and their families must travel to VA centers in San Diego to receive services.
- Limited participation from Veterans in Live Well on Wheels services.

Future Vision:

The recommendations for an East County CMVR are phased over a time horizon that includes the short term: within 1 year; mid term: 1- 2 years; and long term: + 2 years.

Short Term:

- **Establish a CMVR at a public library.** The CMVR could be situated in a high density Veteran population like El Cajon or Santee. The library could be easily accessible by public transportation and have ample parking for Veteran events. The facility could have space for private counseling and conference rooms that can be used for Veteran events and workshops. The East County CMVR could be staffed by a Veteran peer

navigator for service referrals and a VSR to provide direct assistance for Veteran benefits.

Mid Term:

- Establish a dedicated CMVR mobile unit: The mobile CMVR delivers a range of services directly to remote areas of East County.
- Install CMVR kiosks: Large touch-pad kiosks could be positioned at public libraries in East County. The kiosks provide virtual support for Veteran services across East County.

Long Term:

- Establish a comprehensive Veteran support hub that provides temporary housing along with a range of services aimed at helping Veterans transition to stable, long-term housing and employment. The CMVR could include a reintegration process that involves a thorough life needs scan. The new facility could be located in the Santee/El Cajon area where the largest population of Veterans in East County reside. The CMVR could provide comprehensive on-site services, including medical screening and mental health counseling, employment and job training services, and fitness and wellness facilities. The location of the long-term CMVR could accommodate the option of adding low-income, long-term Veteran housing adjacent to the CMVR.

INTRODUCTION

The overall aim and objective of the report is to explore the feasibility for the implementation of the CMVR model in East San Diego County and potential application at existing county-operated MVRCs. The San Diego County Board of Supervisors chartered the evaluation of the CMVR model for implementation in East County and for potential improvement of existing MVRCs (Prioritizing Our Veterans, 2022). The report is intended to identify opportunities for improvement across the four MVRCs. The report provides findings and recommendations for the establishment of a new CMVR in East San Diego County along with supporting strategies to improve Veteran services across San Diego County.

The report provides a current baseline for Veteran services, including the MVRCs, and a future vision for Veteran services and the MVRCs across the San Diego County region. The report utilized various research methods including surveys, interviews, and focus groups to characterize the current baseline through a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Gap analyses were completed to identify opportunities for improvement to achieve the future vision for a CMVR in East San Diego County and expanded MVRCs across San Diego County.

The report supports the Community and Equity Strategic Initiatives in the County of San Diego's 2022-27 Strategic Plan. The report complements the Live Well San Diego vision of Building Better Health, Living Safely, and Thriving. The report provides recommendations for delivering Veteran services within a San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Trauma-Informed System.

Background:

San Diego County is home to one of the largest active-duty military populations in the U.S., with over 110,000 active-duty military personnel stationed in the area. The Veteran population is significant as well, with an estimated 240,000 Veterans residing in the county. The majority of active-duty service members are split between the Navy and the Marine Corps, serving at eight military bases in San Diego County. The military's direct and indirect economic impact on San Diego County is significant, contributing over \$50 billion annually to the local economy. The military is directly and indirectly responsible for 340,000 jobs in the County, which makes up almost 10 percent of the total local civilian labor force.

It is the intent of this report to provide recommendation for improving Veteran services in East San Diego County and across the entire San Diego County region. The report goes beyond traditional studies by adding another layer of detail in providing short and long-term recommendations and action plans to facilitate progress and build momentum.

The report contains:

1. Overview
2. Executive Summary
3. Introduction
4. Veteran Services - Including Veteran Service Providers, Veteran Needs, and MVRCs
5. Improving Military Relations & Partnerships
6. East County CMVR

7. Final Recommendations
8. Appendices

The various contract elements are addressed throughout the report. The Requirements Traceability Matrix found in Appendix G identifies where the report addresses the various contract requirements in the statement of work.

Acknowledgements:

The Report Team would like to acknowledge the San Diego County communities, Veterans, research organizations, and Veteran service providers that unselfishly shared current data and experience to enable the completion of the report with high quality and excellence. Their input and continued dedication will positively impact and serve Veterans for many years to come.

The Report Team:

NVTSI, chartered in 2010 as a California-based private sector nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, is dedicated to assisting transitioning active-duty, recently separated service members, guard/reserves, Veterans, and military spouses to build the emotional, psychological, social, and professional skills necessary for successful reintegration into civilian life.

NVTSI was established by a group of retired high-ranking Naval and Marine Corps officers, workforce development professionals, and social scientists from renowned organizations, working collaboratively to fill the gaps in the continuum of Veteran services.

Using a systems-integration approach, NVTSI has been successful in partnering with viable community and business partners who demonstrate research and experienced based best-practice methodologies for successful Veteran community reintegration.

For the individual Report Team bios, see Appendix F.

Approach and Methodology:

The action research approach for this proposal builds on academic research, as well as Veterans, and Veteran service provider data history and experience.

1. Review of literature and reports as sources of scientific evidence
2. Collect data and experience from Veterans and Veteran service providers
3. Collect data and experience from key stakeholder groups
4. Use analysis tools including SWOT, Gap Analysis, and Possible, Implement, Challenge, and Kill (PICK) prioritization methodology.
5. Provide findings and recommendations addressing Veteran needs, service provider integration, MVRC improvements, and CMVR implementation.

The Report Team's approach utilized literature reviews of local and national Veteran research studies, as well as applied research. It included current and multi-year experience and data collection with local Veteran service providers covering Veteran needs as well as Veteran transition programs. To obtain data directly from the Veterans, local focus groups and learning forums, surveys and interviews were conducted.

Specific research and methodology included:

- Literature reviews and reports on Veteran transition and reintegration (academic, Veterans Administration, service provider experience, etc.)
- SWOT Analysis to validate understanding of the overall system
- “Gap Analysis” approach to capture the current baseline, depict the future vision, and identify action steps to move from the current baseline to the desired future vision.
- Veteran feedback and experience: Methods such as targeted focus groups, interviews, surveys and/or data collection of Veterans and NVTSI data to validate gaps and needs
- Service provider feedback and experience: Methods such as targeted interviews, surveys and/or data collection of service provider stakeholders to validate gaps and needs

Ethical considerations:

All data collected from Veterans and stakeholders will be held confidentially without name of the provider unless given permission by the participant or respondent.

MILITARY AND VETERANS RESOURCE CENTERS

Current Baseline:

There are four MVRCs that are operated by the OMVA across San Diego County. The North Coastal MVRC is located in Oceanside, and the North Inland MVRC is located in Escondido. The North Central MVRC is located in Kearny Mesa, and the South Region MVRC is located in National City. To evaluate the operations of the MVRCs, the NVTSI report team conducted interviews with customers and made customer visits to the MVRCs.



Figure 1. MVRC in Escondido.

The MVRCs provide valuable Veteran benefits and claims support. The centers are staffed by VSRs to help process VA benefit claims. Assistance with Veteran benefits was a top priority identified on the Veteran survey. The strong need for benefits support is evident by the MVRCs averaging over 1000 walk-in visits and over 2000 calls a month.

MVRCs have partnered with various Veteran service providers and offer referrals to a number of services. They have established memorandums of agreements with twelve service providers. Some of these service providers have an on-site presence at the MVRCs, primarily operating out of the Escondido and National City MVRCs.

The customer process upon arrival at the MVRCs is:

1. Greeted by a reception ambassador
2. Asked to sign in and indicate the reason for the visit
3. Depending on the purpose, appropriate action is taken:
 - a. Review and process paperwork for Veteran designation on driver's license or disabled Veteran license plates
 - b. If the customer has an appointment, they are asked to wait while the designated Senior/Veterans Services Representative is notified.

Characteristics of the MVRCs current baseline include:

- Most MVRCs have ample parking and easy access from freeways, providing convenience.
- On-site VSR helps with benefit claims
- Large volume of walk-in and call-in customers.
- Metrics include average call wait time, days of VA claim appointments wait time, number of license plate applications, and College Fee Waiver applications.
- Follow-up call made after appointment
- Limited awareness of active-duty military community
- No MVRC in East County.

Future Vision:

The CMVR model is a transformative solution that provides comprehensive Veteran services within the community. CMVRs ensure a smooth and successful reintegration into civilian life. This evidence-based framework creates a unified ecosystem that integrates housing, mental health, employment, and social reintegration services, all tailored to the specific needs of the local Veteran population. The CMVR includes three major elements: 1) A community backbone organization that provides project management and leadership for the CMVR; 2) An integrated network of Veteran service providers, and; 3) Peer navigation to help Veterans connect with the services they need.

In the future vision, the MVRCs have been converted into CMVR offering a comprehensive range of services tailored to meet the evolving needs of Veterans and their families. The CMVRs provide a centralized hub for Veteran services in the region. The centers connect transitioning service members who are moving into the region with community services.

The CMVRs include an integrated network of service providers. The networked service providers have signed a memorandum of agreement to implement common metrics and use a common intake and referral process. On-site services are provided for the highest priority services that were identified in the Veteran survey, including health services, mental health counseling, and benefits administration.

The CMVRs have partnered with the VA to position their mobile unit on-site on various days of the month to provide on-location health screening and mental health counseling. CMVRs partner with local college Veteran Resource Centers and local chamber of commerce. Service providers and partners provide various information seminars at the CMVRs.

The CMVRs are staffed by Veteran peer navigators who provide assessments, referrals and guide Veterans through the complexities of transitioning to civilian life, ensuring they receive timely assistance with housing, healthcare, and financial benefits. The peer navigators use a common intake process to identify Veteran needs. A common referral process and system is used to provide a closed loop process to ensure Veterans receive the services they need.

The CMVRs share best practices and lessons learned through a community of practice. Common metrics are reviewed to identify service gaps and improvement opportunities.

CMVRs foster a strong sense of community, and recognition events for Veterans and their families are hosted at the centers. The CMVRs empower Veterans to connect with peers, share experiences, and build lasting relationships.

CMVRs provide virtual access to Veteran services through kiosks located in public libraries in the region. CMVR mobile units augment the brick and mortar CMVRs in each region. The CMVR mobile units are scheduled for remote locations within the CMVR region, and are periodically stationed at large events where Veterans and their families may attend.

The attributes of the future vision CMVR are:

- Physical hub with in-person peer navigation and on-site services identified as a high priority on Veteran survey including physical health screening, mental health counseling, and benefits administration.
- Integrated network of Veteran service providers that offer:
 - Benefits Counseling: Understanding and applying for Veterans' benefits, disability compensation, pensions, education benefits
 - Transition Assistance: Programs to help Veterans transition from military to civilian life, job search, resume writing, interview prep.
 - Health Care Services: Health care service organizations, County Veteran Services Representatives
 - Financial Counseling: Budgeting, debt management, financial planning, accessing Veterans' benefits
 - Housing Assistance: Finding affordable housing, local housing programs, temporary shelter.
 - Training and education to establish new purpose and identity after military service
 - Home Loans: VA home loans, housing assistance programs
 - Legal Aid: VA claims, family law, employment rights
 - Educational Support: GI Bill benefits, scholarships, educational programs.
 - Career Services: Job placement, vocational training, career counseling, resume writing, interview prep, networking
 - Family Support: Counseling, resources for family members, childcare, family therapy, support groups
 - Substance Abuse Programs: Rehabilitation programs, support groups
 - Peer navigation provides referrals to various service providers
- Common intake and referral process with service providers
- Partnership with VA includes positioning of mobile units at CMVR periodically
- Visible and inviting signage
- Open and inviting facility is accessible by public transportation and provides ample parking for large events
- High community awareness and visibility
- Partnership with Chambers of Commerce and local businesses
- Welcome home process for transitioning service members moving into region
- Informational seminars on high priority Veteran services
- Training on reintegration and workforce development skills
- Training for local business for Veteran hiring and Veteran-friendly culture

- Volunteer opportunities for community projects
- Feedback mechanisms include electronic survey and suggestion box
- Common metrics across all CMVRs that include in-process and customer satisfaction metrics
- Sharing of best practices and lessons learned across all CMVRs

Communication strategies: MVRCs use multifaceted communication strategies to effectively connect with Veterans and their families.

- **Initial Contact:** Greeted by friendly and knowledgeable peer navigator. They establish rapport, conduct intake to understand Veteran needs, and provide direct service or provide referrals to the right resources.
- **Appointment Reminders:** Reminders for scheduled appointments include date, time and location of appointment.
- **Follow-Up Communication:** After the MVRC visit, staff follows up to ensure Veterans received the service that they needed and to address any additional questions or concerns. This includes phone calls or emails.
- **Ongoing Support:** The MVRC communicates with Veterans to keep them informed of new programs, services and events. This includes newsletters, social media updates, and community meetings.
- **Feedback Opportunities:** Veterans are encouraged to provide feedback through surveys, suggestion boxes and direct communication with MVRC staff. The MVRC values customer feedback and uses it to improve services.
- **Crisis Communication:** In emergency situations, the MVRC has protocols in place to provide immediate assistance.

Recommendations:

A gap analysis was conducted to identify recommendations to move from the current baseline MVRCs to the future vision CMVRs. The gap analyses included strengths and weaknesses of the current baseline MVRCs. The gap analysis can be found at Appendix C.

The initial recommendations to close the gap between the current baseline and future vision are listed below. The recommendations were grouped in categories based on elements of the Collective Impact model (Kania and Kramer, 2011) and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award's Communities of Excellence 2026 (COE2026) Framework ("The Communities of Excellence Framework," 2022):

- **Leadership**
 - Develop shared vision and goals for MVRCs/CMVRs
 - Establish strategic partnerships with Veteran service providers and community partners including local chambers of commerce and colleges
 - Convene Veteran service providers and partners together periodically to reinforce shared vision and establish goals
 - Secure funding and drive improvement planning for MVRCs
 - Expand service scope beyond benefit claims
 - Become community reintegration centers
 - Oceanside MVRC could be better integrated with Veterans Association of North County

- **Common Agenda - Strategy**
 - Establish shared vision and mission for MVRCs/CMVRs
- **Shared Measurement – Measures, Analyses, Knowledge**
 - Establish shared metrics for MVRCs/CMVRs – both in-process and output/results
 - Utilize common intake process
 - Establish community of practices for MVRCs to share best practices
- **Mutually Reinforcing Mechanisms**
 - Form strategic alliances with VSOs including VA
 - Align VSO participation to top Veteran needs – utilize historical 2-1-1 request data
 - Utilize common intake and referral system with VSOs
- **Operations / Processes/ Services**
 - Integrate “One Stop” employment centers with MVRCs/CMVRs
 - Integrate VA vet centers with MVRCs/CMVRs
 - Utilize hybrid approach with kiosks in county libraries to provide assistance on routine transactions – signing up for VA health care, etc.
 - Kiosks have capability to connect live with MVRC/CMVR peer navigator.
- **Continuous Communications**
 - Enhance outreach and awareness for MVRCs.
 - Leverage American Legion & VFW
 - Include military bases
 - Improve signage at MVRCs
- **Workforce**
 - Implement training for MVRC/CMVR peer navigators to include expanded intake and referral process
 - OMVA CMVR project manager to ensure consistency across CMVRs
- **Customers**
 - Provide community “on-boarding” for Veterans living in vicinity of MVRC
 - Create feedback loops with Veteran customers to include town halls, surveys, etc.
 - Provide customer service training to ensure excellent Veteran experience

VETERAN NEEDS

Current Baseline:

Approach:

The current baseline for Veterans needs utilized research from the leading USC Veteran research (The State of the American Veteran: The Southern California Veterans Study, 2023). These findings have been corroborated with the NVTSI report team's data collection from local Veterans, local Veteran service providers and experience. Identifying and understanding the range of needs for Veterans in transition and post-transition from military to civilian life is an important starting point. A broad search of Veteran transition scholarly research studies, papers and articles to identify baseline research findings, themes, and priority issues has been conducted. Also conducted were ongoing focus groups and learning forums involving Veterans in transition, post transition, family, Veteran support organizations and professional transition specialists from support organizations and the Veterans Administration.

A collaborative relationship has been established with the USC School of Social Work Veterans research organization, as a leader in current research. USC research includes data separation subsets for San Diego, Orange, and Los Angeles Counties. Contacts and relationships with other local universities including San Diego State University, University of California, and National University have been established.

Summary of assessment findings and priority issues overview:

Research review findings revealed that there has been and continues to be a substantial amount of excellent university level research and papers to identify issues and specific areas in need of intervention or prevention for Veterans. The research does not, however, make specific recommendations for specific prevention or intervention strategies for how to address the needs. It instead recommends that Veteran support organizations and the VA could address the issues in their statements of work. There is some leading research on the need for communities to serve as integrators of services for Veterans transitioning into the community, but also does not address offering specific tested operational strategies to accomplish community reintegration.

- **Scholarly Research:** Various research studies have been conducted regarding Veteran's needs. Focusing on Southern California, comprehensive recent research was conducted and is ongoing by the USC School of Social work, Military and Veterans Programs (The State of the American Veteran: The Southern California Veterans Study, Kintzle, Alday, Castro 2024).

The USC Study (The State of the American Veteran: The Southern California Veterans Study, 2023) 10 Key Findings:

1. There are too many Veterans unprepared for their transition from military to civilian community.
2. Many Veterans in the study reported experiencing moderate to severe physical pain.
3. A significant number of Veterans in the study indicated experiencing loneliness and a lack of social support.
4. Far too many Veterans continue to remain at risk of dying by suicide.

5. Food insecurity among Veterans is high.
6. Military sexual trauma remains a major concern, particularly for women Veterans.
7. Veterans believe that their exposure to airborne toxins, such as burn pits, has caused them physical harm.
8. Many Veterans do not seek care for mental health issues, despite the health benefits of doing so and the numerous resources available to them.
9. While the VA health care system is viewed very positively by most Veterans, there are far too many Veterans who report negative perceptions about the VA, as well as reporting logistical barriers to receiving VA care.
10. Despite challenges Veterans may be experiencing, many report living purposeful, fulfilled and meaningful lives.

Notable Additional Findings:

1. Being a Veteran was an important part of self-image and had a lot of meaning; this was equally true for both men and women.
 2. Three out of four Veterans had careers different from their military occupation.
 3. PTSD and depression remain major mental health issues among Veterans.
 4. Problematic alcohol use was a concern among Veterans in the study.
 5. Women were more likely than men to report severe physical health symptoms, although symptoms were high in both groups.
 6. Cannabis misuse was low in the study...but a potential rise in misuse.
 7. A significant number of Veterans reported experiencing major sleep problems.
- **Data and information collection through local focus groups, survey data and experience:** In addition to external Veterans needs research, the NVTSI report team conducted several focus groups, learning forums, and collected data over ten years of Veteran transition workshops. The information collected is very similar to the formal local and national research findings (see focus group information in Appendix E). A summary is below:

A summary of “High” Ranking Needs:

1. Navigating Veteran services
 2. Food
 3. Creating a new identity for civilian life
 4. Finding a purposeful career
 5. Adjusting to civilian life
- **Data From 2-1-1 Veteran Service Requests:** 2-1-1 San Diego is a free, 24-hour phone service and online database that connects people with community, health, and disaster services. It provides Veterans access to a wide range of resources, including housing assistance, food, transportation, mental health services, and more. The data from over 20,000 Veteran service requests in 2023 is shown in Appendix E. The highest percentage of Veteran service requests were for housing, utilities, and employment support.

Additional focus group questions and data used in the report are found in the appendix.

Future Vision:

The future vision of addressing Veteran physical and emotional needs is holistic and integrated with community resources. Veterans are efficiently assessed for immediate and longer term physical and emotional needs. A warm handoff is made to the appropriate Veteran service providers in a network to meet those needs in a timely manner.

Additionally, physically and emotionally stable Veterans participate in education and civilian life-skills training to create their new civilian identity, purpose and areas of interest in order to achieve purpose-driven career choices. This may include immediate job search, or reskilling/upskilling and continuing education as three out of four Veterans want careers that are different from their military occupations.

Veterans in transition to civilian life in East County are actively engaged in a process that identifies and meets their physical and emotional needs, as well as general wellbeing. They are prepared to self-manage an independent life of purpose and meaning, and prepared to pursue independence and economic viability.

The emotional and physical needs of Veterans during transition and reintegration are seamlessly identified and addressed upon exit from the military as well as those who have already separated from service.

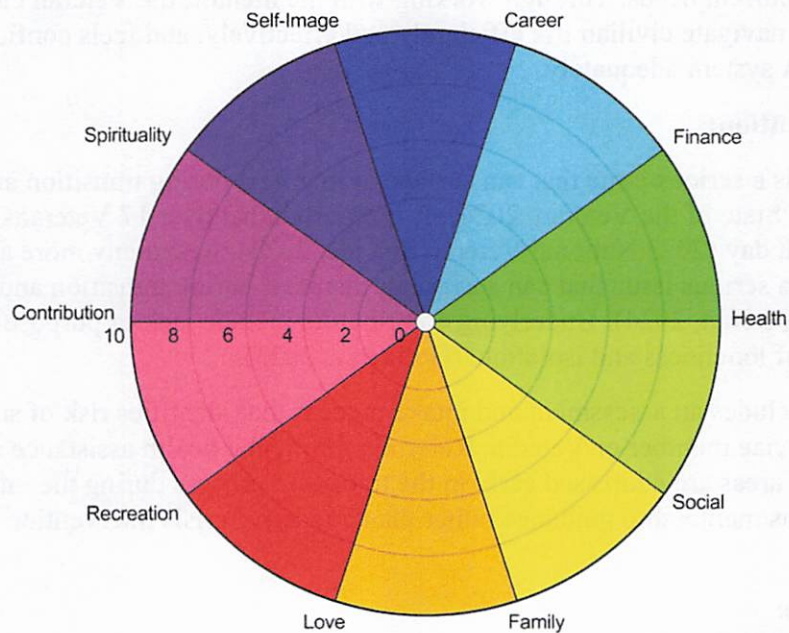
Intake Assessment of Physical and Emotional Needs:

Through an automated assessment process, Veterans know the priority of their physical and emotional needs, and where to go to access help. The process of identifying and ensuring that Veterans' physical and emotional needs are met begins with a holistic needs assessment. The Veterans Health Administration identifies several key social determinants of health that can impact Veterans' well-being (Wong, et. al., 2019). The Veteran's needs intake assessment includes these social determinants:

1. Housing Stability
2. Food Security
3. Employment
4. Education
5. Transportation
6. Social Support
7. Exposure to Abuse and Violence
8. Legal Needs
9. Utility Needs

A simple online assessment tool, such as the Life Balance Wheel shown below, is also used to identify Veteran's needs. This tool provides a baseline for each Veteran's needs and helps prioritize referral areas in many domains that make up their life. Veterans can quickly identify their specific needs and the service providers available to assist. Technology is available to help with simple navigation for services.

MY LIFE WHEEL



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Figure 2. Life Balance Wheel.

Cognitive Reorientation and Life Planning:

Prior to job hunting, state of the art training and development is a critical part of the reintegration process and readily available. Applied cognitive behavioral training guides the participants through a learning process that reorients the emotional and psychological transition necessary for a new vision and purpose to be successful in civilian life.

Because the prerequisite of a new identity and purpose is critical for a successful civilian life, training is provided prior to career selection and job hunting. Veterans have documented their new civilian identity and life purpose within their life plan. They have a stronger self-efficacy and confidence that they can pursue a positive and successful future with a purpose-driven life and career.

Each Veteran has a customized transition and reintegration life plan based on their specific needs that includes:

- Identity
- Purpose
- Vision
- Personality
- Talents and Skills
- Career/Job Identification
- Action Plan for upskilling and/or job search

Mentorship and Guidance:

A mentor has been provided to assist with navigation of programs and resources specifically to meet the Veteran's current needs. Through working with the mentor, the Veteran clearly understands how to navigate civilian life efficiently and effectively, and feels confident that they can navigate the VA system adequately.

Suicide Risk Prevention:

Suicide prevention is a serious issue that can surface or manifest during transition and reintegration (USC: State of the Veteran, 2024). It is reported that over 17 Veterans take their lives by suicide each day (2023 National Veteran Suicide, 2023), with many more attempts. Death by suicide is a serious issue that can surface or manifest during transition and reintegration (USC: State of the Veteran, 2024). Underlying contributors include lack of purpose and identity as well as feelings of loneliness and isolation. (Hollaway, 2023).

The future vision includes an assessment and intake process that identifies risk of suicide with the transitioning service member or Veteran. Referrals for mental health assistance are made immediately. These areas are addressed early in the transition process during the intake assessment as well as mentorship guidance rather than a reactive crisis intervention down the road.

Social Connections:

Veterans have access to a variety of social support networks and community engagement opportunities. This helps to mitigate feelings of isolation and loneliness that are contributors to suicide if not addressed.

Shared Metrics and Measurement:

San Diego County and Veteran service providers have access to Veteran needs assessment metrics that measure the progress for the physical and emotional needs of Veterans county-wide. Many organizations track and manage their own metrics, but there is a lack of summary metrics reflecting multiple service organizations and services.

Veterans in transition to civilian life in East County are actively engaged in a process that identifies and meets their physical and emotional needs, as well as prepares them to self-manage an independent life of purpose, meaning and economic viability. Attributes of the future vision include:

- The emotional and physical needs of Veterans during transition and reintegration are seamlessly met upon exit from the military.
- Veterans know where to go to access help for physical and emotional needs.
- Veterans quickly and seamlessly identify their specific needs and the service providers available to assist.
- Veterans receive a mentor that has been through transition and can help.
- A targeted resume is ready and Veteran practices interviewing to be prepared.
- The Veteran clearly understands how to navigate the system efficiently and effectively.
- Veterans have documented their new civilian identity and life purpose.
- Technology is available to help simple navigation for services.
- The Veteran is confident they can pursue a positive and successful future.

- Veterans have a customized transition and reintegration plan based on their specific needs.
- Veterans feel confident that they can navigate the VA system adequately.

Recommendations:

A gap analysis was completed by evaluating the current baseline compared to the desired future vision. Recommendations for actions to close the gaps were identified. The gap analysis for Veteran needs is shown in Appendix C.

Recommendations to close the gap between current vision and future vision are found in Veteran Service Providers, section 3.2.1b and Improve MVRCs, section 3.2.1c.

Recommendations that specifically address initial assessment of Veterans emotional and physical needs, as well as preparation for psychological reorientation of identity, purpose and career alignment are:

- Identify or create an assessment tool to efficiently connect Veteran physical and emotional needs with Veteran service providers, and provide a warm hand-off with the community
- Identify holistic transition and reintegration training that includes creating a civilian identity, purpose, life skills and purpose-driven career plan

VETERAN SERVICE PROVIDERS

Current Baseline:

Approach:

To define the current baseline of Veteran services in San Diego County, a multi-pronged research approach was used. The approach involved both historical research and descriptive research. For historical research, previous studies on Veteran services in San Diego County were reviewed. As there was limited recent study activity on Veteran services, NVTSI put a significant focus on descriptive research. This involved conducting surveys, interviews, and observations.

To conduct a Veteran services survey, a comprehensive list of Veteran service providers was needed. A Veteran services directory was developed by using a list of VSOs from 2-1-1 San Diego and cross-referencing against the SDVC membership. The Veteran Services Directory was updated as Veteran service providers were interviewed and surveyed. The Veterans Services Directory includes:

- All VSOs listed in 2-1-1 San Diego
- All Veteran service members of the SDVC
- Nation-wide organizations that have a presence in San Diego

The Veteran Services Directory does not include services available at the active-duty bases and that are found in [Military OneSource](http://www.militaryonesource.mil) (www.militaryonesource.mil). A Veteran service provider survey was developed and sent to all service providers in the Veteran Service Directory with active email addresses. This included approximately 200 service providers. The results of the survey can be found in Appendix E.

Interviews were conducted with key Veteran service stakeholders for each service domain. Service providers were identified by high referrals from a 2-1-1 San Diego data-pull. Interviews were also conducted with all members of the San Diego Military and Veteran Advisory Council. The key themes that were identified can be found in Appendix E.

The 2-1-1 data was analyzed to help characterize the current baseline. The data pull included all Veteran service requests for 2023. A summary of over 24,000 service needs for 2023 is shown in Appendix E. The results of the 2-1-1 San Diego data pull indicate housing and utilities support are the top needs by a significant amount. Employment, legal, and family support were the next highest need categories.

The results of the historical and descriptive research were used to develop a SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis is shown in Appendix C.

Strengths

Large community of service providers:

Strengths of the current baseline include a large community of Veteran service providers dedicated to providing support to local Veterans. Over 340 Veteran service providers provide support for Veterans across San Diego County. The majority of service providers are part of a Veteran network.

Strong collaboratives:

There are strong collaborative groups such as the San Diego Veteran Coalition and the San Diego Military Family Collaborative (SDMFC). The majority of the service providers participate in 2-1-1 San Diego as shown by the survey and interview data in Appendix E.

Centralized peer navigation:

Centralized Veteran peer navigation helps Veterans find the services they need. The peer navigation for the San Diego region is provided by Courage to Call and is accessible through a dedicated Military and Veteran Services web page in 2-1-1 San Diego and through a centralized help line. Most service organizations provide referrals out to other providers if Veterans need assistance in other areas.

MVRCs Providing Benefits Support:

Based on Veteran survey information (reference Veteran survey, Appendix E), benefits support remains one of the biggest needs for Veterans across San Diego County. The regional MVRC provide VA benefits claim support for Veterans in most areas in San Diego County. The MVRCs provide on-site benefits counseling and support with a VSR.

Weaknesses**Lack of coordination and integration:**

While there are a significant number of VSOs providing valuable support to local Veterans, many of the service organizations are siloed and do not coordinate or collaborate with other service providers inside and outside of their service domain. The arrow alignment chart shown below illustrates siloed work (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2022):

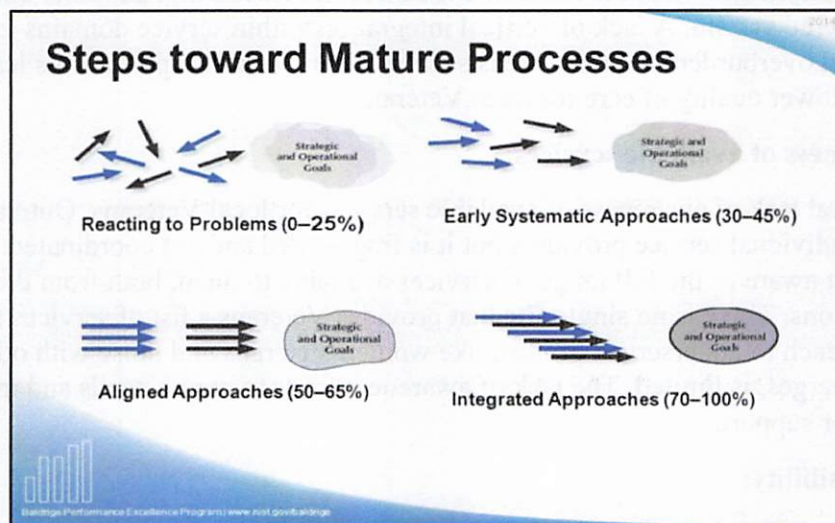


Figure 3. Siloed Service Providers.

There is an environment of competition with service providers inside their service domain, competing for resources such as grants and clients. This creates silos of service and a lack of

coordination and collaboration. The current baseline is represented by the Collaboration Continuum shown below:



Figure 4. Veteran Service Providers.

A small minority of service providers are connected through a common referral system. Many service providers use their own customer relationship management system. Some providers are part of a Veteran services collaborative, such as the SDVC and Live Well San Diego. While many service providers have activity-based measures, there are limited outcome-based metrics.

The lack of horizontal integration between service providers results in difficulty for Veterans to get the support they need. Veterans often find it confusing, frustrating, and time-consuming to navigate a scattered system. A lack of vertical integration within service domains leads to understaffed and overburdened staff in areas such as mental health support. This leads to long wait times and lower quality of care for local Veterans.

Lack of awareness of available services:

There is a general lack of awareness of available services for local Veterans. Outreach is conducted by individual service providers but it is fragmented and not coordinated. Many Veterans are not aware of the full range of services available to them, both from the VA and other organizations. There is no single site that provides Veterans a list of services and service providers. Outreach to underserved groups, like women Veterans and those with other than honorable discharges, is limited. The lack of awareness leads to unmet needs and missed opportunities for support.

Limited Accessibility:

The majority of services and resources are concentrated in urban areas, such as central San Diego. Many Veteran services are located in areas that are difficult for Veterans to access, particularly those with disabilities or limited transportation options. Veterans in rural or remote areas struggle to find support due to distance and transportation challenges. This can create barriers to care and prevent Veterans from receiving the support they need. Veterans and families in less accessible areas are underserved, resulting in disparities in care and support. These

populations may face higher risks of isolation and unmet needs. Virtual delivery of Veteran services is limited.

Insufficient Housing Support:

San Diego County continues to have a significant population of Veterans experiencing homelessness. The Regional Task Force on Homelessness estimates nearly 1,000 Veterans experience homelessness, approximately 8% of the homeless population in San Diego County (*“VA San Diego and County Fight Veteran Homelessness,”* 2023). Finding affordable and accessible housing remains a significant challenge for many Veterans, particularly those with disabilities or experiencing homelessness. This lack of housing can exacerbate other issues, such as unemployment and substance abuse. While there are many transitional housing resources in San Diego County, many do not offer coordinated services for Veterans, such as mental health, job training and placement, and assistance finding long-term housing.

Insufficient Employment Support:

According to a recent study by the USC, 66% of Veterans in San Diego County did not have a job when they left the military (Kintzle, 2023). With the high cost of living in San Diego County, many Veterans are underemployed, with many making less than they did in the military. Specific data on Veteran underemployment in San Diego County was not available, but a report by the National Veterans Training Institute states that nearly a third of Veterans are underemployed, a rate that is 16% higher than non-Veterans (Griffiths, 2022).

In addition to the high unemployment and underemployment rate, Veteran turnover in the first years of civilian employment is higher than the civilian population. A Korn Ferry Report states that 43% of Veterans leave their first civilian job after a year and 80% leave before the end of their second year (*“A Covert Job Problem For Military Veterans,”* 2022). Veteran service providers need to focus not just on helping Veterans and transitioning service members get a job, but also find roles that better suit their needs, interests, and strengths.

Insufficient Transition Support:

The transition from military to civilian life can be challenging for many Veterans, and current services may not adequately address all of their needs. This can include issues related to employment, housing, education, and mental health. According to the USC Veteran study, a significant number of Veterans in San Diego County were unprepared for their transition from the military to civilian life. In addition to housing and employment challenges mentioned earlier, many Veterans reported emotional challenges during their transition, with most reporting they didn’t know how hard the transition would be (Kintzle, 2023).

Limited Focus on Long-Term Outcomes and Follow-Up:

Many organizations focus on immediate needs, such as emergency housing or job placement. They often lack the resources for long-term support and follow-up. Without long-term follow-up, Veterans and their families may relapse into challenges like homelessness or unemployment. This approach limits the ecosystem’s ability to create sustainable, positive outcomes.

Future Vision:

Enhanced MVRCs/CMVRs:

Regional CMVR provide centralized coordination of services for various regions across San Diego County. They provide a central hub for coordinating services across Veteran service providers to streamline access and reduce redundancy. These centers are staffed by Veteran peer navigators and help Veterans transition to civilian life, providing resources for housing, employment, and mental health. The CMVR model includes an integrated network of service providers within the community. The CMVR is led by a sponsoring organization referred to as the backbone organization that helps establish a community systems framework.

A community systems framework:

A community systems framework is used in San Diego County to establish an environment of collaboration and integration across service providers. The framework includes elements from the Collective Impact, Veteran Community Action Team (VCAT), and Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, and the Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence models.

The Collective Impact Model includes elements such as a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication and reinforcing activities (Kania, J. & Kramer, M., 2011). In the future vision, Veteran service providers share common goals and measures. They collaborate together on joint projects to address Veterans needs.

The VCAT model is designed to create a comprehensive network of service providers and community members dedicated to efficiently serving Veterans and their families (Burke, M. & King, J., 2011). The model aims to establish a community-based system of care by forming coalitions of various stakeholders, including Veterans' service organizations, Veterans, and their families.

The Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence framework's purpose and mission is to improve the performance and long-term success of businesses and other organizations including city, county, state, and federal government. The framework includes seven categories: Leadership, Strategic Planning, Customer and Market Focus, Information and Analysis, Human Resource Focus, Process Management, and Results (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2022).

Integrated network of service providers:

The future vision of Veteran services in San Diego County is characterized by an integrated network of service providers focused on providing comprehensive and accessible support to local Veterans. The integrated network facilitates a holistic approach to care, addressing multiple aspects of a Veteran's needs, including health, housing, employment, and education.

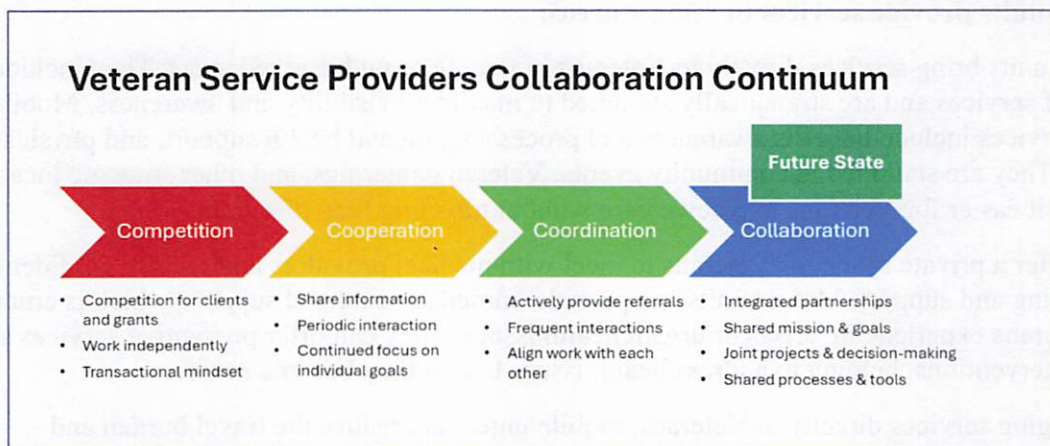


Figure 5. Future Vision - Veteran Service Providers.

This integrated network has a shared vision, mission and goals. They partner together on joint projects.

The integrated network uses common tools and processes to facilitate integration both vertically and horizontally. These common processes and tools include an intake process and referral system.

Vertical integration is established for providers within a service domain, such as housing or employment. Vertical integrators help manage capacity within each service domain, ensuring providers aren't running over capacity or underutilized. The vertical integration network shares resources as needed to optimize support for Veteran clients in their service domain.

Horizontal integration is facilitated using the suite of common processes and tools across the service domains. The service provider network operates with a "No-Wrong Door" mindset identified in the VCAT model (Burke and King, 2011) The "No Wrong Door" policy is designed to ensure that Veterans and their families can access the support and services they need without being turned away or redirected multiple times. This approach aims to create a seamless experience by connecting various service providers and resources, regardless of where a Veteran first seeks help.

Streamlined navigation of services:

The integrated Veteran services network provides streamlined navigation so that Veterans can more easily access the services they need without having to contact multiple organizations. Veterans call a centralized helpline or 2-1-1 to reach a Veteran peer navigator to assist them in getting the support they need. A centralized database ensures Veterans receive accurate and comprehensive information about available services.

Holistic support for employment and well being:

In the future vision, the Veteran unemployment rate, attrition, and underemployment is below the general population. Enhanced programs for job training, placement, and educational opportunities are tailored to Veterans' needs. A holistic care approach integrates health services that address physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Mobile units provide services to remote areas:

Mobile units bring services directly to Veterans in remote or underserved areas. They include a range of services and are strategically stationed to maximize visibility and awareness. Mobile units services include benefits awareness and processing, mental health support, and physical health. They are stationed at community events, Veteran gatherings, and other strategic locations, making it easier for Veterans to receive care without traveling long distances.

They offer a private space for Veterans to meet with medical providers and receive confidential counseling and support. Mobile units can provide immediate care and support, which is crucial for Veterans experiencing crises or urgent health issues. They can offer preventive services and early interventions, helping to address health issues before they become severe.

By bringing services directly to Veterans, mobile units help reduce the travel burden and associated costs for Veterans. They optimize the use of resources by targeting areas with high demand and ensuring services are delivered where they are most needed.

The mobile units, with inviting signage, increase the visibility of Veteran services within the community, helping to raise awareness and engage more Veterans. They can operate during non-traditional hours, accommodating Veterans who may have difficulty accessing services during regular business hours.

Virtual services delivered through digital platforms:

Veteran services are effectively delivered virtually to Veterans who are remote or who cannot make it to an MVRC or mobile CMVR. Virtual delivery of Veteran services is accomplished through several methods, ensuring accessibility and convenience for Veterans.

Veterans can self-navigate to find the service they need through a centralized web platform that includes a front-end graphical user interface and a back-end database of Veteran service providers in the integrated network. This graphical user interface is readily accessible on the OMVA web page and 2-1-1 San Diego. The simple graphical user interface is intuitive and easy to navigate so Veterans can readily find the support that they need.

Veterans can connect with a live peer navigator through the graphical user interface if desired. The Veteran can choose from a live chat or video connect option. The live chat and video connect provides real-time access to a Courage to Call peer navigator that can help refer the Veteran to the appropriate Veteran service provider.

For Veterans that don't have internet access, the centralized web platform is provided on kiosks at county libraries throughout the county.

A digital app provides access to Veteran services through their mobile device. The app includes the graphical user interface to provide easy navigation to find the support they need. The app includes a live chat option to a Courage to Call Veteran peer navigator to assist the Veteran if desired.

Improved Outreach and Communications:

The Veteran service network utilizes a mix of communication channels for improved outreach and engagement with Veterans and foster collaboration with Veteran service providers. A mobile

digital platform provides timely information on services, events, and success stories. This platform is also used for real-time collaboration among service providers.

Timely communications are pushed out to Veterans and their families on digital platforms and include regular updates on services, events, and success stories.

- **Email:** For formal communication and updates
- **Newsletters:** Push regular updates on services, events, and success stories.
- **Social Media:** Engage with Veterans and the community.
- **Webinars and Workshops:** For training and information sharing.
- **Hotlines and Helpdesks:** For immediate support and inquiries.
- **Collaborative Digital Platform:** Push timely updates on services, events, and success stories and provide real-time collaboration with service providers.

Consistent messages are tailored to different audiences:

- **Veterans:** Information on available services, how to access them, and success stories
- **Service Providers:** Updates on tools, policies, best practices, and collaboration opportunities
- **Community:** Information on Veteran recognition events and volunteer opportunities

The San Diego County Guiding Coalition drives the implementation of an effective communication plan with the integrated network of Veteran service providers.

Roles and responsibilities for managing different communication channels and tasks have been established across the Veteran service network.

There is a system for collecting and analyzing feedback from Veterans and service providers to continuously improve communication efforts.

Recommendations:

A gap analysis was completed by evaluating the current baseline compared to the desired future vision. Recommendations for actions to close the gap were identified. The gap analysis for Veteran services is shown in Appendix C.

The recommendations were categorized in the elements of the Collective Impact model (Kania & Kramer, 2011) and the Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence framework. The list of recommendations is below:

Leadership:

- Develop guiding policy for Veteran community reintegration
- Secure funding for improvement initiatives
- Reestablish “Guiding Coalition” for Veterans to include County, cities, military, and senior VSOs such as SDVC
- Advocate for expanded women representation on Veteran advisory boards
- Incentivize and reward VSOs collaboration and integration
- Develop growth plan for call center to include metrics
- Periodically conduct community survey from COE2026 to identify improvement needs

Common Agenda – Strategy:

- Use Collective Impact model/approach
- Establish shared vision with backbone and stakeholders
- Include short, mid, and long-term horizons in planning process

Shared Measurement – Measures, Analyses, Knowledge:

- Implement shared metrics – both in-process and output/results
- Develop and utilize metrics from centralized call center
- Establish forum to share best practices (consider SDVC)
- Utilize data (e.g. 2-1-1 San Diego requests) to annually identify gaps and align services

Mutually Reinforcing Mechanisms:

- Establish vertical and horizontal network of VSOs
- Create a model and process for integrating service providers for quick soft handoff to meet specific Veteran needs
- Utilize common referral system

Operations / Processes / Services:

- Establish common triage and intake assessment to identify specific physical and emotional needs
- Provide life purpose & identity training and coaching for civilian life
 - Develop process to assign mentors to both transitioning service members and Veterans
- Develop automated Life Balance Wheel Assessment to identify key areas for transition and reintegration learning and assistance
- Provide employment training and placement aligned to purpose and passions
 - Utilize Artificial Intelligence technology
 - Ensure technology and training is available to create resumes and practice interviewing
- Utilize kiosks at county libraries for simple Veteran transactions (signing up for VA health care, etc.)
- Establish and integrate Veteran services at transitional housing & recuperative care locations/projects
- Provide more low income housing (people making \$60,000 and less)
- Provide support for high number of Veterans moving out of county/state
 - Provide “warm hand-off” with communities where Veterans are moving
 - Expand remote services to include transition for Veterans moving out of county/state
- Develop mobile app for self service

Continuous Communications:

- Develop joint marketing and outreach plan
 - Leverage American Legion, VFW, and VA
- Create strategy and plan to improve understanding of VA processes

- Publish single resource directory on OMVA and SDVC sites - update at least every six months
- Publish Key Performance Indicator (KPIs) on metrics dashboard on OMVA website
- Improved marketing and communications for Live Well Mobile Office

Workforce:

- Establish pool of community assistance advisors/peer navigators
- Implement training for community assistance advisors/peer navigators for consistent Veteran experience including warm handoffs on referrals
- Establish housing coordinator to provide vertical integration and capacity management for housing services

Customers:

- Create single Veteran resource directory for improved self-service
- Provide community “on-boarding” for transitioning service members
- Establish continuous feedback loops with Veterans
 - Periodic surveys and town halls

MILITARY RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Current Baseline:

San Diego County is home to a significant number of military installations and hosts one of the largest concentrations of active-duty service members and military families in the United States. With major bases like Naval Base San Diego, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, and Camp Pendleton, the region supports approximately 110,000 active-duty military personnel. San Diego also has over 50 ships stationed in the region, underscoring its role as a major hub for naval operations. Each year, about 15,000 service members transition out of the military from these bases, making San Diego a key center for military-to-civilian transitions.

Despite the wealth of Veteran resources, including the MVRCs, there is an urgent need to strengthen partnerships with military leadership and enhance awareness of these services. To further define the current baseline of military relations and partnerships between the military and San Diego County, a survey was conducted with the military bases leadership. The complete survey results can be found in Appendix E. The survey results revealed the following challenges:

- **Lack of Awareness of Community Services:** Military personnel and their families are often unaware of the services available to them during their transition. Efforts like those by the San Diego Military Advisory Council (SDMAC) and the SDMFC help provide awareness of community services. However, there is a need for improved communication and outreach to ensure that military and their families are informed about the community resources available to them.
- **Navigational Complexity for Service Members:** The array of available services can be overwhelming, making it difficult for military personnel to navigate and find the specific support they require. With numerous organizations and programs, active-duty personnel and their families often struggle to find the right resources due to the complexity and sheer volume of options. Navigational difficulty can discourage individuals from seeking assistance or lead them to services that do not fully address their needs. This issue is compounded by a lack of a streamlined, “one-stop-shop” resource for information and referrals.
- **Coordination and Communication Gaps:** Effective communication and coordination among so many military bases and Veteran service providers is challenging. A potential lack of streamlined communication channels between the county and military installations can hinder service delivery. The lack of centralized information-sharing mechanisms can create gaps where critical needs are not met efficiently. Active-duty members may experience delays or may fall through the cracks if services are not well-coordinated. These gaps can lead to frustration and discouragement from seeking further assistance.
- **Transition Support Gaps for Service Members:** While many programs address transition needs, challenges remain in effectively preparing service members for civilian life, particularly in areas like career planning. Studies have shown that employment is the primary concern for Veterans transitioning out of the military, with many experiencing frustration as they try to translate their military experience into civilian job opportunities. Despite possessing a wide range of valuable skills such as leadership, discipline,

technical expertise, and problem-solving, many Veterans struggle to secure civilian employment that not only matches their experience but also provides a livable wage with the high cost of living in San Diego County. Without targeted support, this can result in prolonged unemployment or underemployment, leading to financial strain, and negatively impacting their overall well-being.

Future Vision:

Guided by San Diego County's *Live Well San Diego* philosophy, the San Diego region's integrated service provider network collaborates seamlessly with local military leadership, including Navy Region Southwest, Marine Corps Installations West, and regional California Guard/Reserves. The community service provider network and military partnerships create an ecosystem of comprehensive and accessible services for transitioning military families, grounded in the Live Well pillars of health, community, and well-being.

This military/Veteran eco-system addresses the diverse needs of military families, including access to benefits, health, mental health, food security, housing, and employment, empowering them to thrive as they integrate into civilian life. By fostering innovative partnerships and utilizing technology, the region's Military/Veteran Guiding Coalition identified in section 3.2.1b leads efforts to ensure a streamlined, community-based approach that supports military families throughout their transition, while promoting the Live Well vision of a healthy, safe, and thriving San Diego community.

The future vision attributes include:

- **Enhanced Communication:** A key pillar of the future vision is creating a culture of enhanced communication between the network of community service providers and military installations. This open and consistent communication ensures seamless coordination and avoids gaps in services, enabling the County to deliver a personalized and efficient "warm hand-off" for transitioning families. Regular, effective information sharing between Navy Region Southwest and community partners ensures that no service member or Veteran slips through the cracks as they move from active duty to civilian life.
- **Integrated Support Services:** Leveraging modern technology, a centralized digital platform integrates support services for transitioning families. This digital infrastructure facilitates real-time information sharing across health services, mental health providers, housing agencies, employment resources, and VSOs. By improving accessibility and ensuring a more coordinated approach, transitioning families experience less fragmentation, quickly identifying and accessing the services they need without having to navigate a complex, disjointed system.
- **Expanded Partnerships:** The integrated network of community service providers places a strategic focus on expanded partnerships with military installations and commands in the region. These partnerships enable the San Diego region to offer a wide range of services, including specialized support such as skills training, entrepreneurship programs, and affordable housing initiatives for transitioning service members and their families. The private sector's involvement is vital in offering transitioning service members and their families employment opportunities in key San Diego industries, fostering a smooth transition into meaningful, well-paying civilian careers. By creating strong partnerships

with military bases and commands, the San Diego region has created a stronger safety net for transitioning families, ensuring that their immediate needs are met as they integrate into civilian society.

- **Policy-Driven Support:** Policies have been created and refined with the express purpose of prioritizing the needs of transitioning military personnel and their families. These policies focus on breaking down bureaucratic barriers, ensuring that military families have streamlined access to resources in healthcare, housing, employment, and education. By advocating for local, state, and federal policies that directly address the specific challenges faced by transitioning families, the San Diego region creates a supportive legislative environment that backs up community efforts with tangible, structural solutions.
- **Community-Centric Engagement:** At the heart of the future vision is a commitment to community-centric engagement, where local organizations, businesses, and citizens actively work to bridge the gap between military service and civilian life. MVRCS connect with transitioning service members to provide a centralized hub for community services. Through community outreach programs, public awareness campaigns, and volunteer initiatives, the integrated network of service providers embraces transitioning families as valuable members of San Diego's community. By fostering a sense of belonging, community partners help mitigate the isolation that often accompanies military transitions, ensuring that Veterans and their families feel supported, welcomed, and engaged with their new civilian lives.

In this desired future vision, San Diego County's Guiding Coalition leads the way in transforming how transitioning military families are supported, ensuring they have equitable access to health, mental health, housing, food security, and employment. By promoting a culture of collaboration, integrated technology solutions, expanded partnerships, forward-thinking policies, and community-driven engagement, San Diego County ensures that every transitioning family in San Diego receives the comprehensive and compassionate care they need to succeed.

Recommendations:

A gap analysis was completed by evaluating the current baseline compared to the desired future vision. Recommendations for actions to close the gaps were identified. The gap analysis for improving military relations and partnerships is shown below in Appendix C.

The recommendations were categorized in the elements of the Collective Impact model (Kania & Kramer, 2011) and the Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence framework (Communities of Excellence, 2022). The list of recommendations is below:

Backbone – Leadership:

- Include military leadership on "Guiding Coalition"
- Create and advocate for policies that prioritize needs of transitioning military personnel and their families

Common Agenda – Strategy:

- Establish shared vision with military leadership

Shared Measurement – Measures, Analyses, Knowledge:

- Establish joint goals/metrics with career counselors – e.g. every transitioning service member has a job offer or school admission before separation

Mutually Reinforcing Mechanisms:

- Utilize centralized digital communication platform for sharing information between county, military installations and support organizations

Operations/ Processes:

- Community advisor/coach assigned to each transitioning service member before their separation
- Warm hand-off between FFSC and the community-based MVRC/CMVR where the service member will reside
- Establish mentorship programs with transitioning service members.
- Include kiosks on bases that include community services available to transitioning service members and their families
- Connect and target family members on community services

Continuous Communications:

- Expand communications plan to include transitioning service members as early as 2 years before separation
- Conduct Quarterly reviews with command leadership
- Offer a “welcome” home county package and process in communities
- Hold community resource fairs at bases
- Launch targeted campaigns to inform transitioning service members about available services
- Utilize Live Well mobile office to provide information on military installations
- Create common digital communication platform for sharing of information between county, military installations, and support organizations

Workforce:

- Establish military liaison position/office with Office of Military and VA

Customers:

- Create feedback loops with transitioning service members and share with community partners

EAST COUNTY MVRC/CMVR

Current Baseline:

San Diego East County is home to a significant number of military Veterans, with approximately 57,455 Veterans residing in the area. The cities with the highest Veteran populations in East County are El Cajon and Santee, each with over 6000 Veterans (American Community Survey, 2022). Despite having one of the largest Veteran populations in San Diego County, there are limited Veteran service providers in the region. There is no MVRC located in East County. A new family wellness center in Ramona provides limited support for Veterans benefits. A county VSR is positioned at the El Cajon County Library for two days a month. Unfortunately, there is no VA clinic or Veteran center in East County, so Veterans need to travel to VA centers in San Diego to receive services. However, there are Veteran Resource Centers at Grossmont and Cuyamaca Colleges that provide help with education benefits for Veteran students.

Future Vision:

The CMVR model is a transformative and integrated community asset model designed to seamlessly leverage local Veteran resources to provide a better reintegration experience for Veterans and their families in the most efficient manner possible. By implementing the CMVR model, East San Diego County can streamline operations, reduce duplicative costs, prevent reintegration risks, close service gaps, identify Veterans with high-risk factors, and produce better outcomes for the local Veteran community.

CMVRs ensure a smooth and successful transition into civilian life by offering various programs and services, including career and employment transition assistance, financial literacy strategies, social reintegration classes, substance abuse assistance, and integrative mental health programs. This evidence-based framework creates a unified ecosystem that integrates housing, mental health, employment, and social reintegration services, all tailored to the specific needs of the local Veteran population. The CMVR framework seeks to link multiple access points into one universal hub, enabling Veterans to receive comprehensive support through a streamlined and centralized system.

To maximize impact, the CMVR leverages a collective impact framework, a structured approach for bringing people, organizations, and governments together to solve complex problems. Drawing from Stanford University's collective impact model, the CMVR approach is rooted in intentional collaboration and shared information to address the multifaceted challenges of Veteran reintegration. The collective impact model emphasizes five core components:

1. A common agenda uniting diverse stakeholders.
2. Shared measurement systems to track progress.
3. Mutually reinforcing activities to ensure alignment and efficiency.
4. Open and continuous communication to foster trust and transparency.
5. Backbone support organizations to coordinate efforts and sustain progress.

The CMVR includes three major elements:

1. **Community Backbone Organization:** Provides project management and leadership, ensuring that all stakeholders work cohesively toward shared goals.

2. **Integrated Network of Veteran Service Providers:** Unites nonprofits, governmental entities, and community resources to deliver holistic and coordinated support.
3. **Peer Navigation:** Guides Veterans through the system, connecting them with the services they need effectively and efficiently.

Approach:

The future vision of an East County MVRC/CMVR looks across three different time horizons. The near-term horizon is one year out. The mid-term horizon is 3 years out and the long-term horizon is five years out.

A survey of over 200 San Diego County Veterans highlighted key priorities for the future East County MVRC/CMVR. The details of the survey can be found in Appendix E. The highest priority services include healthcare, VA benefits support, and mental health counseling. The survey results underscore the importance of a physical facility to act as a hub for services, with sufficient parking, proximity to public transportation, and private meeting spaces identified as critical features. By functioning as an integrated community asset, the MVRC/CMVR will optimize existing resources and partnerships, ensuring Veterans receive comprehensive, timely, and effective support.

The CMVR framework is designed for scalability and can be replicated in every district of San Diego County. Ultimately, these CMVRs can be linked together into a cohesive network that shares resources and information, creating a unified and efficient countywide system. This replicable model provides a blueprint for other regions to adopt, ensuring that Veterans across all districts benefit from a connected, universal support system.

Near Term – Temporary MVRC/CMVR at Public Library:

To minimize start-up time and cost, the near-term MVRC/CMVR approach is to locate in an existing facility, such as a public library. The MVRC/CMVR evaluation team focused on facilities in Santee and El Cajon, as these two cities have the highest population of Veterans. The facility assessment included East County VSOs, public libraries, and existing County facilities. An evaluation process was established that included the priorities that were identified in the Veteran survey. The scoring matrix that was used in the evaluation process is shown below:

Facility Location	Accessibility	Parking	Convenient Space	Training Space	Storage/Meet. Space	Usability	Total	Comments
	1	Poor						
	2	Below Average						
	3	Average - meets expectations						
	4	Above average						
	5	Excellent						

Figure 6. Site Evaluation Matrix.

A public library was identified as the top candidate for a near-term MVRC/CMVR. There are public libraries in El Cajon and Santee that are accessible through public transportation and have ample parking to host large Veteran events. Some of these public libraries have rooms that can be used for private counseling and conference rooms that can be used for meetings and training events.

The near-term future vision description:

When approaching the MVRC/CMVR, Veterans will notice the highly visible, patriotic signage on the outside of the building. A digital marquee outside the facility identifies service hours and the various services that are provided.

The facility layout is open and inviting. As the Veteran enters the library, the location of the MVRC/CMVR is readily evident, indicated by highly-visible signage and pop-up banners. A Veteran peer navigator greets the Veteran as they enter the MVRC/CMVR.

The Veteran peer navigator inquiries about the Veteran's service history and builds rapport with them. They ask about the specific needs of the Veteran and how they can help. They request the Veteran complete a simple graphical intake assessment to help them identify areas of need.

Based on the area of need, the Veteran peer navigator provides on-site support or off-site referrals to a Veteran service provider in the integrated network. If the Veteran customer needs support for benefit claims, they are directed to a private meeting room that is staffed by a county VSR.

If the area of need is not supported on-site, the peer navigator provides a referral to a Veteran service provider. The East County MVRC/CMVR is supported by an integrated Veteran service provider network. This network provides services in all Veteran service domains. Once the Veteran need is identified, the MVRC/CMVR peer navigator provides a warm hand-off to the preferred service provider. This includes contacting them, making a virtual introduction and scheduling an appointment if appropriate.

Basic contact information is captured for the Veteran client for follow-up. This information is entered into a common database and referral system that is used by the integrated Veteran service provider network. The peer navigator follows up with the Veteran client after the referral is made to ensure they received the services needed. The Veteran client is sent an electronic survey afterwards to capture feedback for improvement.

The East County Veteran Survey indicated a high preference for physical health screening and mental health support. A collaborative partnership with the VA is established to station their mobile unit on site at the El Cajon library on specific days of the week on a regular basis.

When the center isn't staffed, such as on weekends or after hours, Veterans receive support at the MVRC/CMVR positioned at the library. The kiosk has an easy to navigate user interface. The Veteran first enters basic contact information for follow-up. They then identify specific needs manually or using the simple graphical intake/assessment tool. Based on the identified need, the kiosk displays Veteran service provider information including contact info. The Veteran peer navigator follows-up with the Veteran after one week.

Additional information is available at the MVRC/CMVR on benefits and other Veteran services provided by the integrated Veteran service provider network. A rack of information cards for

service providers, organized by service domain, is located at the MVRC/CMVR and accessible at all hours of library operation. A suggestion box is located at the MVRC/CMVR to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

The East County MVRC/CMVR periodically hosts informational seminars for various Veteran services, such as financial planning. These seminars are offered in person at the MVRC/CMVR and are based on suggestions and feedback from local Veteran inputs.

Training is also offered at the East County MVRC/CMVR. This includes reintegration training, resume and interview preparation, etc. Feedback from local Veterans is received to identify training needs.

The East County MVRC/CMVR uses various communication channels to promote the services that it provides utilizing current media and technology. The MVRC/CMVR leverages the integrated network of service providers to promote and market the MVRC/CMVR to local Veterans and their families. The network of service providers meet regularly to discuss potential events, communication vehicles, and messaging. This network is driven by the Veterans of East County Alliance.

Attributes of the East County MVRC/CMVR include:

- Physical location/hub with in-person peer navigation per preferences identified on Veteran survey
- Strong backbone that drives local CMVR such as the Veterans of East County Alliance
- Staffed by Veteran peer navigators such as Courage to Call
- Integrated network of Veteran service providers based in East County
- Open and inviting facility accessible by public transportation and ample parking for large events
- High community awareness and visibility
- Partnership with Chamber of Commerce and local businesses
- Partnership with VA includes stationing of mobile unit at CMVR periodically
- Welcome home process/information for transitioning service members moving into East County
- Informational seminars on high Veteran services
- Provides on-site services based on survey including physical health screening and mental health support
- VA health screening mobile unit is located on site on certain days
- Training on reintegration and workforce development skills
- Training for local business for Veteran hiring and Veteran-friendly culture
- Volunteer opportunities on community Veteran projects
- Feedback mechanisms include electronic survey and suggestion box

Mid Term – Mobile MVRC/CMVR and Kiosks in Public Libraries:

The mid-term horizon for the future vision of the East County MVRC/CMVR includes the elements of the short-term MVRC/CMVR along with some additional elements to provide more expansive delivery of Veteran services to East County Veterans.

A dedicated mobile MVRC/CMVR augments the center at a public library in El Cajon or Santee. This approach leverages the current Live Well on Wheels community outreach program utilized

by San Diego County. Cities in East County have identified their preferred location for the mobile CMVR and it is positioned at these locations regularly. The mobile MVRC/CMVR can deliver a range of services directly to remote areas of East County.

The MVRC/CMVR also acts as a mobile billboard for awareness and visibility of Veteran services. It includes a highly visible, patriotic wrap that identifies the various services provided. A regular schedule is established for the location of the mobile MVRC/CMVR and is widely communicated through various channels. The mobile MVRC/CMVR is also stationed at public events in East County where Veterans may attend.

Additional CMVR kiosks are positioned at other county libraries in East County. They include the user interface identified in Appendix A. These kiosks have the ability to live video chat with the peer navigator located at the El Cajon/Santee MVRC/CMVR.

Attributes for the mid-term MVRC/CMVR include:

- Mobile CMVR is stationed at various East County cities and events
- Kiosks located at libraries in East County

Long Term – Permanent CMVR

The long-term future vision for the East County MVRC/CMVR is a comprehensive support hub that not only provides temporary housing and affordable long-term housing but also offers a range of services aimed at helping Veterans transition to stable, permanent housing. The evaluation process included looking at potential sites for the long-term MVRC/CMVR. Surplus land that could be developed to include an on-site MVRC/CMVR and affordable housing units were reviewed. This included the Edgemoor property in the Santee area.

The long term MVRC/CMVR provides a supportive and empowering environment that helps Veterans rebuild their lives and achieve long-term stability. The MVRC/CMVR prioritizes stable housing as the first step in addressing other issues. The center provides temporary housing with a focus on moving Veterans to permanent housing as quickly as possible. The MVRC/CMVR is located adjacent to dedicated rental housing units for the VA Supportive Housing program. Smart housing solutions utilize technology to create a safe and efficient living environment. Assistance is provided in finding and securing permanent housing, including help with rental applications and financial planning.

The MVRC/CMVR provides comprehensive support services that includes on-site medical and mental health services to address both physical and psychological needs. There is access to individual and group therapy sessions to support mental health and well-being. Specialized programs are offered to help Veterans overcome addiction issues.

The Center provides employment and education services that include programs to help Veterans acquire new job skills and find employment. Workshops are held onsite to teach resume writing and interview prep to help Veterans prepare for job searches. The MVRC/CMVR includes partnerships with local colleges and universities to provide educational programs and certifications.

The MVRC/CMVR provides social and community integration. Peer support groups provide opportunities for Veterans to connect with others with similar experiences. Organized events and

activities foster a sense of community and belonging. Programs to support the families of Veterans, including childcare and family counseling, are provided on site.

Personalized care plans are created to tailor services to meet the individual needs of each Veteran. A holistic approach incorporates physical fitness, nutrition, and mindfulness practices into daily routines. Life skills training teaches essential skills such as establishing a new identity, building resilience, strengthening self-efficacy, and financial literacy.

Digital access at the MVRC/CMVR provides Veterans with access to computers and the internet to help with job searches, education, and staying connected. Telehealth services allow remote access to healthcare providers for those who may not be able to visit in person.

The MVRC/CMVR includes recreational and fitness facilities for residents to socialize and exercise. Transportation services are provided for residences to support them in making appointments, shopping, and other daily activities for living.

The elements of the future vision long-term MVRC/CMVR include:

- Temporary housing with smart home technology
- Assistance in finding and securing permanent housing
- On-site basic medical care and screening services
- Counseling and therapy
- Substance abuse programs
- Telehealth services for remote access to care
- Personalized care planning
- Job training and placement services
- Job skill training including resume writing and interview preparation
- Financial literacy training and financial planning support
- Peer support groups
- Family support services
- Holistic wellness programs
- Life skill training
- Recreational activities
- Community-based activities to include volunteer opportunities
- Legal services and support
- Transportation services

Recommendations:

Recommendations were identified to achieve the future vision. These recommendations were categorized into the elements of the Collective Impact model (Kania & Kramer, 2011) and the Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence framework (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2022). The list of recommendations is below:

Backbone – Leadership:

- Establish “Guiding Coalition” for CMVR in East County
- Create and advocate for reintegration policy in East County
- Create short-term and long-term CMVR plan

Common Agenda – Strategy:

- Establish shared vision with East County stakeholders and Veterans
- Conduct stakeholder workshop to create shared vision, goals, and identify roles

Shared Measurement – Measures, Analyses, Knowledge:

- Utilize shared metrics that have been established for MVRCs
- Participate in MVRC community of practice to identify best practices and lessons learned

Mutually Reinforcing Mechanisms:

- Utilize common referral process established for MVRCs

Operations/ Processes:

Short Term:

- Establish co-tenancy with existing facility
- VA mobile unit at preferred location
- Peer navigation and VSR at preferred location

Mid Term:

- Consider Live Well Mobile Office or dedicated Mobile MVRC/CMVR
- Establish recurring schedule with rotation across different locations in East County with high Veteran population (El Cajon, Santee)
- Target events with potential high Veteran attendance
- Ability to connect live with peer navigator in Mobile MVRC/CMVR
- Kiosks located at locations around East County / web-enabled support for remote and virtual access

Long Term:

- Establish Veteran Center that includes transitional housing and on-site services
- On-site Veteran services

Continuous Communications:

- Create outreach and marketing plan for East County CMVR – involve service providers in region

Workforce:

- Identify project manager for CMVR start-up
- Staff and train peer navigator in common intake and referral process

Customers:

- Utilize Veteran survey to identify high priority services/capabilities for MVRC/CMVR
- Create feedback loops with East County Veterans and share with community partners

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Approach:

The recommendations from the gap analyses for each objective were prioritized through a multi-voting process with various criteria. These improvement initiatives were then evaluated using a PICK analysis. A PICK analysis, usually characterized by a four-quadrant chart, is a tool used in Lean Six Sigma methodologies to prioritize and categorize ideas, tasks, or projects based on their potential impact and ease of implementation. The PICK chart helps visually sort and prioritize ideas during brainstorming and planning sessions, ensuring that decision-making is strategic and data-driven. A breakdown of each quadrant in the chart is:

- **Possible:** Ideas that are easy to implement but have a low impact. These are often considered for later when resources are available.
- **Implement:** Ideas that are both easy to implement and have a high impact. These are prioritized as they offer quick wins.
- **Challenge:** Ideas that have a high impact but are difficult to implement. These require careful planning and significant resources.
- **Kill:** Ideas that are difficult to implement and have low impact. These are typically discarded.

An example of a PICK chart is shown below:

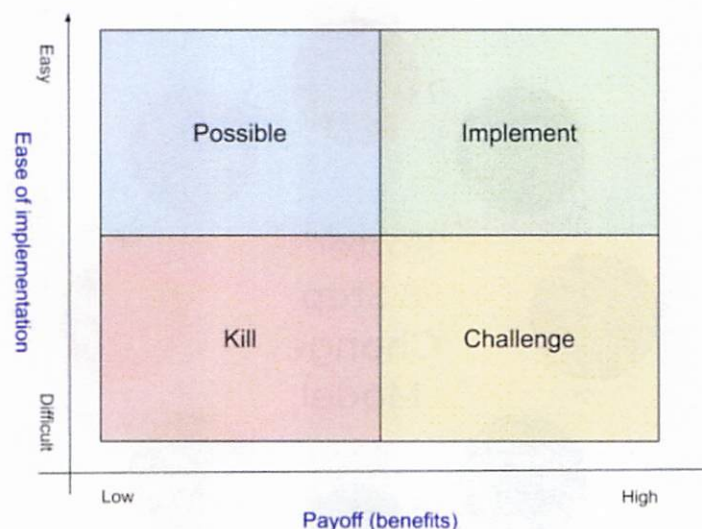


Figure 7. PICK Chart Template

The PICK analysis was used to prioritize short and long-term improvement initiatives. The results of the PICK analysis shown below:

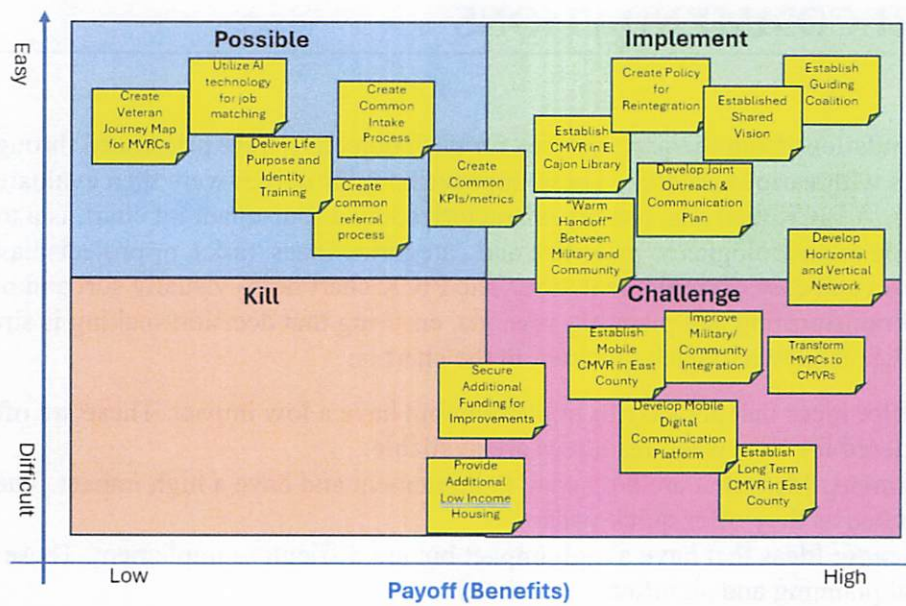


Figure 8. PICK Analysis Results

The next step in developing final recommendations was to use a step within John Kotter's 8-step Change Model shown below ("Implementing the Kotter Change Model In 8 Steps," 2024).

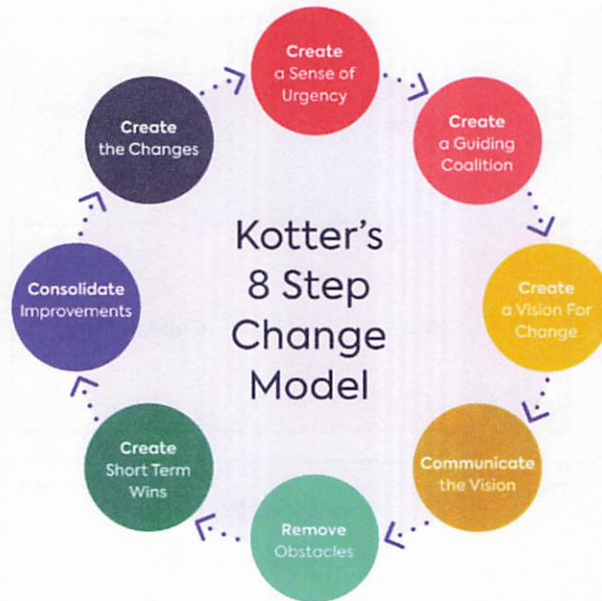


Figure 9. Kotter-Change Model

One of the elements of the Kotter Change Model is to consolidate improvements. Several of the improvement ideas in the PICK analysis were consolidated into improvement initiatives. The improvement initiative structure aligned to the report objectives is shown below:

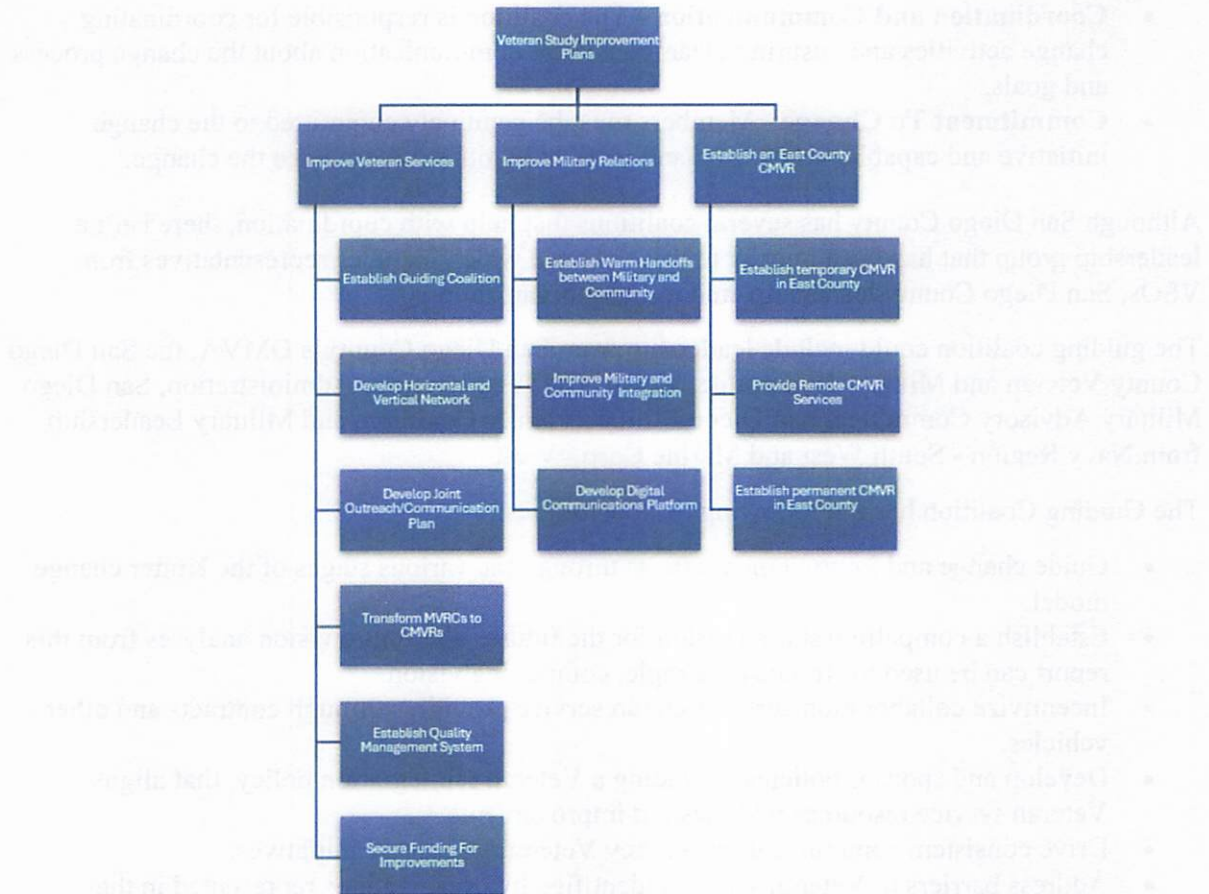


Figure 10. Improvement Initiatives Structure

Short Term Initiatives:

The “High Benefit/High Ease of Implementation” Initiatives from the PICK analysis form the collection of improvements that could be completed within a year. These short-term initiatives generate “early wins” and create forward momentum identified in the Kotter Change Model. They are described below:

Establish A Guiding Coalition

In John Kotter’s 8-Step Change Model, a **guiding coalition** is a group of influential leaders who are committed to driving and supporting the change effort. A strong guiding coalition can effectively lead and sustain the change efforts, ensuring that changes are embraced and implemented successfully.

This coalition is crucial for several reasons:

- **Influence and Authority** - The members of the guiding coalition are typically individuals who have significant influence and authority within their organization. Their support can help overcome resistance and mobilize others.
- **Diverse Perspectives** - A well-rounded coalition includes members from different organizations, ensuring a variety of perspectives and expertise.

- **Coordination and Communication** - The coalition is responsible for coordinating change activities and ensuring clear, consistent communication about the change process and goals.
- **Commitment To Change** - Members must be genuinely committed to the change initiative and capable of inspiring and motivating others to embrace the change.

Although San Diego County has several coalitions that help with coordination, there isn't a leadership group that has the authority to drive change which includes representatives from VSOs, San Diego County leadership, and military organizations.

The guiding coalition could include leadership from San Diego County's OMVA, the San Diego County Veteran and Military Committee, SDVC, CalVets, Veterans Administration, San Diego Military Advisory Committee, San Diego Military Family Coalition, and Military Leadership from Navy Region - South West and Marine Corp - West

The Guiding Coalition has the following responsibilities:

- Guide change and improvement efforts through the various stages of the Kotter change model.
- Establish a compelling shared vision for the future. The future vision analyses from this report can be used to structure a simple, compelling vision.
- Incentivize collaboration across Veteran service providers through contracts and other vehicles.
- Develop and sponsor policies, including a Veteran reintegration policy, that aligns Veteran service resources with desired improvements.
- Drive consistent communications on key Veteran issues and initiatives.
- Address barriers to Veteran services identified by organizations represented in the Guiding Coalition.
- Charter periodic assessment of Veteran services
- Align resources to address barriers and implement improvements.

Develop a horizontal and vertical network of Veteran service providers

An integrated Veteran service network creates a more seamless and effective system for delivering services to Veterans. This network is integrated both horizontally across various service domains and also vertically within a particular service domain. This network could establish the following:

- Shared vision, mission, and goals
- Common processes and tools
- Common metrics

The integrated network works to a shared vision, mission and goals established by the Guiding Coalition. Each member of the integrated network is vetted through a process that reviews their capabilities and commitment to the shared vision, mission, and goals.

The integrated network uses common tools and processes to facilitate integration both vertically and horizontally. These common processes and tools include a common intake process and referral system. Common tools and processes facilitates the "No Wrong Door" approach within

the VCAT model (Burke and King, 2011). This helps ensure that Veterans are connected to the right service regardless of where a Veteran first seeks help.

Horizontal integration across service domains is facilitated by coalitions such as the SDVC. The horizontal network collaborates to address service gaps and improvement opportunities. The integrated horizontal network works together on joint projects charted by the Guiding Coalition.

Vertical integration is established for providers within a service domain, such as housing or employment. Vertical integrators are identified by the Guiding Coalition to minimize duplication and help manage capacity within each service domain. The vertical integration network shares resources as needed to optimize support for Veteran clients in their service domain.

The performance of the integrated network could be measured through the use of shared metrics to ensure effective metric-driven decision making. These metrics are reported regularly to the Guiding Coalition and used to identify gaps and improvement opportunities.

Establish a Joint Outreach and Communication Plan

A joint outreach and communication plan is crucial for several reasons:

- **Enhanced Coordination:** It ensures that all service providers are on the same page, reducing duplication of efforts and ensuring that Veterans receive comprehensive support.
- **Consistent Messaging:** A unified plan helps maintain consistent and clear messaging about available services, eligibility criteria, and how to access them. This reduces confusion and helps Veterans navigate the system more easily.
- **Resource Optimization:** By working together, service providers can share resources, knowledge, and best practices, leading to more efficient use of available resources and better outcomes for Veterans.
- **Increased Reach:** A joint plan allows for a broader outreach, reaching more Veterans who might otherwise be unaware of the services available to them. This is especially important for those who may be isolated or less likely to seek help on their own.
- **Improved Trust and Engagement:** Consistent and reliable communication builds trust with Veterans. When they see that multiple organizations are working together to support them, it can increase their willingness to engage with these services.
- **Addressing Barriers:** A coordinated approach helps identify and address barriers to accessing services, such as stigma, lack of awareness, or logistical challenges. By working together, service providers can develop strategies to overcome these obstacles.

A joint outreach and communication plan fosters a more integrated and effective support system for Veterans, ensuring they receive the care and assistance they need.

To develop a joint outreach and communication plan, the Guiding Coalition could charter an Outreach/Communication Working Group. This could be driven by an existing coalition, such as the San Diego Veteran Coalition. This working group could include members from the Guiding Coalition, including active duty military commands.

The Joint Outreach/Communication Plan could include a mix of traditional and digital communication methods to ensure inclusivity and effectiveness, to include:

- **Integrated Service Provider Network:** Members within the integrated service provider network could share joint messages and communications within their individual communication channels. Engaging with the integrated network of Veteran service providers can help connect Veterans with peers and resources.
- **Social Media:** Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are effective in reaching younger Veterans and their families. Regular posts, live videos, and interactive content can engage this demographic.
- **Email newsletters:** For Veterans who prefer more traditional communication, email newsletters can be effective. They provide updates on services, events, and resources in a format that can be easily accessed and saved.
- **Phone calls and Text messages:** Personalized phone calls and text messages can be very effective, especially for older Veterans who may not be as tech-savvy. These methods provide a direct line of communication and can be used to remind Veterans of appointments or important information.
- **Virtual Meetings and Webinars:** Platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams can be used to host virtual meetings, webinars, and support groups. This is particularly useful for Veterans who may have mobility issues or live in remote areas.
- **Community Events and Workshops:** Hosting in-person events and workshops at MVRCs, VA facilities, and other local venues can help reach Veterans who may not be as active online. These events can provide valuable information and foster a sense of community.
- **Mobile Apps:** Apps can provide Veterans with mental health support and resources directly on their smartphones. The development of a joint digital platform that includes a mobile app is discussed in a separate improvement initiative.
- **Traditional Media:** Utilizing radio, television, and print media can reach Veterans who may not be active online. Public service announcements and advertisements in local newspapers can be effective.

By using a combination of these methods, Veteran service providers can ensure they are reaching Veterans across all demographics and providing them with the support they need.

Transform Existing MVRCs to CMVRs

The four existing MVRCs in San Diego County could be converted to Centers of Military Veteran Reintegration (CMVR) to provide expanded services. The converted CMVR is a dedicated facility that provides comprehensive support to Veterans and transitioning service members. These centers offer a wide range of services and have the following attributes:

- Shared vision, mission, and goals
- On-site Veteran peer navigation
- On-site VSR
- Integrated network of local Veteran service providers
- Strategic partnerships with Veteran service providers and community partners including local chambers of commerce and colleges
- Partnership with VA includes positioning of VA mobile unit at CMVR periodically
- Common intake and referral process
- Shared metrics
- Periodic on-site workshops for high demand services

- Periodic Veteran resource fairs and community events to recognize Veterans
- Hand-offs from Fleet and Family Services for transitioning service members
- Community of practice for CMVRs to share best practices

The dedicated CMVR facilities could utilize existing space at the Live Well centers where possible for cost benefits. Emphasis could be placed on creating an inviting environment when entering the CMVR. Consideration could be given to redistribute the Courage to Call Veteran peer navigation resources to be assigned to individual CMVRs. These Veteran peer navigators not only provide service at their respective CMVR but they provide critical Veteran outreach for their region.

The dedicated CMVR facilities across San Diego County could be augmented by CMVR mobile units that deliver Veteran services to remote areas within the region. These mobile CMVRs have a regular schedule within the region, have inviting signage, and are periodically stationed at community events where Veterans and their families may attend.

The regional CMVRs are also supported by kiosks located in county libraries that provide virtual access to Veteran services. These kiosks provide live video chat capability with CMVR or Courage to Call peer navigators.

The converted CMVRs offer a comprehensive range of services tailored to meet the evolving needs of Veterans and their families.

Secure Funding For Improvements

To ensure the sustainability and expansion of services for military members, Veterans, and their families in San Diego, it is recommended that the County of San Diego develop a comprehensive multi-year funding strategy. This strategy could be used to fund the recommendations provided in this report and other improvements for Veteran services.

Proposed Funding Sources:

1. **County Budget Allocations:** Establish a dedicated budget line within the County's annual budget to provide ongoing financial support for the MVRC and related Veteran services.
2. **Federal Grants:** Actively pursue available federal funding opportunities found on the Grants.gov website. This includes VA grants and Department of Labor grants such as the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program designed to support local Veterans.
3. **State Grants:** Pursue grant opportunities from California state organizations that are found on the California Grants Portal. This includes grant opportunities from CalVet such as the California Veterans Health Initiative. Funding for Veteran housing earmarked in Proposition 1 could be pursued. This includes the Homekey+ Grant opportunity from California's Department of Housing and Community Development Division.
4. **Public-Private Partnerships:** Encourage partnerships with local businesses, corporations, and philanthropic organizations that have a vested interest in supporting the military and Veteran community. These partnerships could include sponsorships, donations, and in-kind contributions.
5. **Collaborative Funding with VSOs:** Leverage existing partnerships with VSOs to apply for joint grants and co-funding opportunities that align with shared goals of Veteran reintegration and support.

6. **Tax Incentives and Voter-Approved Measures:** Consider introducing tax incentives or voter-approved funding measures (e.g., bond initiatives or special levies) specifically designed to fund Veteran services in the county. This would allow the local community to directly contribute to ensuring comprehensive support for Veterans and their families.

By implementing a diverse funding strategy, the County of San Diego can ensure the long-term viability of its MVRC/CMVR network, expand the breadth of services offered, and fund the improvement initiatives recommended in this report. This approach will enhance the overall quality of life for Veterans and their families, reinforcing San Diego's commitment to being a Veteran-friendly community.

Establish “Warm Hand-offs” Between Military and Community

A key aspect of building stronger partnerships between the military and the civilian community is ensuring that service members experience a seamless transition when leaving the military. One of the most effective ways to do this is through the implementation of a "warm handoff" process, where the responsibility for supporting service members shifts smoothly from the Department of Defense to civilian organizations like the MVRCs/CMVRs. This handoff could occur in two ways.

1. The first hand-off could occur between 12 months – 6 months before the service member separates. The command career counselor could connect with a civilian career transition advisor from organizations such as Onward Ops, NVTSL, and Zero8Hundred.

The career transition advisor will work with the transitioning service member to assist with:

- Identifying preferred civilian career
 - Skill translation from military experience to civilian career
 - Career readiness planning including reskilling or education
 - Job matching and job search process and tools
 - Connecting to employment services, including networking opportunities
2. Another hand-off that could happen is between the FFSC and the community-based MVRC/CMVR where the service member will reside. This hand-off could occur within six months of separation. FFSC representatives could connect with MVRC/CMVR peer navigators to help service members develop personalized transition plans that outline specific services, local resources, and community contacts they can rely on upon separation. The regional MVRC/CMVR will assist the transitioning service member in connecting to local support for needed services to include:
 - VA benefits
 - Mental health support
 - Financial counseling
 - Housing assistance
 - Legal assistance
 - Family Support Services
 - Social and recreational networks
 - Community recognition and benefits

Establish A Temporary MVRC/CMVR

As discussed in the current baseline, section 3.2.4a, the East County has a large Veteran population but no central hub to provide Veteran services. The OMVA could establish a temporary MVRC/CMVR at a public library in El Cajon or Santee.

There are public libraries in El Cajon and Santee that are located near mass transit and have ample parking and facility space to serve as a CMVR for East County Veterans. The library could have private meeting spaces that can be repurposed into an office space for a Veteran peer navigator and a VSR.

A Veteran peer navigator could provide intake and referral to local Veteran service providers. A VSR provides direct benefits administration.

Long Term Initiatives:

The longer term initiatives will require over a year for complete implementation. These initiatives include the following:

Establish A Quality Management System

A quality management system is a set of processes and procedures that helps an organization ensure it's running smoothly and delivering high-quality products and services. A quality management system can help an organization meet customer and regulatory requirements, improve efficiency and effectiveness, reduce waste, improve communications and promote continuous improvement.

It is recommended to consider the Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, which is based at and managed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, and sponsors of the National Quality Award.

The Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award purpose and mission is to improve the performance and long-term success of businesses and other organizations including city and federal government. The organization offers decades of quality research, criteria development, best practices and tools for improving quality excellence. Organizations do not have to apply for the award to utilize the criteria, learning and tools for quality excellence.

The COE2026 initiative uses a Baldrige-based framework to promote sustainable community performance excellence. South and East regions of San Diego County have participated in a pilot program with COE2026.

Seven categories make up Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence framework:

- Leadership
- Strategic planning
- Customer and market focus
- Information and analysis
- Human resource focus
- Process management
- Results

Improve Military and Community Integration

Strengthening partnerships with military leadership and increasing awareness of Veteran services in San Diego County is essential to ensuring that service members and their families are adequately supported as they navigate the complexities of transitioning to civilian life. Initiatives to improve the integration between the military and the community include:

- **Establish Partnerships with Military Leadership:** A key step to improve Military and Community integration is to develop strong relationships between VSOs, county-operated MVRCs/CMVRs, and the leadership of San Diego's military installations. The San Diego County Guiding Coalition could include representatives from the regional military command leadership. The military representatives of the Guiding Coalition could identify specific needs and pain points experienced by transitioning service members. Military leadership could be invited to participate in the SDMAC.

Formal Memorandums of Understandings could be established between regional MVRCs/CMVRs and the regional military commands in San Diego County. These memorandums of understandings would serve as formal agreements outlining the roles and responsibilities of both parties in supporting transitioning military personnel. By establishing these agreements, MVRCs/CMVRs and military commanders can ensure consistent collaboration, set mutual goals, and develop joint programs that address the specific needs of service members and their families.

- **Establish a military liaison position/office within OMVA:** A military liaison role could be established by San Diego County's OMVA. This liaison could maintain a visible and accessible presence with the military leadership, increasing awareness and trust between the military and the community. The OMVA Military Liaison will facilitate clear and effective communication between military leadership and San Diego County Veteran services. Regular briefings and updates with military leadership will ensure that MVRC/CMVR services are aligned with the evolving needs of active-duty personnel and Veterans. The County liaison will work closely with the bases' Family and Fleet Support Centers to facilitate warm handoffs between FFSC and the regional MVRCs/CMVRs for transitioning service members. The liaison will engage with MVRC/CMVRs and Veteran coalitions to raise awareness about the needs of transitioning service members and their families.
- **Increase Outreach and Awareness of Community Services:**
 - **Conduct Regular Community Orientations Briefs On and Off Base:** To ensure transitioning military personnel are fully informed of the local resources and opportunities available to them, MVRC/CMVRs could regularly conduct community orientation briefs both on military installations and within the local community. These briefings would serve as comprehensive overviews of San Diego's employment landscape, housing market, healthcare services, educational opportunities, and available Veteran support programs. By presenting these briefs on base, MVRCs/CMVRs can engage directly with service members who may not be aware of civilian resources or feel disconnected from the local community. Off-base briefings, meanwhile, would encourage Veterans and their families to explore and engage with their new civilian environment. Regularly scheduled

briefings—both in-person and virtual—will ensure a continuous flow of information for transitioning service members and their families.

- **Conduct Quarterly Reviews:** Consistent communication and collaboration between military and civilian leaders are essential for maintaining strong relationships and adapting services to meet the evolving needs of transitioning service members. To this end, MVRCs/CMVRs could facilitate quarterly meetings with regional military commanders, city officials, and leaders from local Veteran organizations. These meetings would provide an opportunity to review transition challenges, share updates on local economic trends, and evaluate the effectiveness of current programs. By fostering regular dialogue, these meetings can help identify emerging issues early on, such as changes in housing availability or job market demands, allowing MVRCs/CMVRs and military leadership to adjust their support strategies proactively.
- **Engage with Military Spouse and Family Support Networks:** Military families are often heavily involved in the transition process, and it is crucial that they are informed of the resources available through OMVA and the community. By engaging with military spouse organizations, family readiness groups, and school-based military support programs, MVRCs/CMVRs can extend their outreach to family members, ensuring that the entire household is aware of the available services and support.
- **Develop A Mobile Digital Communication Platform:** A mobile digital communication platform can be a game-changer for connecting transitioning service members to Veteran services in their community. A mobile platform ensures that information is accessible anytime, anywhere. This is described in more detail in a separate improvement initiative.
- **Leverage Existing Military Transition Programs:** San Diego’s military installations already run Transition Assistance Programs, which provide essential guidance to service members preparing to leave the military. By partnering more closely with these programs, OMVA & the MVRCs/CMVRs can expand their involvement, offering additional workshops, one-on-one counseling, and mentorship opportunities tailored to the unique needs of Veterans. OMVA can bring in local employers, educational institutions, and service organizations to complement the existing Transition Assistance Programs curriculum, providing Veterans with a more comprehensive understanding of the localized civilian landscape they will be entering. This collaboration ensures that every transitioning service member is introduced to the breadth of resources available to them in San Diego, making it less likely that they will fall through the cracks during their transition.

By implementing these improvement elements, a robust network of support can be created that empowers San Diego’s military community and enhances the overall impact of OMVA, MVRCs, and community Veteran services.

Develop Joint Digital Mobile Platform

A joint digital mobile platform could be created to provide timely communications with local Veterans and enable collaboration with service providers. Some of the key benefits of a joint digital mobile platform includes:

- **Centralized Information:** A joint platform provides a single source of truth for all Veteran services, making it easier for Veterans to find the information they need without navigating multiple websites or resources.
- **Enhanced Accessibility:** By consolidating services and resources, the platform can be designed to be user-friendly and accessible to Veterans of all ages and tech-savviness levels.
- **Real-Time Updates:** Veterans can receive real-time updates on services, events, and resources, ensuring they are always informed about the latest opportunities and support available to them.
- **Community Building:** The platform can facilitate connections between Veterans, service providers, and support organizations, fostering a sense of community and mutual support.
- **Efficient Communication:** Service providers can use the platform to communicate directly with Veterans, schedule appointments, send reminders, and provide personalized support.
- **Data Collection and Analysis:** The platform can collect valuable data on Veteran needs and service usage, helping organizations to better understand and address the gaps in service provision.
- **Cost-Effective:** By sharing resources and infrastructure, organizations can reduce costs and allocate more funds to direct services for Veterans.

The platform will have a graphical user interface that is easy to navigate for Veterans to find the services that they need. An example of the user interface is shown below:



Figure 11. Example of Graphic User Interface.

A joint digital mobile platform can streamline communication, improve access to services, and create a more cohesive support network for Veterans.

Establish Mobile MVRCs/CMVRs and Kiosks for Remote and Virtual Services

Dedicated MVRCs/CMVRs mobile units could be procured and set up to augment the MVRC/CMVR across San Diego County. The mobile MVRC/CMVR approach builds from the current Live Well on Wheels platform. The CMVR mobile units could deliver a range of services directly to remote areas of East County and other regions of San Diego County. The mobile units could provide high-priority services identified in the Veteran survey, including health care screenings, benefits administration, and mental health counseling.

- High level assessment for referrals
- Health education and screenings
- Support for Veterans benefits and claims
- Mental health counseling
- Housing resource support
- Child and Family Services
- Legal Services

The mobile units could be staffed by a Veteran peer navigator and Live Well resources to provide benefits administration support, mental health counseling, physical health screening, and referrals to other Veteran services. A recurring schedule could be established for remote areas not in close proximity to a current MVRC/CMVR. Experience and research shows that a consistent recurring schedule with effective and inviting signage is needed to maximize the connectedness to local Veterans. Additionally, the MVRC/CMVR mobile units could be positioned at periodic community and Veteran events. The schedule for the MVRC/CMVR mobile units could be promoted through the various communication channels established in the Joint Outreach/Communication Plan.



Figure 12. Live Well on Wheels Mobile Office.

MVRC/CMVR kiosks could be positioned at public libraries in East County and throughout San Diego County. They include the user interface for the joint digital mobile platform. The kiosks have the ability to live video chat with a Courage to Call or MVRC/CMVR Veteran peer navigators. They have a large touchpad for easy operation by senior Veterans like the picture below:

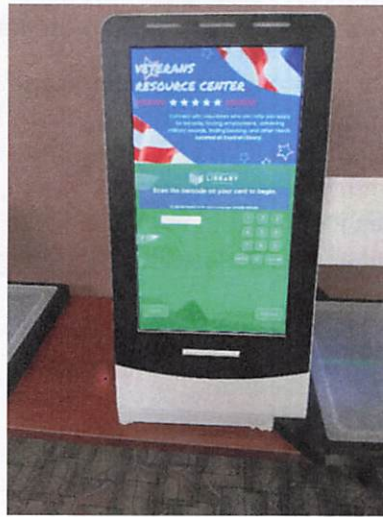


Figure 13. Example of Virtual Services Kiosk

Establish a MVRCCMVR with Veteran housing in East County

The County could develop a new state-of-the-art MVRC/CMVR with transitional and long-term affordable housing, designed to support Veterans as they reintegrate into civilian life. The facility will provide Veteran services for its Veteran residents and other local Veterans in East County. It could be located in East County in an area with a high population of Veterans such as El Cajon or Santee. The future vision MVRC/CMVR could include:

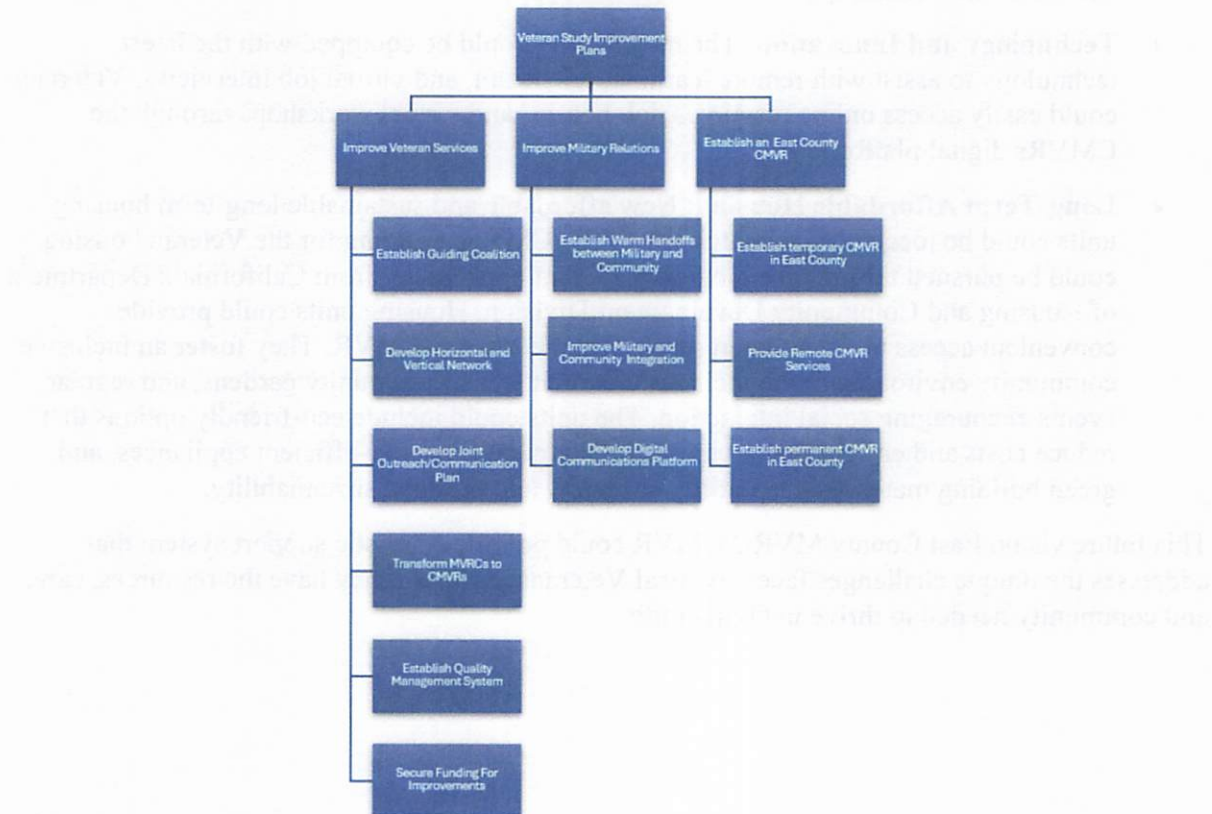
- **Modern Design and Accessibility:** A welcoming, accessible building featuring green spaces, common areas, and private rooms. The center is designed to be both aesthetically pleasing and functional, with ramps, elevators, and other features to accommodate all physical abilities.
- **Comprehensive Support Services:** Inside the MVRC/CMVR, Veterans find a one-stop-shop for all their needs: career counseling, mental health support, legal assistance, financial planning services and more. There are also workshops on resume writing, job interviews, and career skill-building.
- **Transitional Housing:** The short-term transitional housing facilities could include comfortable, safe, and fully furnished rooms where Veterans can stay while they get back on their feet. Each unit could have essential amenities, providing a sense of home and stability. The transitional housing facility includes a communal kitchen and dining area which fosters a sense of community.
- **Healthcare and Wellness Facilities:** An on-site medical clinic could offer primary care, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment. Additional accommodations to promote health and wellness could include a gym, yoga studio, and outdoor spaces for physical wellness.
- **Community Engagement:** The MVRC/CMVR could partner with local businesses and Veteran service providers to provide internships, job placements, and educational

opportunities. Regular social events and community activities help Veterans build new networks and friendships.

- **Technology and Innovation:** The new facility could be equipped with the latest technology to assist with remote learning, telehealth, and virtual job interviews. Veterans could easily access online resources, job boards, and virtual workshops through the CMVRs digital platform.
- **Long-Term Affordable Housing:** New affordable and sustainable long-term housing units could be located adjacent to the MVRC/CMVR. Funding for the Veteran housing could be pursued through the Homekey+ Grant opportunity from California's Department of Housing and Community Development Division. Housing units could provide convenient access to the Veteran services at the MVRC/CMVR. They foster an inclusive community environment that includes common areas, community gardens, and regular events encouraging social interaction. The units could include eco-friendly options that reduce costs and environmental impact. Solar panels, energy-efficient appliances, and green building materials keep utility costs low and promote sustainability.

This future vision East County MVRC/CMVR could provide a holistic support system that addresses the unique challenges faced by local Veterans, ensuring they have the resources, care, and community needed to thrive in civilian life.

APPENDIX A: IMPROVEMENT PLANS



Establish Guiding Coalition

Action	Organization of Primary Responsibility (OPR)
Identify members to include County, SDVC, CalVets, VA, SDMAC, SDMFC, Military Leadership-Navy Region SW, Marine Corp West	OMVA
Create Guiding Coalition charter – Reference example draft charter	OMVA
Conduct workshop to establish shared vision, mission, and reintegration policy – Reference draft reintegration policy	3 rd party facilitator
Identify and charter joint improvement initiatives	Guiding Coalition
Hold monthly meetings to share best practices, address gaps and implement improvement initiatives	Guiding Coalition

Draft Charter for Guiding Coalition

Example Guiding Coalition Charter

1. Purpose:

The purpose of the Guiding Coalition is to provide strategic direction, oversight, and support for the successful implementation of initiatives aimed at improving the lives of veterans in the county.

2. Objectives:

- Foster collaboration among stakeholders, including government agencies, military and community service providers
- Advocate for policies and resources that benefit veterans
- Charter improvement initiatives
- Share best practices
- Drive funding and grant opportunities
- Monitor and evaluate the progress of initiatives and make necessary adjustments.

3. Membership:

- Office of Military and Veteran Affairs, SDVC, SDMAC, SDMFC, San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council, VA, CalVets, Navy Region SW, Marine Corp West

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

- Members: Actively participate in meetings, provide input, and support the implementation of initiatives

5. Meetings:

- Frequency: The coalition will meet monthly with additional meetings scheduled as needed

Develop Horizontal and Vertical Networks of Service Providers

Action	OPR
Establish a vetting process and identify service providers for veteran services for each major service domain, e.g., healthcare, mental health, housing, employment, family, financial, legal	SDVC
Conduct stakeholder workshop with preferred providers to establish groundrules and standards for horizontal and vertical network – e.g. common referral system, common metrics, common intake process	3 rd party facilitator
Utilize preferred providers list as first referrals for Courage To Call, 2-1-1 San Diego, and MVRs/CMVRs	OMVA, SDVC, & Guiding Coalition
Incentive service provider collaboration in San Diego County grants	OMVA
Identify joint projects/initiatives requiring network collaboration	Guiding Coalition /SDVC
Establish Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)	SDVC
Monitor and evaluate network performance– perform self assessments using Baldrige Communities of Excellence 2026 framework	SDVC

Develop and Implement Joint Communication and Outreach Plan

Action	OPR
Identify communications / outreach lead	Guiding Coalition / SDVC
Charter a diverse communications working group to create a comprehensive communications strategy and plan, reference example plan. Leverage a mix of communication channels to effectively reach and engage target audiences through multiple touchpoints.	Communications / Outreach Lead
Connect with local college veteran resource centers for digital media marketing support	Communications Working Group
Utilize joint communication platform - reference Improvement Initiative 3.2.3c - to push communications to veterans on news, services, and community events	Communications Working Group
Use surveys, focus groups, and direct feedback to assess the effectiveness of communication	Communications Working Group

Example Outline for Joint Communication

Elements of Communication Plan
Communications implementation strategy and plan should include:
email (newsletters and targeted email communications);
Social media Platforms like: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and TikTok to share content, engage in conversations, and build a community;
Press releases: Distribute newsworthy announcements to media outlets to gain coverage and visibility.
Website and blog: Publish content, updates, articles, and resources that provide value to your audience
Webinars and live stream: Host online events, presentations, and Q&A sessions to interact directly with your audience
Video content: Create videos for platforms like YouTube and Vimeo to share tutorials, stories, and product demonstrations
Print media: Use brochures, flyers, posters, and direct mail campaigns to reach your audience in a tangible forma
Events and conferences: Participate in or host events, workshops, and conferences to network and share your message with a larger audience.
SMS and messaging apps.: Use text messaging and apps like WhatsApp and Messenger for direct, personalized communication
Podcasts and radio: Create or sponsor podcasts and radio segments to reach a wider audience through audio content
Internal Communications: Use intranets, internal newsletters, and meetings to keep team members informed and engaged.
Public Service Announcements (PSAs): Broadcast messages through TV, radio, and online platforms to inform the public about critical issues.
Community Engagement: Engage with local communities through town halls, community boards, and local organizations
Content Marketing: Develop and distribute valuable, relevant content to attract and retain your audience.

Transform MVRCs to CMVRs

Action	OPR
Identify MVRC / CMVR project manager	OMVA
Identify key services and providers - use input from veteran survey and preferred provider list from SDVC	CMVR Project Mgr / SDVC
Conduct service provider workshop to identify vision and common metrics, intake, and referral process and system.	3 rd party facilitator
Codify partnerships with key service providers through MOUs, including VA for mobile van support	CMVR Project Mgr
Develop Welcome Home package for transitioning service members moving into region	CMVR Project Mgr
Staff CMVRs with peer navigators and conduct training on common intake and referral process	CMVR Project Mgr
Develop Outreach and Communication Plan -- see example	CMVR Project Mgr
Conduct periodic CMVR community of practice meetings to share best practices	CMVR Project Mgr
Host community events with local service providers	CMVR Project Mgr
Deliver services to remote areas using mobile CMVR - reference Improvement Initiative 3.2.4b - at rally points within each CMVR region.	CMVR Project Mgr

Example Outline for CMVR Outreach and Communication

Action
Community Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize local events & workshops focused on veteran services & benefits. Partner with veteran organizations to host joint events that attract more participants.
Social Media: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use platforms (Facebook, Instagram, & LinkedIn) to share stories of veterans who benefited from MVRC services. Create informative content, videos & infographics, highlighting available resources.
Collaborations & Partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local community, organizations, commands to promote MVRCs as essential resources for veterans. Collaborate with military bases & veteran organizations to reach transitioning service members.
Advertising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online ads targeting veterans & their families, focusing on specific demographics & locations. Distribute flyers & brochures in places frequented by veterans, such as VA hospitals, schools, housing & military installations.
Email Newsletters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a regular newsletter that provides updates on services, upcoming events, & success stories. Encourage veterans & their families to subscribe through the MVRC website & social media.
Advocacy & Awareness Campaigns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch campaigns that raise awareness about challenges veterans face & how MVRCs can help. Engage local leaders & influencers to advocate for veteran services.
Media Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to local media outlets to share stories about the impact of MVRCs on veterans' lives. Write press releases for significant events or initiatives to garner media coverage.
Website Optimization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MVRC website is user-friendly, with clear information on services, resources, & how to access them. Include testimonials & success stories to build trust & credibility.
Feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a program where veterans share their experiences & promote MVRC services within their communities. Implement surveys & focus groups to gather feedback from veterans about their needs & how MVRCs can improve. Use feedback to tailor services & outreach efforts more effectively.

Establish Quality Management System

Action	OPR
Benchmark San Diego County South Region pilot program for Communities of Excellence 2026 based on Malcom Baldrige Performance Excellence framework	Guiding Coalition
Charter Live Well or SDVC to create QMS project team to develop and implement QMS System to include annual self assessment and improvement planning	Guiding Coalition
Review Communities of Excellence framework criteria to develop & conduct an informal high-level assessment and prioritize target areas for improvement	QMS Project Team
Create a plan to improve target areas	QMS Project Team
Oversee plan implementation and reassess for improvement	QMS Project Team
Select next priorities areas to work on	QMS Project Team

Secure Funding for Improvements

Action	OPR
Identify lead to identify veteran grant opportunities	OMVA
Identify veteran support grant opportunities from VA and Dept of Labor along with California state grants from CalVets and Homekey+ through MatchAward.com, VA Grants, Grants.gov, US Grants.org, and California Grants Portal.	Grant Lead and SDVC
Prioritize grant opportunities based on veteran needs and improvement opportunities to include Homekey+ (California Dept of Housing and Community Development) and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (US Dept of Labor) in 2025.	Guiding Coalition
Engage and collaborate with stakeholders to develop grant applications	San Diego County Grants Office
Monitor progress and provide regular updates	San Diego County Grants Office

Establish Warm Handoffs between Military and Community

Time	OPR
Create Transition Working Group	SDVC
Identify pool of civilian transition/career coaches from organizations like Onward Ops, VetCTAP, Career Centers	Transition Working Group
Meet with Fleet and Family Support Centers and Command career counselors at military installations to discuss handoff process to CMVRs and civilian transition/career coaches.	Transition Working Group & CMVR project mgr
Build in hand-offs in transition checklist between Fleet and Family Support Centers and CMVRs and between command career counselors and civilian transition/career coaches	Fleet and Family Support Centers

Action	OPR
Identify lead to identify veteran grant opportunities	OMVA
Identify veteran support grant opportunities from VA and Dept of Labor along with California state grants from CalVets and Homekey+ through MatchAward.com, VA Grants, Grants.gov, US Grants.org, and California Grants Portal.	Grant Lead and SDVC
Prioritize grant opportunities based on veteran needs and improvement opportunities to include Homekey+ (California Dept of Housing and Community Development) and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (US Dept of Labor) in 2025.	Guiding Coalition
Engage and collaborate with stakeholders to develop grant applications	San Diego County Grants Office
Monitor progress and provide regular updates	San Diego County Grants Office

Improve Military and Community

Action	OPR
Include military leadership on Guiding Coalition: This will enhance communication and support by establishing a shared leadership structure that promotes mutual understanding, aligns strategic objectives, and leverages diverse perspectives to address the unique challenges of military transition and integration into civilian communities.	OMVA
Establish military liaison position/office: Establishing a military liaison position or office with the OMVA is a strategic move that will ensure streamlined communication, better resource allocation, and enhanced support for veterans, ultimately leading to more effective collaboration and service delivery between the military and veteran affairs organizations.	OMVA
Expand Quarterly reviews with regional command leadership: Expanding quarterly reviews with regional command leadership is vital for maintaining a robust feedback loop, enhancing strategic alignment, and ensuring that performance metrics are closely monitored and optimized, leading to more effective and responsive military operations and support systems.	SDVC
Offer a "welcome home" package Offering a "welcome home" package through the community-based CMVRs for returning soon-to-be veterans is a gesture of gratitude that provides essential support and resources, aiding in their transition to civilian life and demonstrating the community's commitment to honoring their service and facilitating their reintegration.	SDVC, OMVA
Hold community resource fairs at bases and/or at regional MVRC's for soon-to-be-veterans: Holding community resource fairs at military bases and regional Military and Veterans Resource Centers (MVRCs) for soon-to-be veterans is a proactive measure that can significantly ease the transition to civilian life by providing access to a comprehensive suite of services, resources, and networking opportunities in a centralized and supportive environment.	SDVC

Example Elements of Welcome Home Package

Elements
Assist TSM's with TAP Support for non-deployable personnel separating in San Diego: Assisting TSMs with TAP Support for non-deployable personnel separating in San Diego is crucial as it provides specialized guidance and resources tailored to their unique circumstances, ensuring a smooth transition and successful reintegration into the civilian community.
Conduct on/off-base Community Briefings that go beyond TAP: Conducting on/off-base Community Briefings that extend beyond the standard Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is crucial as they provide veterans with comprehensive, localized information and resources, fostering a smoother transition into civilian life and ensuring community services are effectively utilized.
Housing Assistance: Housing Assistance is a cornerstone of veteran reintegration in communities like San Diego County, providing a stable foundation from which veterans can rebuild their lives, pursue new opportunities, and reconnect with society after their service.
Employment Services: Employment and career services are fundamental to the reintegration of veterans in San Diego County, providing them with the necessary tools, training, and opportunities to translate their military skills into meaningful civilian employment, which is essential for their financial stability and personal fulfillment.
Mental Health & Wellness Support: Mental Health & Wellness Support is essential for the reintegration of veterans in communities like San Diego County, as it addresses the psychological impacts of service, promotes overall well-being, and ensures that veterans receive the comprehensive care they deserve.
Family Integration Programs: Family Integration Programs are vital for the reintegration of veterans in communities like San Diego County, as they provide tailored support to strengthen family bonds, facilitate adjustment to civilian life, and ensure the well-being of both veterans and their families during this critical transition period.
Ongoing Veteran Community Involvement: Ongoing Veteran Community Involvement is essential for San Diego County's support of veterans, as it ensures their valuable skills and experiences continue to enrich the community, while also providing veterans with a sense of purpose and belonging through active participation in local initiatives and decision-making processes.
Organize Annual Muster gatherings for veterans and their families at various MVRC's Organizing Annual Muster gatherings for veterans and their families at various MVRCs is a powerful way to honor their service, foster community spirit, and provide a platform for sharing resources and support that are essential for the successful reintegration of veterans into civilian life.

Develop Mobile Digital Communication

Action	OPR
Perform benchmarking of mobile digital platforms: Consider VA Health Chat, Hero Club For Veterans, Military OneSource, Team RWB	SDVC – Communications Working Group
Define requirements and features -- reference example requirements	SVDC – Communications Working Group
Create Mock-ups for User Interface (UI) and user experience (UX) design -- reference example	SVDC – Communications Working Group
Develop/modify app	County or 3 rd party developer
Conduct Alpha and Beta Testing for App with veteran user group	County or 3 rd party developer
Deploy App by publishing on app stores	County or 3 rd party developer
Market and promote App – utilize Communication and Outreach Plan established in Improvement Initiative 3.2.1c	SDVC – Communications Working Group

Example of Requirements for Mobile App

Requirements
<p>Justification for Developing a Comprehensive Mobile App for Transitioning Service Members and Veterans in San Diego – The transition from military to civilian life is a critical period for service members and veterans. To ensure a smooth and successful transition, it is essential to provide comprehensive support that addresses their unique needs. The proposed mobile app aims to integrate cross-functional support and communication for all transitioning service members and veterans in the San Diego region. This initiative aligns with the County of San Diego's Live Well San Diego vision, which focuses on building better health, living safely, and thriving.</p> <p>Addressing the Transition Process Transitioning out of the military involves numerous challenges, including finding employment, securing housing, accessing healthcare, and integrating into the community. The proposed mobile app will serve as a one-stop solution, offering resources and support throughout the entire transition process.</p> <p>Key features will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transition Planning: Personalized checklists and timelines to help service members prepare for civilian life. 2. Employment Assistance: Job search tools, resume building, and connections to local employers. 3. Housing Support: Resources for finding affordable housing and understanding rental agreements. 4. Healthcare Access: Information on VA benefits, local healthcare providers, and mental health resources. 5. Community Integration: Connections to local veteran organizations, social events, and volunteer opportunities. 6. Warm Hand-Off to the Community <p>A warm hand-off ensures that transitioning service members and veterans are not left to navigate the complexities of civilian life alone. The app will facilitate this by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mentorship Programs: Pairing veterans with mentors who have successfully transitioned. 2. Community Resources: Providing information on local services, such as legal aid, financial counseling, and family support. 3. Peer Support Networks: Creating virtual communities where veterans can share experiences and offer mutual support. <p>Supporting Social Determinants of Health The social determinants of health (SDOH) play a significant role in the overall well-being of veterans. The app will track and support SDOH by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education and Employment: Offering educational resources and job training programs. 2. Housing Stability: Connecting veterans with housing assistance programs and emergency shelters. 3. Food Security: Providing information on local food banks and nutrition programs. 4. Transportation: Offering resources for transportation assistance and ride-sharing options. 5. Social Connectivity: Promoting social engagement through community events and support groups. <p>Alignment with Live Well San Diego The County of San Diego's Live Well San Diego initiative aims to create a region that is building better health, living safely, and thriving. The proposed mobile app aligns with this vision by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building Better Health: Ensuring veterans have access to healthcare services and mental health support. 2. Living Safely: Providing resources for stable housing, legal aid, and financial counseling. 3. Thriving: Promoting social engagement, employment opportunities, and community integration.

Establish Temporary CMVR in East County (Short Term)

Action	OPR
Identify CMVR Project Manager	OMVA
Create stakeholder list – utilize veteran survey for key services & service providers	CMVR Project Mgr
Conduct local stakeholder workshop to define desired veteran experience, create shared vision, goals, and define roles	3 rd party facilitator
Define facility requirements for temporary CMVR at public library	CMVR Project Mgr
Staff CMVR with peer navigator and veteran service representative	CMVR Project Mgt
Collaborate with VA to schedule mobile VA health screening van	CMVR Project Mgr
Implement common intake and referral process defined in Improvement Initiative 3.2.1d	CMVR Project Mgr
Implement communications and marketing plan – Ref Improvement Initiative 3.2.1c	CMVR Project Mgr

Establish Mobile and Virtual East County CMVR (Mid Term)

Action	OPR
Benchmark the existing San Diego County Live Well Mobile RVs	CMVR Project Mgr
Create a vision for a fully functional mobile CMVR campaign and its impact, including visual rendition and AI video of the vehicle, signage, staging and location.	CMVR Project Mgr
Create feasibility recommendations for mobile CMVR including budget	CMVR Project Mgr
Repurpose an existing Live Well Mobile RV or other county vehicle	CMVR Project Mgr
Acquire a vehicle for Mobile CMVR	CMVR Project Mgr
Implement Mobile CMVR initiative with communications and outreach plan -- go where the veterans are	CMVR Project Mgr
Experiment with locations and venues and collect data	CMVR Project Mgr
Establish consistent schedule for Mobile CMVR	CMVR Project Mgr
Prototype kiosk in public library with digital platform user interface – reference Improvement Initiative 3.2.3c	CMVR Project Mgr
Install kiosks in all county libraries in East County	CMVR Project Mgr

Establish Permanent CMVR in East County (Long Term)

Action	OPR
Conduct benchmarking with existing veteran transitional housing facilities • Understand lessons learned and best practices	CMVR Project Mgr
Conduct future state workshop with stakeholders • Further define requirements for CMVR • Define housing models (e.g. shared housing, individual units)	3 rd Party Facilitator
Finalize site search • Priorize Edgermoor parcel in Santee	CMVR Project Mgr
Secure funding • Prioritize grant funding through California Dept of Housing and Community Development (HCD) Homekey+	County grant writing
Create project plan • Include budget and funding, facility development, regulatory and legal considerations, staffing, veteran services, and risk management	CMVR Project Mgr
Issue RFP to housing developers	County buyer and contracts
Monitor & evaluate • Define key performance indicators to measure effectiveness • Regular Assessments: Conduct annual evaluations to assess program impact & make necessary adjustments	CMVR Project Mgr

APPENDIX B: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX C: GAP ANALYSES

Veteran Needs:

Current State	GAP			Future State Vision and culture/behaviors	Potential Actions to close the GAP
SWOT Analysis (transfer)	People	Processes	Technology	Veterans in transition to civilian life in East County are actively engaged in a process that identifies and meets their physical and emotional needs, as well as prepares them to self-manage an independent life of purpose, meaning and economic viability.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Triage assessment to identify the specific physical and emotional needs of each veteran before/during transition and reintegration 2. Identify service organizations (directory) to meet the physical and emotional needs of the veterans 3. Provide a model and process for integrating service providers for quick soft handoff to meet specific veterans needs 4. Provide process to assign mentors to veterans 5. Ensure technology and training is available to create resumes and practice interviewing
Strengths:					
From research and experience physical and emotional needs are understood	X				
There are multiple VSOs that provide support for physical and emotional needs	X				
There are brick and mortar veteran resource center in place	X				
Technology can be used to improve veteran transition and reintegration needs			X		
Weaknesses					
Research concludes there are still too many veterans unprepared for their transition from the military to civilian community	X				
There is a lack of integrated systems and processes of service providers to robustly support veteran's transitions needs		X			
Veterans find it difficult to navigate the VA system and Veteran Service Providers	X	X			
Lack of access to one-on-one mentors	X	X			
Poor resume and interview skills preparation	X				

Current State	GAP			Future State Vision and culture/behaviors	Potential Actions to close the GAP
SWOT Analysis (transfer)	People	Processes	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The veteran clearly understands how to navigate the system efficiently and effectively. • Veterans have documented their new civilian identity and life purposes • Technology is available to help simple navigation for services • The veteran is confident they can pursue a positive and successful future • Veteran has a customized transition and reintegration plan based on their specific needs. • Veteran feels confident that they can navigate the VA system adequately • CMVR program is funded 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Develop processes to improve veteran transition experience including awareness communications triage and training 7. Develop training to assist veterans in documenting renewed civilian identity and purpose 8. Develop automated Life Balance Wheel Assessment to identify key areas for transition and reintegration learning and assistance 9. Build in suicide prevention by creating new identity and purpose for civilian life 10. Create model for veterans program integration to ensure smooth timely handoff for support 11. Create communications strategy to improve understanding of the VA processes 12. Develop Funding strategy
Opportunities					
Based on research and experience identify recommendation areas to improve the transition and veteran experience	X	X	X		
Implement best practices for veterans to create renewed civilian identity and life purpose	X				
Apply technology to improve processes and transition			X		
Ensure prevention is addressed, not just crisis management	X				
Threats					
Lack of an integrated veteran support system		X			
Competing unaligned veterans programs adds to confusion in navigating the service organization environment		X			
Continued negative perception of VA keeps veterans away	X				
Lack of adequate funding for CMVR implementation		X			

Veteran Service Providers:

Current State	GAP			Actions to close the GAP	Future State
SWOT Analysis (transfer) Weaknesses	People	Processes	Technology		Culture/Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fragmented, siloed, and unintegrated service providers 	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen networks for vertical and horizontal integration RFPs encourage partnering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated veteran service providers with shared vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No single website for veteran resources 			X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post Veteran Resource Directory on OMVA and SDVC website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated veteran resource directory accessible on website
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No common/shared metrics 		X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify & implement common measures Establish Quality Management System with metric dashboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veteran service providers use common performance system and metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited outreach and awareness of veteran services 	X		X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop integrated marketing/outreach plan Engage in strategic partnerships with VA, American Legion, VFW... Leverage social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veterans are aware of where to get the help they need

Current State	GAP			Actions to close the GAP	Future State
SWOT Analysis (transfer) Weaknesses	People	Processes	Technology		Culture/Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High veteran underemployment and turnover 	X		X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase focus on identifying passions, purpose, & identity Align job training to purpose Utilize AI technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veterans attain rewarding, high income employment aligned to purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underserved veteran population for OTH discharge and women 	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase minority participation on veteran councils Improve minority outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veteran services are inclusive and connect with women and OTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High unemployment with recently transitioned veterans 	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm hand-offs between active-duty career counselors and civilian career coaches / mentors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every transitioning service member has job or education lined up before ETS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing resources not fully utilized and don't include necessary veteran resources 	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish housing coordinator Connect housing resources to community veteran resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing resources are fully utilized and are integrated with veteran services

Current State	GAP			Actions to close the GAP	Future State
	People	Processes	Technology		Culture/Behaviors
	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand access to veteran service representatives through mobile and virtual CMVRs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance in navigating VA medical and benefits system is very accessible
	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Reintegration training Warm hand-off between Fleet and Family Support and CMVR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful reintegration with transitioning service members and families
	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage state funding opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements are funded

Organizational:

Current State	GAP			Future State Vision and culture/behaviors	Potential Actions to close the GAP
SWOT Analysis (transfer)	People	Processes	Technology	<p>Efficient and effective organizational structure and functioning resulting in an excellent veteran experience that eliminates problems and meets needs.</p> <p>The Veterans Centers are welcoming, inviting and family friendly. They efficiently help to identify veterans needs and provide warm handoffs to veteran support organizations to efficiently meet those needs.</p> <p>A network of integrated veteran support organizations are engaged in the transition process under a shared vision of working together to meet the needs of the veterans and their families. It is an environment of cooperation, not competition.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create or refresh a shared vision for the County and service providers working together to efficiently meet the needs of veterans and their families with a positive experience. 2. Create an improvement plan, with subsections for each service center to make changes or improvements to meet the shared vision 3. Create common metrics including in-process and end-of-process metrics that help with day to day decision making, progress to goal achievement, veteran experience and success stories. 4. Create a growth plan for the call center with metrics.
Strengths:					
There are physical County vet centers operating and a new one opening	X	X	X		
There is an operational call center	X	X	X		
Technology is advancing and can improve the reintegration and job hunting process			X		
There is a visionary new Director of Veteran and Military Affairs	X				
Weaknesses:					
Too many veteran support organizations to sort through	X				
Veterans Support Organizations may not be conveniently located	X				
Veteran Support Organizations are not integrated		X			
Hard to navigate VA system for appointments and support	X	X			
Veteran Resource Centers not utilized to capacity	X				
Lack of one-on-one mentors to guide veterans in their transition and reintegration	X				
Lack of standardized metrics to measure goals and support decision making		X			

Current State	GAP			Future State Vision and culture/behaviors	Potential Actions to close the GAP
Weaknesses Cont.	People	Processes	Technology		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Establish an integrated veteran support organization community of practice to ensure efficient working together with warm handoffs and continuous improvement best practices. 6. Establish a one-on-one mentorship program for veterans to talk to someone who has successfully transitioned 7. Establish transition and reintegration training that guides veterans in establishing a new civilian identity, purpose in life, and preparation for a best fit career plan, job hunt and placement. 8. Create a high-level veterans policy for East County.
Lack of veterans renewing their civilian identity and purpose before selecting job/career paths	X				
Many programs focusing on resumes and jobs and not mindset preparation	X				
Vets often lack adequate resumes and interviewing skills	X				
Opportunities					
Utilize current veteran research, periodicals and local focus groups/learning forums data; provide specific recommendations that target improvements of a desired future state.	X	X	X		
Improve elements of existing Veterans Resource Centers.	X	X	X		
Apply use of technology and innovative processes to create efficiencies		X	X		
Build in "prevention" to new processes rather than reaction only "crises intervention"	X	X			

Current State	GAP			Future State Vision and culture/behaviors	Potential Actions to close the GAP
Opportunities cont. Create a common aligned system of service providers to support an integrated shared vision for veterans resource centers	People	Processes	Technology		
	X	X	X		9. Create a short – mid – long term funding plan for veteran initiatives.
Create an integrated shared vision for veterans resource centers.	X				10. Work with the military bases to connect with service members prior to release to endure a smooth handoff into the community support system including the VA resources.
Create Veterans policy for East County.	X				
Standardized In-process and end-of-process metrics		X			
Threats					
Lack of an integrated veteran support system	X	X			
Competing unaligned veterans programs	X	X			
Lack of adequate funding for the CMVR systems integration		X			
Negative perception of the VA Cost of living in San Diego	X				
High veteran Job turnover	X				

MVRCS:

Current State	GAP			Future State Vision and culture/behaviors	Potential Actions to close the GAP
SWOT Analysis (transfer)	People	Processes	Technology		
Strengths:					
Multiple MVRCS are located in various regions in San Diego County	X	X	X	<p>A collaborative ecosystem where CMVRs and MVRCS are financially stable, have expanded their scope beyond benefits support, and are fully integrated with local, VSO's, businesses, healthcare organizations, and educational institutions to provide comprehensive, holistic support to veterans and their families.</p> <p>Associated Culture/Behaviors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative Partnerships: Actively seeking and maintaining partnerships with various stakeholders to enhance support services. Innovation in Service Delivery: Continuously innovating to address the broad spectrum of veterans' needs, including social reintegration. Financial Sustainability: Cultivating diverse funding sources to ensure long-term stability and growth. Community Integration: Fostering a culture of community support and integration for veterans, i.e. VCAT. Competitive Excellence: Striving to offer the best support services by leveraging academic and research opportunities—collective impact model. 	Diversify Funding Sources: CMVRs could explore new funding avenues, such as private sector partnerships or service fees, to reduce reliance on government grants and donations.
Provide a wide range of benefits administration and support		X	X		Expand Service Scope: MVRCS could broaden their focus beyond academic support to include more comprehensive reintegration services like mental health and community integration.
Staffed by welcome ambassador and veteran service representatives		X	X		Strengthen Partnerships: Both CMVRs and MVRCS could form strategic alliances with local businesses, healthcare organizations, and educational institutions to enhance service offerings and create more opportunities for veterans.
Integrated with Live Well Centers		X	X		Improve Resource Allocation: CMVRs should develop strategies for more flexible and efficient use of funds to ensure stability and adaptability in changing political climates.
Partnerships with multiple veteran service providers are documented in Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs).		X	X		Enhance Outreach and Awareness: Vet Centers and other veteran support efforts could implement targeted outreach programs to increase accessibility and awareness of their services.
Appointment wait times are measured		X			
30-day follow-up calls made after initial appointments	X	X			
Weaknesses					
Limited veteran services available		X			
Uninviting entry with armed security check		X			
Lack of referrals to veteran service providers		X			
No partnership with VA		X			
Limited shared metrics	X	X			
Lack of sharing of best practices and lessons learned		X			
Lack of visibility with community and military					
.No MRVC in East County					

Military Relations and Partnerships:

Current State	GAP			Future State Vision and culture/behaviors	Potential Actions to close the GAP
SWOT Analysis (transfer) Strengths: <p>Established Military Presence: San Diego's significant military population provides a strong foundation for collaboration between the county and local installations.</p> <p>Existing Support Frameworks: Programs like the Center for Military and Veteran Reintegration (CMVR) offer a model for successful transition support.</p> <p>Community Engagement: Organizations such as the San Diego Veterans Coalition actively work to bridge gaps between military service and civilian life.</p> <p>Comprehensive Family Health Services: The county's health services play a crucial role in the transition to civilian life.</p> Weaknesses: <p>Communication Gaps: Potential lack of streamlined communication channels between the county and military installations can hinder service delivery.</p> <p>Resource Limitations: Constraints in funding and staffing may affect the county's ability to provide comprehensive services.</p> <p>Awareness Issues: Veterans and their families may not be fully aware of the services available to them during transition.</p> <p>Competing Priorities: Other pressing county issues may divert attention and resources away from veteran reintegration efforts.</p>	People	Processes	Technology	<p>San Diego County will collaborate with local military installations, non-profits, and private sector organizations to provide comprehensive and accessible services to transitioning families, including health, mental health, food, housing, and employment</p> <p>Enabling culture/behaviors:</p> <p>Enhanced Communication: Building a culture of enhanced communication between the county, military installations, and support organizations to ensure efficient service delivery and a 'warm hand-off' for transitioning families.</p> <p>Integrated Support Services: Developing a behavior of integrating technology to improve information sharing and service accessibility for transitioning families.</p> <p>Expanded Partnerships: Fostering a culture of collaboration by building stronger relationships with non-profits and private sector organizations to enhance support networks.</p> <p>Policy-Driven Support: Creating a behavior of policy development that prioritizes the needs of transitioning military personnel and their families.</p> <p>Community-Centric Engagement: Encouraging a culture of community engagement where organizations actively work to bridge gaps between military service and civilian life.</p>	<p>Develop a Centralized Communication Platform: To address communication gaps, establish a centralized digital platform for information sharing between the county, military installations, and support organizations.</p> <p>Increase Funding and Staffing: To overcome resource limitations, seek additional funding and hire more staff dedicated to veteran services.</p> <p>Enhance Service Awareness Campaigns: To mitigate awareness issues, launch targeted campaigns to inform veterans and their families about available services.</p> <p>Strengthen Non-Profit and Private Sector Partnerships: To take advantage of partnership expansion opportunities, build stronger collaborations with non-profits and private sector organizations.</p> <p>Implement Veteran-Centric Policies: To capitalize on policy development opportunities, create and advocate for policies that prioritize the needs of transitioning military personnel and their families.</p>

APPENDIX D: VETERAN AND MILITARY DEMOGRAPHICS

Military and Veteran Demographic Overview of San Diego County

1. Population Size and Composition

- **Military and Veteran Population:**

San Diego County is home to one of the largest active-duty military populations in the U.S., with over **110,000 active-duty military personnel** stationed in the area. The Veteran population is significant as well, with an estimated **240,000 Veterans** residing in the county.

2. Ethnicity and Diversity

- **Ethnic Composition:**

The military and Veteran populations in San Diego County are highly diverse:

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 50-55%
- **Hispanic/Latino:** 25-30%
- **African American:** 10-12%
- **Asian/Pacific Islander:** 5-7%
- **Other/Mixed Ethnicities:** 3-5%

3. Gender Distribution

- **Active Duty Personnel:**

Approximately **85% male** and **15% female** among active-duty military members.

- **Veteran Population:**

The Veteran population also shows a strong male majority, but the number of female Veterans is steadily increasing. Women make up approximately **10-12%** of the Veteran demographic.

4. Family Size and Structure

- **Military Families:**

Active-duty service members in San Diego typically have an average household size of **3-4 persons**, often including spouses and children. Nearly 70% of active-duty personnel are married, and **50%** have children.

- **Veteran Families:**

Veteran households have a slightly lower family size on average, with many Veterans living with spouses and adult children.

5. Age Groups

- **Active Duty Age Distribution:**

- **18-24 years:** 35%
- **25-34 years:** 40%
- **35-44 years:** 20%
- **45+ years:** 5%

- **Veteran Age Distribution:**

- **Under 30 years:** 10%
- **30-49 years:** 35%
- **50-64 years:** 30%
- **65+ years:** 25%

6. **Homelessness and Housing Challenges**

- **Homeless Veterans:**

San Diego County has one of the largest homeless Veteran populations in the country. An estimated **1,500 to 2,000** Veterans experience homelessness annually in the county, constituting **10-15%** of the overall homeless population.

- **Housing Costs:**

The high cost of living and housing shortages in San Diego County exacerbate these challenges for both active-duty families and Veterans.

7. **Mental Health and Well-being**

- **Mental Health Challenges:**

Many Veterans and active-duty personnel face mental health challenges, including **PTSD, anxiety, and depression**. An estimated **20-25%** of Veterans have been diagnosed with PTSD. For active-duty service members, the number is around **15%**, with additional reports of anxiety and depression being prevalent.

- **Suicide Rates:**

Veteran suicide rates in San Diego County reflect national trends, with **17-20 Veteran suicides per day** in the U.S. reported. Local efforts focus on reducing this alarming figure.

8. **Employment and Economic Participation**

- **Employment Status:**

Unemployment rates for Veterans in San Diego County are generally **lower than the national average**, around **3-5%**. However, transitioning military personnel can face barriers to employment, such as skills mismatch and the need for certification equivalency.

- **Veteran-owned Businesses:**

San Diego is home to over **35,000 Veteran-owned businesses**, contributing significantly to the local economy.

- **Military Spouse Employment:**

Military spouse unemployment rates remain high, estimated at **20-25%**, largely due to frequent relocations and lack of employment opportunities that match their skills.

9. **Financial Well-being**

- **Income Levels:**

Active-duty military personnel in San Diego typically earn salaries according to their rank, ranging from **\$35,000 to over \$100,000** annually. Many Veterans, particularly

those with disabilities, rely on VA benefits, with median Veteran household incomes estimated around **\$70,000**.

- **Poverty Rates:**
Despite generally higher income levels, a small but significant portion of Veterans live in poverty, especially those who are unemployed or homeless. Poverty rates for Veterans in San Diego hover around **7-8%**.

10. Physical Health and Disability

- **Disability Rates:**
Approximately **25-30%** of San Diego Veterans have a service-related disability, often receiving VA compensation for conditions such as **mobility issues, chronic pain, and hearing loss**.
- **Access to Care:**
Veterans in San Diego have access to comprehensive healthcare services through the **VA San Diego Healthcare System**, which includes hospitals, clinics, and specialized care facilities.

11. Size of Local Military and Bases

- **Military Bases:**
San Diego County hosts several major military installations, including:
 - **Naval Base San Diego** - Home to the Pacific Fleet's largest naval base.
 - **Marine Corps Air Station Miramar** - Home to the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.
 - **Camp Pendleton** - The largest Marine Corps base on the West Coast
 - **Naval Base Coronado** - Home to Naval Air Station North Island, Naval Amphibious Base Coronado

Together, these bases host 110,000+ active-duty personnel and support tens of thousands of civilian and contractor jobs.

12. Economic Impact

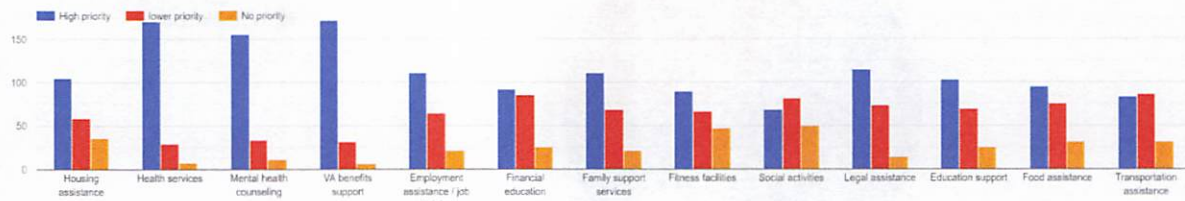
- **Military Economic Contribution:**
The military's direct and indirect economic impact on San Diego County is profound, contributing over **\$50 billion annually** to the local economy. This includes spending on defense contracts, military construction, personnel salaries, and housing.
- **Civilian Workforce:**
An estimated **300,000 civilian jobs** in the region are directly or indirectly connected to military activities, making the military sector a cornerstone of San Diego's economy.

APPENDIX E: SURVEYS AND DATA

Veteran CMVR Survey

Veteran service priorities:

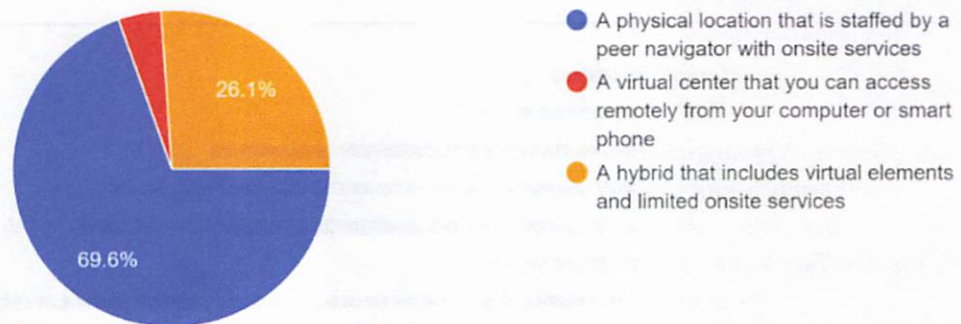
Identify the priority of services you would like to see offered at the veteran center?



Type of Veteran Center Preferred:

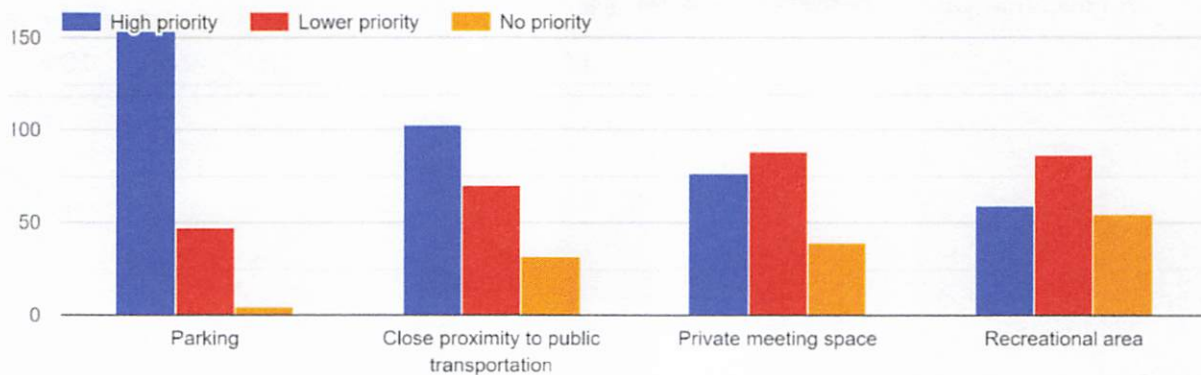
What type of veteran center would you most likely use?

207 responses



Facility Priorities:

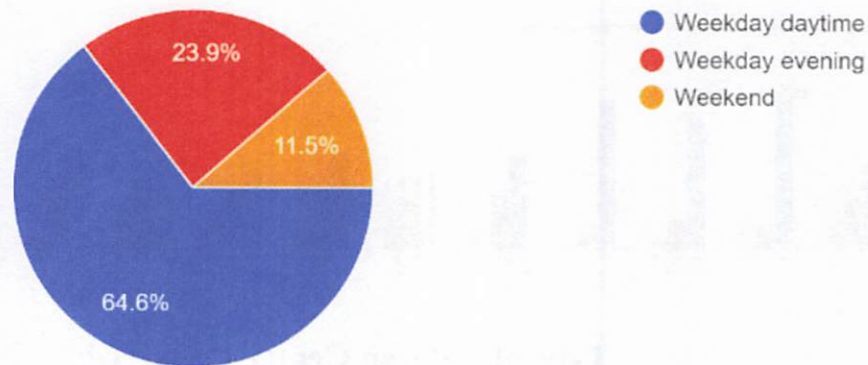
For a brick and mortar veteran center, what is the priority for the facility?



Veteran Center Operating Hours:

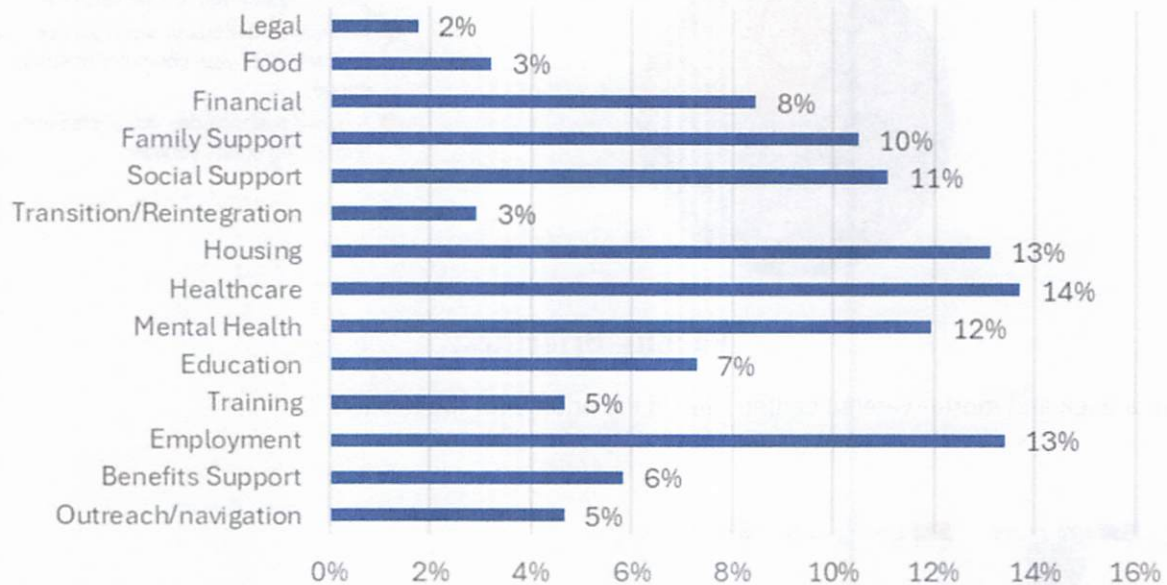
What is the most convenient time for you to visit a veteran center?

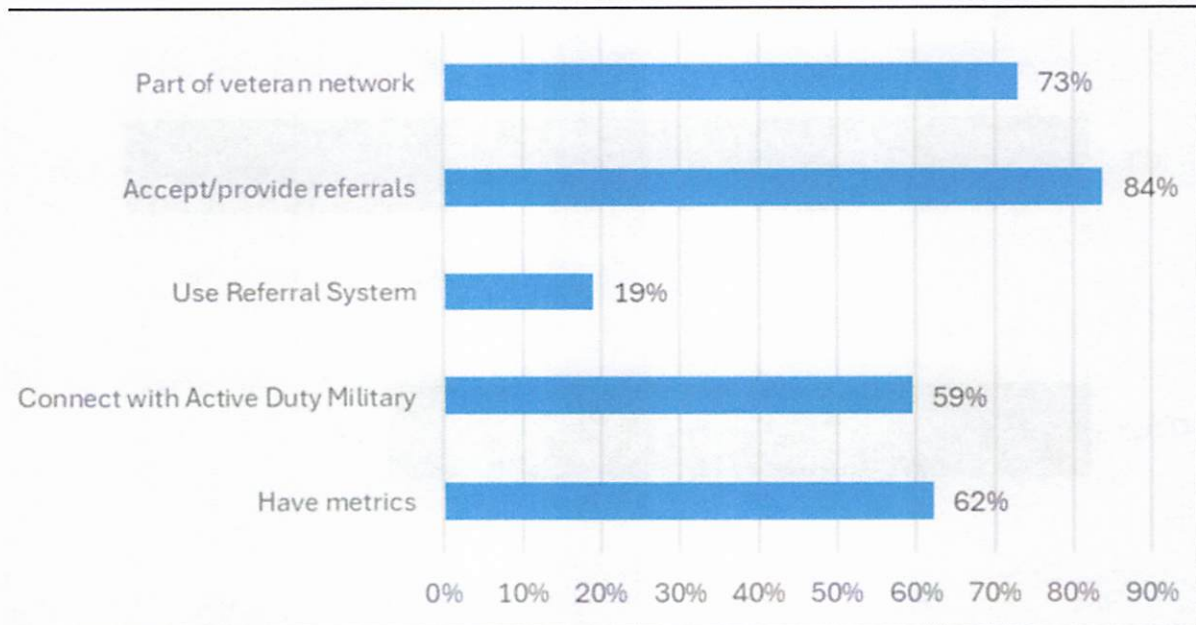
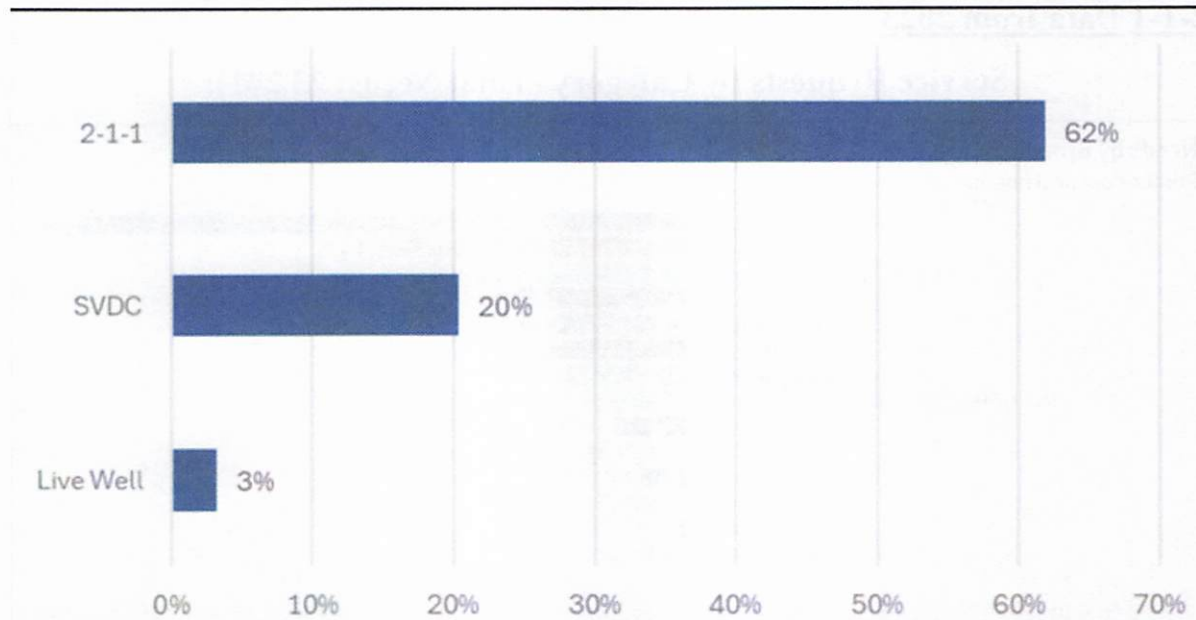
209 responses



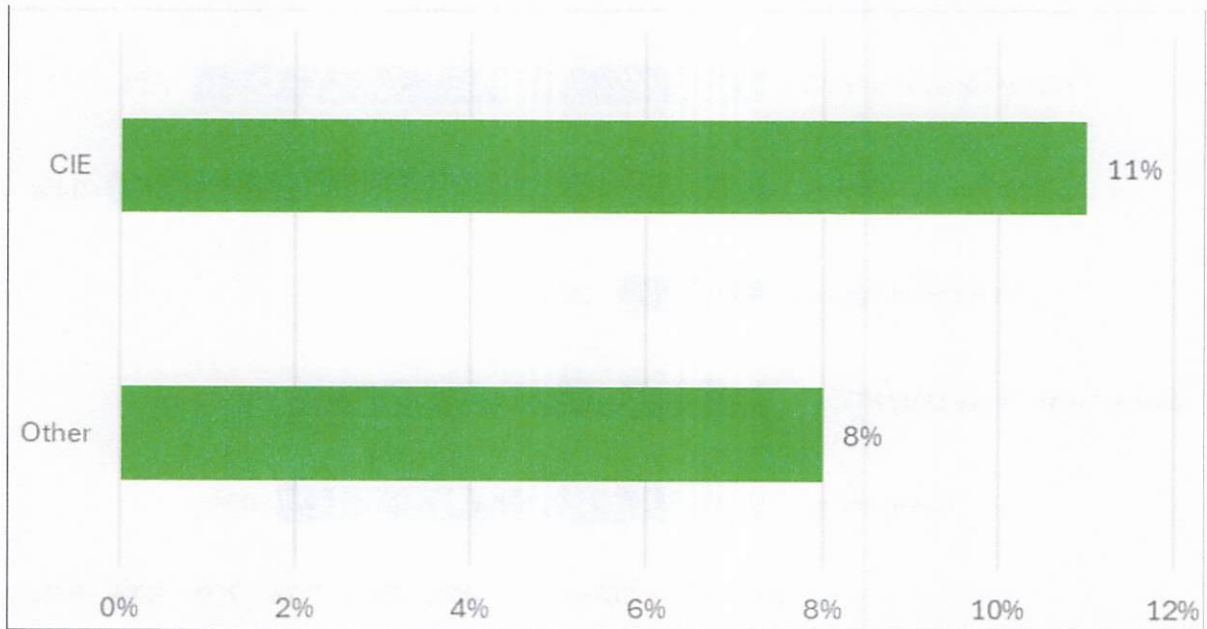
Veteran Service Provider Survey

Veteran Service Providers by Domain:



Veteran Service Network Referrals:**Veteran Service Collaborative Participation:**

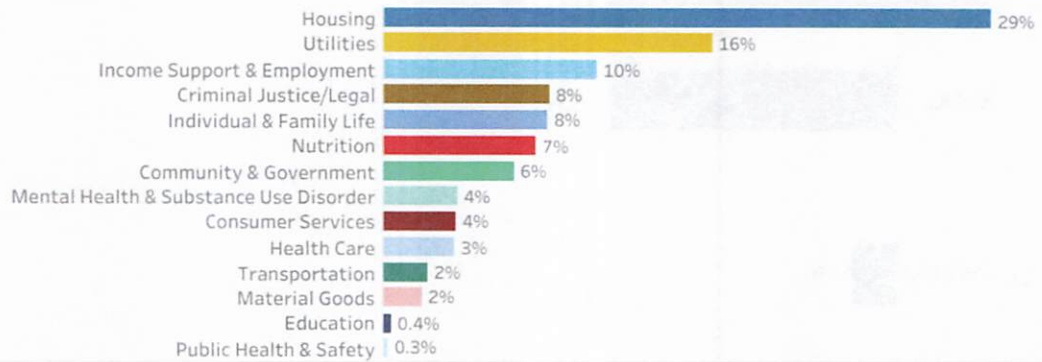
Veteran Service Referral System:



2-1-1 Data from 2023

Service Requests by Category (Total Needs: 23,241):

Needs by Broadest Category
Percent of total needs



Veteran Needs

Questions	Response
Prior to separation how prepared were you for transition to civilian life (low 1-10 high)	Avg 5 (2-7)
Prior to separation, how aware were you of your local community veteran resources and service organizations, and where to go? (low 1-10 high)	Avg 4 (1-7)
How effective was having a sponsor guide you in your preparation? (low 1-5 high)	With Sponsor 5 (High) Reboot Without formal Sponsor 3 (Med)
Rank importance of the following needs (Low – Med – High): 1. Navigating Veteran Services 2. Food 3. Creating new identity 4. Finding a purposeful career 5. Adjusting to civilian life	1. Med – High 2. Low – High 3. Med – High 4. High 5. High

Interview Results from San Diego County Military and Veteran Advisory Council

What are the biggest veteran needs and issues that you see in your district and in San Diego County?

- Many veterans and families in financial crisis
- MVRCs are underutilized
- SDC Veterans Advisory Council not very effective
- With so much emphasis on vet housing, other services not getting enough emphasis
- Lack of county emphasis for employment services - #1 need
- Support for spouse employment
- Jobs often don't pay well enough to live in San Diego County – many veterans leaving state
- Other Than Honorable discharges and women don't feel they have a strong voice in veteran support
- Doing poor job of serving women veterans- especially those that have experienced sexual trauma
- Lack of support for veterans moving out of state
- Military spouse employment
- Financial insecurity
- Food insecurity
- Weak support for Guard and Reserves and families
- Family member education and support - especially military children
- Gap from transition education and support especially for limited duty
- Too few veterans sign up for VA benefits –
- Tremendous pride to serve - reluctant to ask for help

What are the biggest veteran needs and issues that you see in your district and in San Diego County? (Continued)

- English may not be primary language
- Lack of alignment with high number of organizations supporting veterans
- Politics of support of veterans and military issues
- Homeless issues with veterans
- Difficult to navigate VA healthcare for older veterans
- Veterans in East County have to travel long distances to get support
- A lot of veterans that don't understand their benefits coming out of military
- Veterans not sure where to start to make disability claim for VA
- Biggest need is housing - housing costs are very high in San Diego
- Veterans homeless task force can be improved – not fully utilizing existing resources

What Are Recommendations You Have to Improve Support For Local Veterans and Their Families?

- Bigger shared mission with SDVC and SDMFC
- County should incentivize working as one
- One stop website for veteran resources
- Collaborate and not compete
- Need a better way of handing-off to other communities when veterans moving out of San Diego County
- VA and other service providers need to adapt to changing drug policies and laws
- Improve outreach to OTH and women veterans
- Improve remote services for veterans moving to new location
- Increase women representation for veteran boards and advisory councils
- Need more welcoming and open environment for women and OTH
- Establish Veterans Advisory Councils at city level – like Chula Vista

What Are Recommendations You Have to Improve Support For Local Veterans and Their Families?

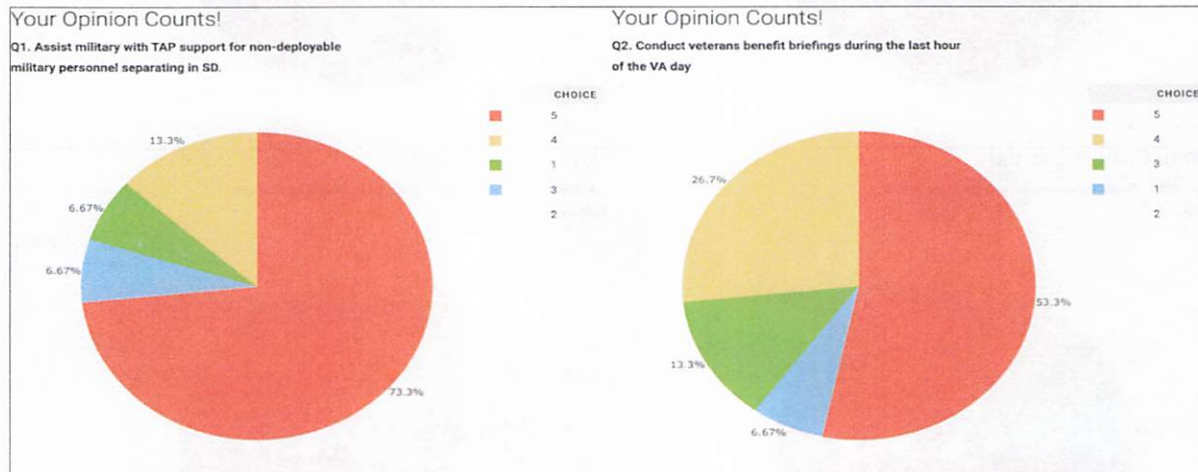
- Use American Legion and VFW for improving outreach and understanding issues with veterans
- Improve education with senior veterans on VA Health Care and assistance on how to navigate through system
- Improve outreach and education on VA benefits
- Have supervisor meet with ombudsmen and Fleet and Family Support for active duty bases in their district
- OMVA needs to improve marketing of veteran services
- Need to improve community presence with active duty military
- Revamp TAP program to promote veteran services including the VA
- Establish veteran centers at or near transitional housing locations – provide employment, education, and other services

List of Veteran Service Providers Interviewed

Service Domain	Organization / POC
Outreach/Navigation	Courage To Call San Diego Veterans Coalition San Diego 2-1-1
Benefits Support	OMVA/MVRCs
Career/Employment	San Diego Workforce Partnership Interfaith
Training/Education	San Diego Workforce Partnership
Mental Health	San Diego VA Vet Center
Housing	Interfaith
Transition/Reintegration	Zero8hundred
Social Support / Networking	Veterans Beer Club
Family Support	San Diego Military Family Collaborative
Financial	Support The Enlisted (STEP)
Food	Interfaith
Legal	Legal Aid Society of San Diego

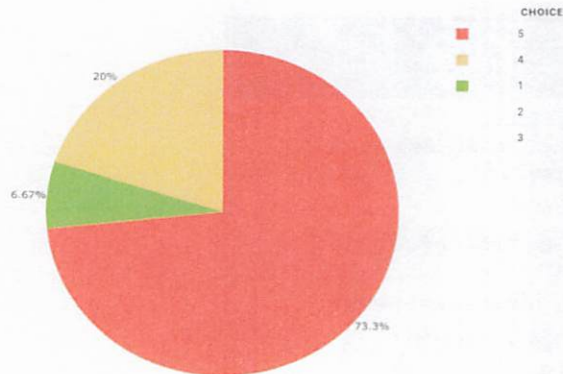
Results From Military Relations Survey

The survey was conducted with military installations to evaluate the most significant value that the community can offer to transitioning service members.



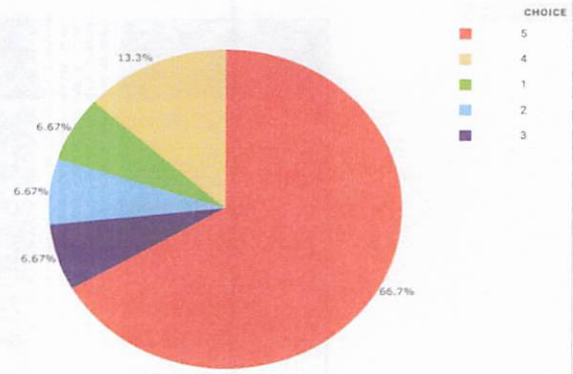
Your Opinion Counts!

Q3. Conduct on/off-base community orientation briefings that go beyond TAP



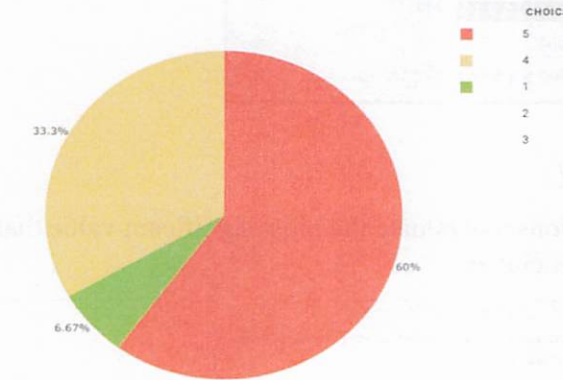
Your Opinion Counts!

Q4. Implement a welcome home type of program for transitioning service members and their families in all...



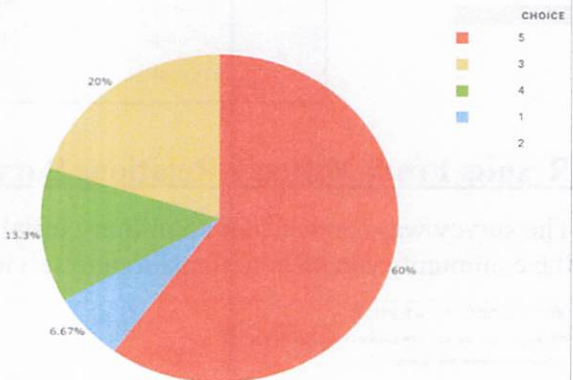
Your Opinion Counts!

Q5. Organize annual (Musters) gatherings with veterans and their families at different Military/Veteran Centers across...



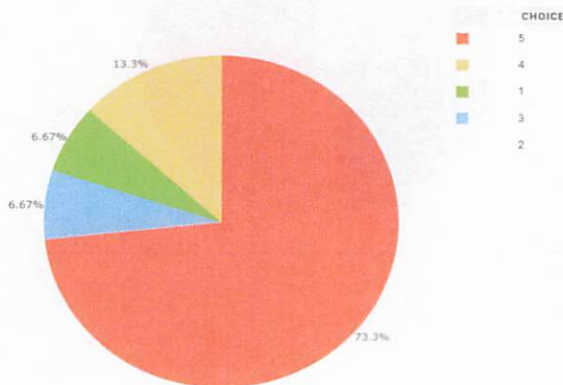
Your Opinion Counts!

Q6. Provide family services for all veterans at Livewell centers in region



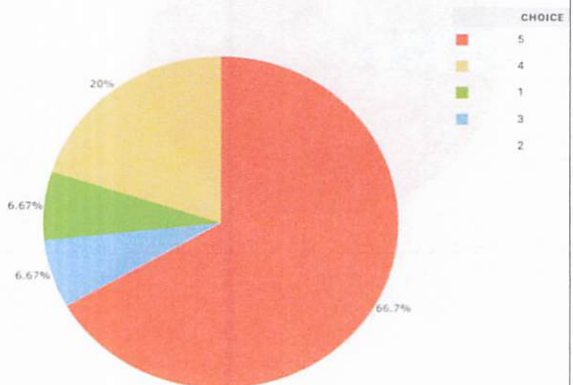
Your Opinion Counts!

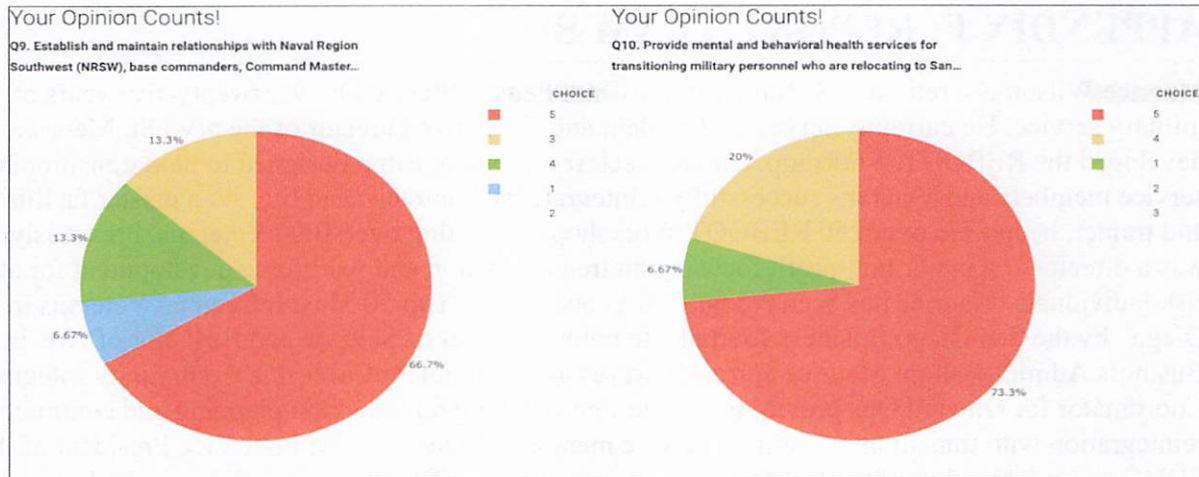
Q7. Offer affordable housing to veterans living in East County



Your Opinion Counts!

Q8. Offer temporary housing/workforce development to at-risk military separating in SD





APPENDIX F: REPORT TEAM BIOS

Maurice Wilson is a retired U.S. Navy Master Chief Petty Officer with over twenty-five years of military service. He currently serves as President and Executive Director of the NVTSL. Maurice developed the REBOOT Workshop, a three-week reverse-boot camp designed to help transitioning service members and Veterans successfully reintegrate back into civilian life. As a master facilitator and trainer, he has led over 250 REBOOT Workshops impacting over 3000 Veterans. Previously, he was a director at a major non-profit focusing on transformation and workforce development for at-risk individuals. Maurice has been recognized as one of the “Top 50 Most Influential Veterans in San Diego” by the San Diego Business Journal. He holds a Master of Science and Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration. Maurice currently serves as the Southern California Community Integration Coordinator for Onward Ops providing one-on-one coaching on transition planning and community reintegration with transitioning military service members. Maurice is the First Vice President of the SDVC and is a member of the California Veterans Chamber of Commerce and American Legion.

Lee Whittington is a retired U.S. Air Force field officer with ten years of active-duty service and ten years of reserve service. He currently serves as a certified life coach and career coach for transitioning military and Veterans. As the program manager for the CMVR, he leads the start-up of CMVRs nationwide. Lee retired from the Boeing Company after spending twenty-one years in various management positions, with the last ten years as an executive in program management and systems engineering. He was the executive leader for the Boeing Veterans Affinity Group in Southern California and has hired over fifty Veterans in his organizations. He has been on the Board of Directors for several Veteran support organizations in Southern California including Working Wardrobes. He holds a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering. He has taught college-level classes in manufacturing engineering, project management, and business administration. Lee is a member of the American Legion where he currently volunteers as a Veteran peer navigator at a Veteran resource center in Southern California.

Dr. Richard Nicholson is an organizational psychologist and life coach specializing in assisting Veterans in transitioning from a military culture to a civilian life of purpose and meaning. He has over 30 years of experience with defense contractors in leadership development, executive coaching, high-performance teams, and employee engagement. Rich is a Master Facilitator and trainer, conducting over 500 workshops to improve personal, team, and organizational development. He has been part of a 2-time Malcolm Baldrige-winning application team and a team assessor for the California Baldrige Award. He has over fifteen years of experience designing and implementing strategies to improve military-to-civilian transition and community reintegration including designing course content for the REBOOT Workshop. He holds a Doctor of Psychology in Organizational Consulting, a Master of Science in Applied Organizational Psychology, and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. He has co-authored and published five books and videos, with two specifically addressing military transition. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Prison Ministries of America.

Kalem Riley is a U.S. Navy Veteran and military spouse with over fifteen years of leadership and management experience. She possesses knowledge in project management, administrative systems and Information Technology support. She currently coordinates in-person events, virtual workshops, and training programs for NVTSL. She reviews strategies and programs from the viewpoint of the Veteran experience. Dedicated to positively impacting the community, she is

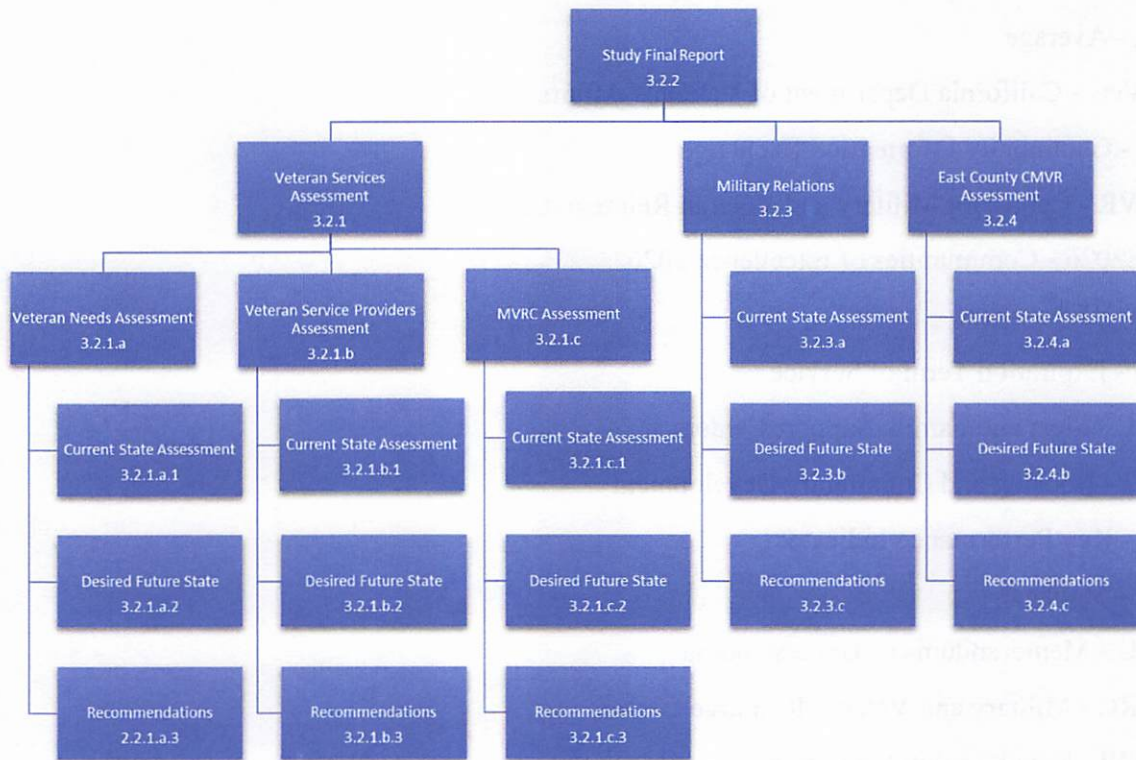
particularly passionate about supporting Veterans and initiatives that facilitate their transition to civilian life.

APPENDIX G: REQUIREMENTS TRACEABILITY MATRIX

Description: The Requirements Traceability Matrix identifies where the final report addresses the various contract requirements in the Statement of Work:

Contract Element	Report Section	Page
3.1 Goals		
3.1.1 Feasibility of CMVR approach & expansion of MVRCS	Military and Veterans Resource Centers	15
3.1.2 Implementation Plan for East County CMVR	Appendix A: Improvement Plans	62
3.2 Objectives		
3.2.1 Veteran Service Assessment	Military and Veteran Resource Centers	15
	Veteran Needs	20
	Veteran Service Providers	26
3.2.2 Comprehensive Written Report	Complete Report	3
3.2.3 Partnerships with Military Leadership	Military Relations and Partnerships	35
3.2.4 East County Veterans Center	East County MVRC/CMVR	39
4.0 Target Population and Geographical Area		
4.1 Target Population	Appendix D: Veteran and Military Demographics	78
4.2 Geographical/Regional Service Area	Overview	3
5.0 Data Collection and Reporting Requirements		
5.1 Veteran demographics and needs	Appendix D: Veteran and Military Demographics	78
5.2 MVRC and CMVR Comparison	Military and Veterans Resource Centers	15
5.3 Surveys of military and veterans	Appendix E: Surveys and Data	81
5.4 Recommendations for streamlining and services at MVRCS and East County Veterans Center	Final Recommendations	47
5.5 Improve Services, Seek Funding, Improve Awareness	Final Recommendations	47
5.6 Engagement of Stakeholders for East County Veterans Center	East County MVRC/CMVR	39

APPENDIX H: WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE



APPENDIX I: ACRONYMS LIST

AI - Artificial Intelligence

Avg - Average

CalVets - California Department of Veterans Affairs

CIE - Community Information Exchange

CMVR - Center for Military and Veteran Reintegration

COE2026 - Communities of Excellence 2026

Dept - Department

ETS - Expiration Term of Service

FFSC - Fleet and Family Support Centers

HCD - Housing and Community Development

KPI - Key Performance Indicator

Mgr - Manager

MOU - Memorandums of Understanding

MVRC - Military and Veteran Resource Centers

NRSW - Naval Region Southwest

NVTSI - National Veterans Transition Services, Inc.

OMVA - Office of Military and Veteran Affairs

OTH - Other Than Honorable (typically refers to military discharge status)

PICK - Possible, Implement, Challenge, and Kill

PTSD - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Q&A - Questions and Answers

QMS - Quality Management System

RFP - Request for proposal

RV - Recreational Vehicle

RWB - Red White and Blue

SD - San Diego

SDC - San Diego County

SDMAC - San Diego Military Advisory Council

SDMFC - San Diego Military Family Collaborative
SDOH - Social determinants of health
SDVC - San Diego Veterans Coalition
STEP - Support the Enlisted Project
SW - Southwest
SWOT - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TAP - Transition Assistance Program
TSM - Transition Service Member
UI - User Interface
USC - University of Southern California
UX - User Experience
VA - U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
VCAT - Veteran Community Action Team
VetCTAP - Veteran Career Transition Assistance Program
VFW - Veterans of Foreign Wars
VSO - Veteran Service Organization
VSR - Veteran Service Representative



RICARDO BASURTO-DAVILA
CHIEF EVALUATION OFFICER

OFFICE OF EVALUATION, PERFORMANCE, AND ANALYTICS
1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 452, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2422

August 22, 2025

TO: Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, Chair
Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe, Vice Chair
Supervisor Paloma Aguirre, Chair Pro Tem
Supervisor Joel Anderson
Supervisor Jim Desmond

FROM: Ricardo Basurto-Dávila, PhD, MSc, Chief Evaluation Officer
Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics

RE: ANNUAL STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN

On May 18, 2021 (16) the San Diego County Board of Supervisors approved recommendations on *Launching a Comprehensive Approach to Evidence-Based Policy Making and Establishing an Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics* (OEPA). This action instructed OEPA to develop the County of San Diego's (County) Annual Strategic Research Plan (ASRP), which should: (1) identify the most important research and policy questions, key service areas, and program models on which to focus evaluation efforts; and (2) be incorporated into the County's annual strategic planning process. OEPA will update the ASRP annually.

The first ASRP was published in July 2023 and was designed to guide research and evaluation efforts across the County and to align them with the five Strategic Initiatives: Sustainability, Equity, Empower, Community, and Justice. This alignment ensures that existing analytic resources—and any new capacity built—are used to support the County's priorities. The initial ASRP included a Learning Agenda for the County with 33 questions that, when answered, would help the County become more effective and efficient. It also identified six Learning Activities, research and evaluation projects that would be the starting point to address Learning Agenda questions.

The attached document provides OEPA's latest update to the ASRP, shaped through extensive stakeholder engagement, during which OEPA gathered input from a majority of County departments, the cross-departmental Strategic Advisory, Guidance and Evaluation team, and members of the public. The Learning Agenda was refined based on the feedback received, streamlining it from 33 to 18 questions. This allows the County to focus its efforts and resources on building a strong base of evidence to inform decisions and drive impact.

Learning Agenda and Learning Activities

OEPA is leading or co-leading efforts to answer nine Learning Agenda questions in the updated ASRP through a portfolio of ten Learning Activities, co-created with departments and external partners. These projects address high-priority topics including homelessness, justice system involvement and public safety, economic development, and government operations and efficiency, among others. The portfolio features rigorous studies of rental subsidies,

unconditional cash transfers, alternatives to incarceration, and procurement strategies to support small businesses—alongside efforts to build community trust, enhance shared decision-making, and strengthen inclusive evaluation practices. Collectively, these efforts aim to generate actionable evidence to improve outcomes, advance equity, and optimize the use of public resources. Among the ten current Learning Activities included in the ASRP are:

- Recovery Action Fund for Tomorrow (RAFT): Studying whether one-time \$4,000 payments to low-income families and seniors improve economic stability and prevent homelessness post-COVID. Preliminary results will be available in December 2025, with final results shared with the Board in early 2026.
- Shallow Rent Subsidy Program (SRSP): Evaluating whether \$500/month subsidies and light-touch support help low-income seniors avoid homelessness and improve housing stability. Preliminary results are anticipated by August 2025, with a final report in late 2027.
- Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI): Evaluating how ATI efforts are designed and implemented, with a focus on equity, outcomes, and potential to reduce recidivism. This is a multi-year, ongoing effort, and first results are anticipated in the summer of 2025.
- Environmental Justice Workgroup (EJW): Studying how a community-led governance model builds trust and promotes equitable decision-making for climate-related efforts. Initial results will be available in June 2026.

It is important to note that the Learning Activities in the ASRP do not reflect all evaluation work being conducted across the County and they do not account for all OEPA's work. Over the next two years, new Learning Activities will be developed to answer the remaining nine Learning Agenda questions. The ASRP and any future updates to the Learning Agenda and Learning Activities will be available on OEPA's website at <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/oepea>.

If you have any questions or would like to be briefed individually, please contact me at (619) 531-5184 or ricardo.basurto@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



RICARDO BASURTO-DÁVILA, PHD MSC
Chief Evaluation Officer

Cc: Ebony N. Shelton, Chief Administrative Officer
Caroline Smith, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Joan Bracci, Chief Financial Officer
Brian Albright, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Finance and General Government
Dahvia Lynch, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Land Use and Environment
Kimberly Giardina, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services
Andrew Strong, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Public Safety
Board of Supervisors Communications Received

Attachment – Annual Strategic Research Plan



Annual Strategic Research Plan 2025

**County of San Diego
Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics**



2025 ASRP Executive Summary

The 2025 Annual Strategic Research Plan (ASRP) serves as a guide to ongoing efforts to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of important County of San Diego programs and services.

Developed by the Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics (OEPA) in partnership with representatives from County departments, this strategic document identifies the highest-priority research questions for the County. The plan does not report on all County research but focuses on the most critical areas aligned with public input and the County's [Strategic Plan](#).

The core of the ASRP is the “Learning Agenda”, which outlines 18 questions to guide the County's evaluation efforts over the next two to five years. These questions are designed to address long-term, high-priority issues. Each question is aligned with one or more of the County's five Strategic Initiatives: Community, Empower, Equity, Justice, and Sustainability. The Learning Agenda includes questions related to the following policy areas: homelessness; physical and mental health; children and families; government operations and efficiency; economic development; climate and environment; community engagement and trust; and justice system and public safety.

The ASRP was developed with input from a majority of County departments, the cross-departmental Strategic Advisory, Guidance and Evaluation (SAGE) team, and the public.

Department subject matter experts provided context for upcoming decisions that could be informed by evidence and identified key programs well suited for evaluation. SAGE identified enterprise-wide criteria for selecting which questions to include in the Learning Agenda. Through a survey, 232 members of the public identified what they thought should be priorities including homelessness, infrastructure, and public health.

“Learning activities” are research and evaluation efforts designed to answer the Learning Agenda questions. Since the last Annual Strategic Research Plan published in 2023, OEPA has led or co-led efforts to answer nine current Learning Agenda questions. The Learning Agenda is designed to address broad, complex questions, that often require multiple evaluation efforts across several years to answer.

The ASRP will be updated annually to ensure they align with evolving priorities and emerging needs. While many questions may remain consistent to address long-term issues, updates will reflect new pressing issues and shifts in the County's strategic goals.

2025 Learning Agenda

Question number indicates primary Strategic Initiative: C – Community, EM – Empower, EQ – Equity, J – Justice, S – Sustainability

	Question	Ongoing Learning Activity
C-1	To what extent is increased investment in prevention services impacting the rate of child abuse and neglect?	Guaranteed Income as a Prevention Strategy in Child Welfare
C-2	How does the County foster trust between residents and County government?	Collaborative Governance Models to Build Trust and Advance Climate Efforts
C-3	To what extent do graduates of the Library High School Program experience changes in their future formal education, career advancement, or earnings?	
C-4	How has the two-year Childcare Blueprint changed the County childcare system?	
EM-1	What County data is most relevant to the community, and to what extent is it available, accessible, and usable?	
EM-2	How can the County make it easier and less time-consuming for residents to learn about and access services?	
EM-3	How can internally facing County departments make processes more efficient so other departments can better utilize their services?	
EQ-1	How can the County most effectively prevent and reduce homelessness?	Rental Subsidies as a Homeless Prevention Tool for Older Adults
EQ-2	What strategies are most effective in reducing social isolation and promoting mental well-being for subgroups experiencing the highest levels of social isolation?	Unconditional Cash Payments on Housing Stability and Well-Being
EQ-3	To what extent do existing equity planning documents and tools enable departments to use an equity lens and utilize the lived experience of the community to design, implement, and improve programs and services?	Shared Housing as a Strategy to Reduce Isolation Among Older Adults
EQ-4	How can the County's procurement process foster equitable economic development?	Equity-Centered Evaluation Framework in County Practice
EQ-5	What outreach methods are most effective for increasing awareness of and participation in Medi-Cal by older adults age 60+?	Equity in County Contracting
J-1	How can the County use alternatives to incarceration approaches to reduce the number of people involved in the justice system?	Systemwide Alternatives to Jail for Low-Level and Behavioral Health Cases
J-2	How do the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, social services, public health, and community organizations reduce gun violence in San Diego County?	Countywide Strategy to Evaluate Gun Violence Reduction Efforts
J-3	What effect do behavioral health crisis interventions have on law enforcement resources and client outcomes?	
S-1	What climate action measures will produce the most return on investment for greenhouse gas reductions, improved air quality, green jobs, and increased equity?	Impact of Climate Action Plan Strategies
S-2	To what extent do alternative strategies for green infrastructure project procurement and implementation impact the speed, quality, and co-benefits delivered (e.g., social, economic, and environmental) in comparison to traditional methods?	
S-3	How can the County most effectively meet regional, state, and federal goals in the Regional Decarbonization Framework?	



I am pleased to introduce the County of San Diego's (County) 2025 Annual Strategic Research Plan, a key tool in our ongoing commitment to building evidence that informs critical decisions that impact the programs and services we provide to our residents. This plan supports the County's mission to "Strengthen our communities with innovative, inclusive, and data-driven services through a skilled and supported workforce."

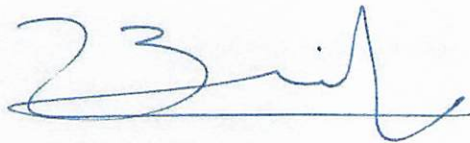
Evaluation and accountability have long been central to how we operate. As outlined in the County's General Management System (GMS), the Evaluation and Accountability component ensures that we track, report, analyze, and adjust our operations to meet our goals effectively. These mechanisms work together to ensure that our programs are not only aligned with our strategic priorities but are also continuously improving.

In 2021, the County deepened its capacity to generate and use evidence by establishing the Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics (OEPA). This office was created to lead countywide efforts in evidence-based policymaking, program evaluation, and metrics. Through OEPA, we are better equipped to support the Board of Supervisors and County leadership with timely, relevant, and rigorous data to guide decision-making.

The Annual Strategic Research Plan identifies high-priority learning questions that, when answered, have the potential to directly inform how we design and deliver services, allocate resources, and invest in our workforce. These questions reflect the needs of our communities, the goals of our departments and business groups, and the vision set forth by our Board of Supervisors.

Thank you for your continued partnership in this important work. By aligning research with our strategic initiatives, we are reinforcing a culture of continuous learning and improvement that will help us better serve every resident of San Diego County.

Sincerely,



Ricardo Basurto Dávila
Chief Evaluation Officer
County of San Diego

Introduction

Is a \$500 monthly rent subsidy effective in preventing homelessness among low-income older adults? What actions, programs and services will most effectively help keep people from going to jail or returning to jail? How can the County streamline operations and make programs and services more efficient?

These are some of the questions that the County of San Diego will address through evaluations guided by the Annual Strategic Research Plan (ASRP).

The ASRP identifies the County's most important research and policy questions to determine which key service areas and program models need evaluation. It is a strategic document that helps organize and guide research and evaluation efforts across departments, though it does not encompass all ongoing research. The ASRP defines the County's highest priority questions that will inform decisions related to policy, services, operations, and allocating resources. The County's Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics (OEPA) will collaborate with departments to develop high-quality, rigorous evaluations that help ensure that key decisions are supported by evidence and are aligned with the public's needs.

Community engagement is at the center of the County's [General Management System](#). We believe that residents should be informed and consulted on research that impacts them. OEPA will provide ongoing opportunities for the public to learn about the County's evaluations through our website, [Government Delivery email listserv](#), and other County channels. Public survey feedback during ASRP development highlighted interest in broader communication. So, we will explore additional opportunities to share findings via social media, local media, interactive meetings, and County department partner networks

A Learning Agenda for the County

The core of the ASRP is the Learning Agenda, which identifies the questions that will guide the County's evaluation efforts over the next two to five years. Coordinated by OEPA, the majority of County departments and the cross-departmental Strategic Advisory, Guidance, and Evaluation (SAGE) team helped create the Learning Agenda. In addition, 232 residents from 15 incorporated cities and the unincorporated area provided input through a survey on the [Engage San Diego website](#).

The Learning Agenda questions were chosen based on four main factors: alignment with public input, connection to the Board of Supervisors' priorities, how well they help the County use resources efficiently, and how useful they are for informing important decisions. Each question is aligned with one or more of the [County's Strategic Initiatives](#): Community, Empower, Equity, Justice, and Sustainability. By making sure research is aligned with the Strategic Initiatives, we provide practical, evidence-based insights that support innovation and continuous improvement. The Learning Agenda spans diverse issues—from homelessness and climate change to public safety and government efficiency.

The ASRP will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that research efforts remain aligned with evolving priorities and emerging needs. The Learning Agenda is designed to address long-term, high-priority issues. Because of that, Learning Agenda questions may not change from year to year. However, questions might be updated when new, pressing issues arise or when there are shifts in strategic goals.

Focusing on Actionable Insights through Learning Activities

To answer Learning Agenda questions, OEPA and other County departments conduct Learning Activities. These are specific evaluations, projects, or efforts designed to generate evidence and insights that can be used to strengthen programs and services. Since the launch of the first ASRP in 2023, OEPA has collaborated with County departments to conduct such evaluations. These evaluations are used to assess the impact of innovative solutions and to identify ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of

programs and services. They are also used to assess important issues. For example, they evaluate strategies to reduce homelessness. They look for ways to strengthen child welfare support. They determine how to expand alternatives to incarceration. And they study the effectiveness of environmental justice initiatives and the [County's Climate Action Plan](#).

Through rigorous but practical evaluation methods—such as randomized controlled trials, process evaluations, and the development of best practices—we aim to identify important findings. They answer questions that include: what works; who does it work for; and under what conditions? At the same time, these methods highlight opportunities for improvement. The final section of the ASRP outlines current Learning Activities and how we will develop new Learning Activities for unanswered questions.

Anchoring Our Evaluations in Core Values for Effective Decision-Making


The ASRP's Learning Activities are tailored to address the specific needs and regional context of San Diego County, to ensure our research directly applies to and helps residents. They are designed to produce actions that policy and decision makers can take to improve high-priority programs, policies and operations.

Like policymaking, research and evaluation require making value judgements. What questions should be asked? What outcomes should be considered successes? What methods should be regarded as credible? These are just some examples that show that perspective and values matter throughout the evaluation cycle. Recognizing that evaluation can be approached in different, equally valid ways, The County is dedicated to anchoring our work in core values, such as respect for all people, transparency, independence, rigor, relevance and equity.



Learning Agenda Selection Criteria

- Alignment with public input
- Focus on efficient resource allocation
- Consistency with the Board of Supervisors' priorities
- Potential to inform key decisions



As we translate our Learning Agenda questions into Learning Activities, the County is committed to building robust processes and structures that hold us accountable to our core values. This commitment ensures that our evaluations are designed not only to measure progress but also to foster continuous improvement. By doing so, we aim to provide evidence to enhance programs, policies, and services, ultimately ensuring that the County is better equipped to serve its diverse population.

Learning Agenda Overview

The Learning Agenda is comprised of a wide range of questions – 18 in total- that reflect the many roles of County government. Each Learning Agenda question is aligned with one or more Strategic Initiatives and covers one or more topic areas that are of interest to the public and County government. These include homelessness, physical and mental health, children and families, government operations and efficiency, economic development, climate and environment, community engagement and trust, and justice system and public safety. A full list of questions is listed below, and a detailed description and summary table is included in Appendix A.

Nine of the 18 questions have evaluation efforts – called “Learning Activities” – already started. Learning Activities will be developed and implemented for the remaining nine questions over the next 2-5 years. The following section describes the current Learning Activities, what we expect to learn from them, and timelines for when they will be completed.

Learning Agenda Questions by Strategic Initiative and Ongoing Learning Activity

See Appendix A for an extended list that includes topic area.

Learning Agenda Questions Community (C), Empower (EM), and Equity (EQ)		Strategic Initiative					Ongoing Learning Activity
		Community	Empower	Equity	Justice	Sustainability	
C-1	To what extent is increased investment in prevention services impacting the rate of child abuse and neglect?	✓		✓		✓	✓
C-2	How does the County foster trust between residents and County government?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C-3	To what extent do graduates of the Library High School Program experience changes in their future formal education, career advancement, or earnings?	✓	✓	✓		✓	
C-4	How has the two-year Childcare Blueprint changed the County childcare system?	✓		✓		✓	
EM-1	What County data is most relevant to the community, and to what extent is it available, accessible, and usable?	✓	✓				
EM-2	How can the County make it easier and less time consuming for residents to learn about and access services?	✓	✓			✓	
EM-3	How can internally facing County departments make processes more efficient so other departments can better utilize their services?	✓	✓			✓	
EQ-1	How can the County most effectively prevent and reduce homelessness?	✓		✓		✓	✓
EQ-2	What strategies are most effective in reducing social isolation and promoting mental well-being for subgroups experiencing the highest levels of social isolation?	✓		✓			✓
EQ-3	To what extent do existing equity planning documents and tools enable departments to use an equity lens and utilize the lived experience of the community to design, implement, and improve programs and services?	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
EQ-4	How can the County's procurement process foster equitable economic development?		✓	✓		✓	✓
EQ-5	What outreach methods are most effective for increasing awareness of and participation in Medi-Cal by older adults age 60+?	✓		✓			

Learning Agenda Questions (Continued) Justice (J), Sustainability (S)		Strategic Initiative					Ongoing Learning Activity
		Community	Empower	Equity	Justice	Sustainability	
J-1	How can the County use alternatives to incarceration approaches to reduce the number of people involved in the justice system?	✓		✓	✓		✓
J-2	How do the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, social services, public health, and community organizations reduce gun violence in San Diego County?	✓			✓		✓
J-3	What effect do behavioral health crisis interventions have on law enforcement resources and client outcomes?	✓		✓	✓		
S-1	What climate action measures will produce the most return on investment for greenhouse gas reductions, improved air quality, green jobs, and increased equity?	✓		✓		✓	✓
S-2	To what extent do alternative strategies for green infrastructure project procurement and implementation impact the speed, quality, and co-benefits delivered (e.g., social, economic, and environmental) in comparison to traditional methods?	✓	✓	✓		✓	
S-3	How can the County most effectively meet regional, state, and federal goals in the Regional Decarbonization Framework?		✓			✓	

Note: Question numbers are not consistent between iterations of the ASRP. Numbers will change from year to year when the ASRP is updated as questions are added, removed, or modified.

Learning Activities

The Learning Agenda includes 18 questions. Many of these are already being addressed through various Learning Activities—evaluations, projects, and studies designed to generate evidence to inform programs, policies, and resource allocation. Future learning activities will address the remaining questions.

Learning Agenda Questions Under Active Study

Since the last Annual Strategic Research Plan was published, OEPA has led or co-led efforts to answer nine current Learning Agenda questions. Learning Agenda questions are intentionally broad so it may take multiple Learning Activities to answer them. At the same time, the results from Learning Activities might help answer multiple Learning Agenda Questions. Some questions, such as those related to homelessness, are long-term in nature and will require ongoing study over time. This section highlights only those Learning Activities that are being conducted in collaboration with OEPA and does not reflect all evaluation efforts happening across the County. Once available, OEPA will report results and recommendations for action to department and community stakeholders and the Board of Supervisors.

Learning Activities are in progress for the following questions:

C-1

To what extent is increased investment in prevention services impacting the rate of child abuse and neglect?

C-2

How does the County foster trust between residents and County government?

EQ-1

How can the County most effectively prevent and reduce homelessness?

EQ-2

What strategies are most effective in reducing social isolation and promoting mental well-being for subgroups experiencing the highest levels of social isolation?

EQ-3

To what extent do existing equity planning documents and tools enable departments to use an equity lens and utilize the lived experience of the community to design, implement, and improve programs and services?

EQ-4

How can the County's procurement process foster equitable economic development?

J-1

How can the County use alternatives to incarceration approaches to reduce the number of people involved in the justice system?

J-2

How do the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, social services, public health, and community organizations reduce gun violence in San Diego County?

S-1

What climate action measures will produce the most return on investment for greenhouse gas reductions, improved air quality, green jobs, and increased equity?

Timeline

Learning Activity	Funding Status	FY23-24	FY24-25	FY25-26	FY26-27	FY27-28
Guaranteed Income as a Prevention Strategy in Child Welfare (FIEP Evaluation)	Funded	Design	Execution		Reporting	
Collaborative Governance Models to Build Trust and Advance Climate Efforts	Funded		Design	Execution Reporting		
Rental Subsidies as a Homeless Prevention Tool for Older Adults (SRSP Evaluation)	Partial	Design	Execution		Reporting	
Impact of Unconditional Cash Payments on Housing Stability and Well-Being (RAFT Evaluation)	Funded	Design Execution		Reporting		
Shared Housing as a Strategy to Reduce Isolation Among Older Adults	Funded	Design Execution		Reporting		
Equity-Centered Evaluation Framework in County Practice	Funded		Des. Execution	Reporting		
Equity in County Contracting	Funded		Ex. Rep.			
Systemwide Alternatives to Incarceration for Low-Level and Behavioral Health Cases	Partial	Design	Execution	Reporting		
Countywide Strategy to Evaluate Gun Violence Reduction Efforts	TBD		Design		Execution*	Reporting*
Impact of Climate Action Plan Strategies	Seeking Funding		Design		Execution*	Reporting*

Design	Scoping completed, funding secured, analysis plan under development
Execution	Analysis plan complete, data collection and/or analyses underway
Reporting	Analysis completed; reporting and dissemination of results
*	Denotes tentative timelines

Learning Agenda Question C-1:

To what extent is increased investment in prevention services impacting the rate of child abuse and neglect?

Evaluating Guaranteed Income as a Prevention Strategy in Child Welfare

The Family Income for Empowerment Program is a lottery-based, guaranteed income pilot led by the Health and Human Services Agency's (HHSA) Child and Family Well-Being department and implemented with Jewish Family Service of San Diego. The program provides direct cash payments to 452 low-income families who have had prior involvement with the County's child welfare system. The evaluation includes a causal impact study on future child welfare involvement and well-being outcomes, a process evaluation to inform improvements, and a cost analysis to assess fiscal implications for the County.

What we will learn: This study will assess whether guaranteed income reduces recurrence of child abuse or neglect, improves quality of life for participating families, and offers a cost-effective model for prevention.

Deliverables and timeline: A report evaluating program implementation will be available in September 2025. A final impact report will be available in July 2027, with preliminary results in December 2026. We are currently developing a cost-benefit analysis and will follow the other deliverables.



Resident perspective:

The County should research...

"cash aid [provided] to low-income families during COVID. The cash assistance programs seemed to have great results... Giving low-income families cash could help youth and even decrease domestic violence which is wild and yet so helpful."

Resident, Public Engagement Survey

Learning Agenda Question C-2:

How does the County foster trust between residents and County government?

Evaluating Collaborative Governance Models to Build Trust and Advance Climate Efforts

The Environmental Justice Workgroup was launched in 2025 by the Land Use and Environmental Group's (LUEG) Office of Sustainability and Environmental Justice. The group was created to build trust between community members and local government by fostering authentic relationships and shared leadership in addressing climate injustices. The group includes 21 members representing Tribal communities, youth, academics, residents, and community-based organizations from across the region. Through ongoing collaboration, shared learning, and co-developed strategies, the Workgroup aims to create a foundation for more inclusive and equitable environmental decision-making.

What we will learn: This evaluation will explore how well the Environmental Justice Workgroup model fosters trust, supports sustained and meaningful collaboration, and contributes to more equitable outcomes in environmental governance throughout San Diego County. The evidence generated from this Learning Activity will also inform Learning Agenda Question EQ-3 (*To what extent do existing equity planning documents and tools enable departments to use an equity lens and utilize the lived experience of the community to design, implement, and improve programs and services?*).

Deliverables and timeline: The logic model for this program was completed in April 2025. An evaluation framework will be finalized by June 2025, with initial results available in April 2026.

Learning Agenda Question EQ-1:

How can the County most effectively prevent and reduce homelessness?

Evaluating Rental Subsidies as a Homeless Prevention Tool for Older Adults

This study evaluates the causal impact of the Shallow Rental Subsidy Program, a pilot offering \$500 per month rent subsidies and light-touch case management to low-income older adults who struggle to pay rent. Among 1,133 eligible households, 382 were selected through a random lottery to receive the subsidy




Resident perspective:

The County should research...

"potential/creative solutions to homelessness. Most people experiencing homelessness are desperate for temporary or permanent housing options that aren't lifestyle restrictive, and (they are) often are limited in choice to options that are degrading, judgmental, or impractical to their circumstances."

Resident, Public Engagement Survey



for 18 to 30 months. This pilot is being implemented in collaboration with HHSA's Office of Homeless Solutions.

What we will learn: Through this study, we will learn whether this type of intervention reduces homelessness risk and improves housing stability, especially for low-income older adults. Subsidies are set to conclude by June 2026.

Deliverables and Timeline: The reporting will be conducted in two phases. Phase one will analyze the program outcomes after the subsidies end, with results available by December 2026. Phase two will assess the outcomes 12 months after subsidies end, with the final report scheduled for December 2027.

Assessing the Impact of Unconditional Cash Payments on Housing Stability and Well-Being

This evaluation of the Recovery Action Fund for Tomorrow program explores the effects of a one-time \$4,000 cash transfer provided to 2,250 low-income families and seniors in areas hit hardest by COVID-19. In collaboration with HHSA's Self Sufficiency Services, Jewish Family Service of San Diego, and academic researchers, the evaluation focuses on changes in economic security, well-being, and—among high-risk participants—homelessness prevention outcomes.

What we will learn: This study will provide insights into the effectiveness of cash assistance as a tool for homelessness prevention and economic resilience, helping inform future County investments in economic support programs.

Deliverables and timeline: Preliminary results will be available in December 2025, with final results shared with the Board in early 2026.

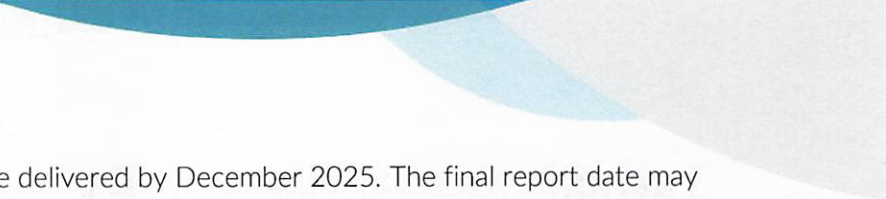
Learning Agenda Question EQ-2:

What strategies are most effective in reducing social isolation and promoting mental well-being for subgroups experiencing the highest levels of social isolation?

Exploring Shared Housing as a Strategy to Reduce Isolation Among Older Adults

The Shared Housing for Older Adults Program is a pilot program designed to match low-income older adults looking for housing with other residents who have available rooms in their homes. Operated by HHSA's Housing and Community Development Services and ElderHelp of San Diego, the program includes assessments, matchmaking, and ongoing support for up to 25 shared housing arrangements. This study will evaluate the program's effectiveness in preventing homelessness, reducing housing costs, and enhancing social connection and a sense of belonging.

What we will learn: The evaluation will help us understand strengths and weaknesses of program design and implementation, and whether, how, and for whom shared housing improves housing stability, supports aging in place, and helps reduce loneliness and social isolation among older adults in the region. If the pilot shows promising results, it could provide evidence to recommend expanding it. If it does not, the evaluation will provide insights for future program development. The evidence generated from this Learning Activity will also inform Learning Agenda Question EQ-1 (*How can the County most effectively prevent and reduce homelessness?*).



Deliverables and timeline: A report will be delivered by December 2025. The final report date may change if the pilot's term is extended.

Learning Agenda Question EQ-3:

To what extent do existing equity planning documents and tools enable departments to use an equity lens and utilize the lived experience of the community to design, implement, and improve programs and services?

Testing an Equity-Centered Evaluation Framework in County Practice

The County is piloting a new evaluation framework to better understand how equity is incorporated into programs and services. This effort is led by the Office of Equity and Racial Justice. The framework will assess how well programs adapt to meet the needs of different groups. It will recommend ways to apply an equity lens to evaluation, such as centering the stories of people impacted by a program or providing opportunities for community members and the County to partner on evaluations. This effort is part of a larger collaborative with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity and is being co-created with 23 other local jurisdictions.

What we will learn: This project will assess whether the County's new approach helps departments apply an "equity lens" to more meaningfully plan and evaluate their work. If successful, the framework will enable stronger integration of community knowledge and power-sharing to make programs effective for the communities they serve.

Deliverables and timeline: The framework will be finalized in October 2025 and implemented thereafter.

Learning Agenda Question EQ-4:

How can the County's procurement process foster equitable economic development?

Tracking Progress Toward Equity in County Contracting

The Equity in Procurement initiative is led by the County's Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs. The initiative aims to give local small businesses greater access to County contracts. OEPA completed a baseline analysis in the fall of 2024 that will be used to measure progress over time. The evaluation supports a broader effort to remove barriers in the competitive bid process and diversify the County's vendor base.

What we will learn: This work will assess whether current efforts are increasing small business participation in County contracting and advancing equitable economic opportunity throughout the region.

Deliverables and timeline: A baseline analysis was completed in fall of 2024 that will be replicated annually.

Learning Agenda Question J-1:

How can the County use alternatives to incarceration approaches to reduce the number of people involved in the justice system?

Assessing Systemwide Alternatives to Incarceration for Low-Level Offenders and Behavioral Health Cases

The Alternatives to Incarceration initiative is led by the Public Safety Group (PSG). It seeks to keep people who do not pose a public safety threat from going to or returning to jail. The initiative does this by expanding the use of community-based services and transitional supports for people reentering communities after being in jail. The evaluation focuses on how the collaborative initiative is designed and implemented. It assesses utilization and effectiveness of services across different groups of people, with special attention equity in service delivery.

What we will learn: This Learning Activity will help determine whether Alternatives to Incarceration efforts are appropriately designed, equitably implemented, and if they are effective in addressing the needs of the focus population and reducing recidivism rates. The study will also lay the groundwork for future impact studies.



Resident perspective:

The County should research...
“how to reduce the negative impacts of imprisonment on individuals by providing opportunities for rehabilitation, addressing underlying issues like addiction or mental health, and keeping people connected to their support systems while still holding them accountable for their actions”

Resident, Public Engagement Survey

Deliverables and timeline: A Measurement and Evaluation Framework was presented to the Board of Supervisors on March 12, 2024. Additional key deliverables include: a Program Theory and Design Report in August 2025; Performance Metrics with initiative-wide indicators and an interactive storytelling dashboard by December 2025; and two final reports in FY 2026–2027. Those reports will be a Process Evaluation Report and an Equity Evaluation Report. A future impact evaluation phase would examine how well the initiative’s programs meet their goals, with a focus on client outcomes and overall effectiveness. Planning for this is ongoing.

Learning Agenda Question J-2:

How do the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, social services, public health, and community organizations reduce gun violence in San Diego County?

Building a Countywide Strategy to Evaluate Gun Violence Reduction Efforts

Following a comprehensive 2024 needs assessment led by Health Assessment and Research for Communities, the County is launching a 17-item, “Gun Violence Reduction implementation plan,”

coordinated by PSG. OEPA and PSG will work together to conduct performance measurement and evaluation to track and assess the performance and impact of the implementation plan to support continuous learning.

What we will learn: This effort will clarify two important items. First, which strategies are most effective in reducing gun violence. And second, how a collaborative infrastructure can support successful, sustained, data-informed action.

Deliverables and timeline: OEPA completed a literature review of hospital-based interventions—such as case-management, mental health, educational support and job training—in May 2025. Program theory workshops were conducted in summer of 2025. The measurement and evaluation framework will be completed June 2026. That framework will include a dashboard for annual reporting efforts.

Learning Agenda Question S-1:

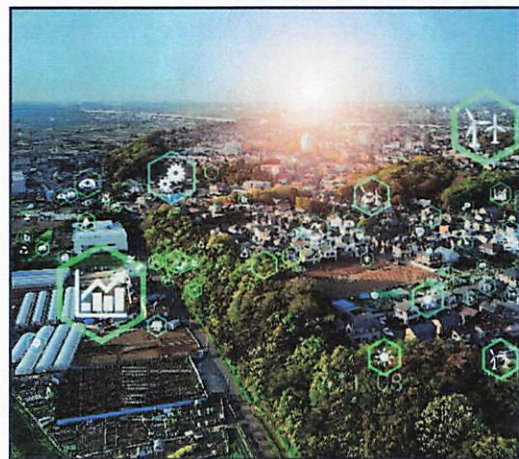
What climate action measures will produce the most return on investment for greenhouse gas reductions, improved air quality, green jobs, and increased equity?

Testing the Impact of Climate Action Plan Strategies through a Randomized Evaluation

OEPA is partnering with the County of San Diego's Planning and Development Services, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, and the University of California San Diego to design and implement randomized experiments to evaluate one or more strategies in the County's Climate Action Plan.

What we will learn: Using a rigorous randomized evaluation design, we will be able to better understand the causal relationship between certain Climate Action Plan efforts, such as installation of electric vehicle charging stations, on greenhouse gas reduction, air quality improvement, green job creation, and equity advancement.

Deliverables and timeline: An evaluation plan will be developed before the start of the program in 2026. The final report timeline will be developed in collaboration with program and research partners.



Resident perspective:

The County should research...

"how to implement sustainability and actions that address the climate crisis throughout County initiatives and processes. The impacts of climate change effect the ability for every County department to meet their mission and goals."

Resident, Public Engagement Survey

Future Learning Priorities

The County's work is ever-changing. Programs evolve, community needs shift, and new opportunities for learning emerge. To keep pace with this change, we have identified a set of nine additional high-priority Learning Agenda questions that have not yet been answered that will guide future research and evaluation efforts. These questions emerged through extensive input from County departments, the public and other stakeholders.

Each question was selected because it:

- Aligns with public input (See Appendix C).
- Supports efficient resource allocation.
- Reflects Board of Supervisors' priorities.
- Has strong potential to give decision-makers the data, information, and analysis they need to improve County services and programs.

These questions reflect the County's commitment to building an evidence-based decision-making culture and answering important questions that will enable us to provide more effective and efficient programs and services to residents.

Learning Activities will be developed for the following questions:

C-3	To what extent do graduates of the Library High School Program experience positive changes in their future formal education, career advancement, or earnings?
C-4	How has the two-year Childcare Blueprint changed the County childcare system?
EM-1	What County data is most relevant to the community, and to what extent is it available, accessible, and usable?
EM-2	How can the County make it easier and faster for residents to learn about and access services?
EM-3	How can internally facing County departments make processes more efficient so other departments can better use their services?
EQ-5	What outreach methods are most effective for increasing awareness of and participation in Medi-Cal by older adults age 60+?
J-3	What effect do behavioral health crisis interventions have on law enforcement resources and client outcomes?
S-2	To what extent do alternative strategies for green infrastructure project procurement and implementation impact the speed, quality, and co-benefits delivered (e.g., social, economic, and environmental) in comparison to traditional methods?
S-3	How can the County most effectively meet regional, state, and federal goals in the Regional Decarbonization Framework?



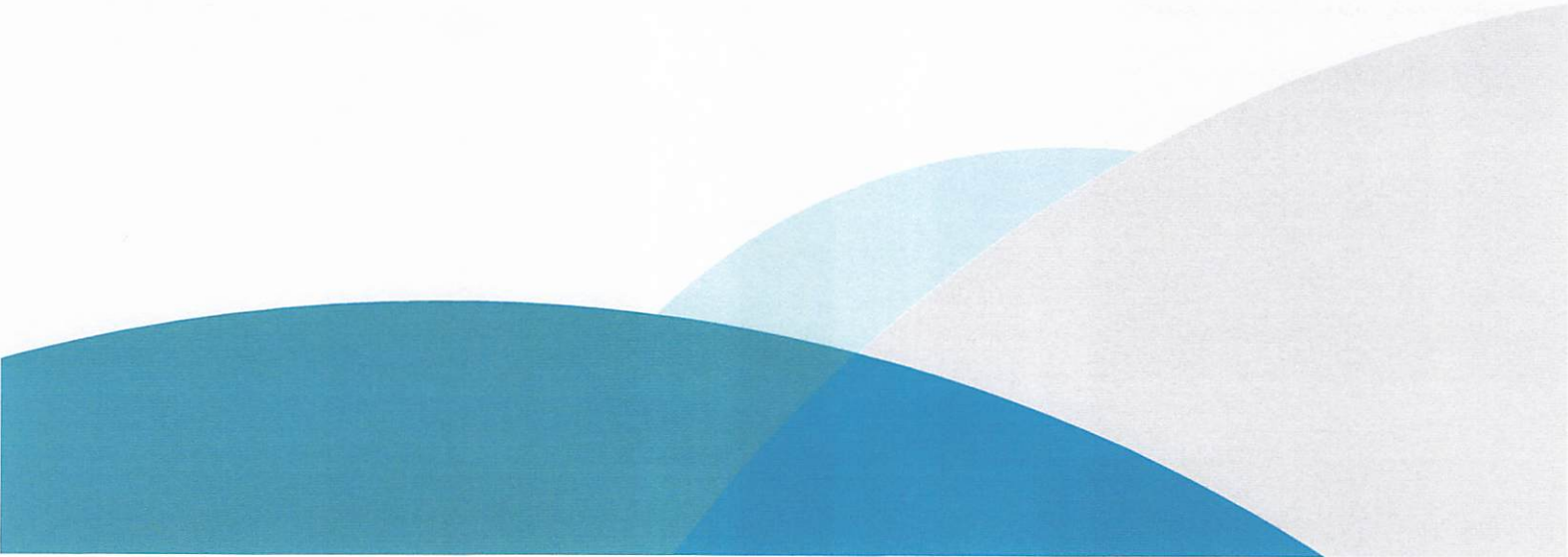
How Future Learning Activities Will Be Developed

OEPA, in collaboration with County departments, will take an iterative and responsive approach to developing new Learning Activities. Questions will be prioritized and scoped based on several factors. Those include: department readiness and capacity; policy and operational priorities; program maturity; direction from the Board of Supervisors or County Chief Administrative Officer; resource availability; and public demand.

To make it easier for the County to answer these important questions and to build our organizations' capacity for evaluation, OEPA will:

- Co-design projects with departments, which will encourage them to lead or support the implementation of Learning Activities.
- Distribute projects based on complexity, timing, and resource availability.
- Build evaluation models that departments can easily duplicate, adapt and use on their own.
- Establish opportunities for collaboration with external researchers and universities that want to do work that has direct impacts on local government.

In line with its mandate from the County Board of Supervisors, OEPA is working towards embedding evaluation into the very core of County operations, transforming it from a periodic activity into a core practice. This shift will support a culture of learning, accountability, and data-informed decision-making into everyday work.



Appendix A: 2025 Learning Agenda

		Topic*							Strategic Initiative*					Ongoing Learning Activity	
		Homelessness Physical and Mental Health		Children and Families	Government Operations and Efficiency	Economic Development	Climate and Environment	Community Engagement & Trust	Justice System & Public Safety	Community	Empower	Equity	Justice		Sustainability
C-1	To what extent is increased investment in prevention services impacting the rate of child abuse and neglect?	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓			✓		✓
C-2	How does the County foster trust between residents and County government?				✓				✓				✓	✓	✓
C-3	To what extent do graduates of the Library High School Program experience changes in their future formal education, career advancement, or earnings?					✓			✓				✓		
C-4	How has the two-year Childcare Blueprint changed the County childcare system?			✓	✓	✓			✓				✓		✓
EM-1	What County data is most relevant to the community, and to what extent is it available, accessible, and usable?				✓				✓		✓				
EM-2	How can the County make it easier and less time consuming for residents to learn about and access services?	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓				✓	
EM-3	How can internally-facing County departments make processes more efficient so other departments can better utilize their services?				✓					✓	✓			✓	
EQ-1	How can the County most effectively prevent and reduce homelessness?	✓	✓			✓				✓		✓		✓	✓
EQ-2	What strategies are most effective in reducing social isolation and promoting mental well-being for subgroups experiencing the highest levels of social isolation?	✓	✓						✓		✓				✓
EQ-3	To what extent do existing equity planning documents and tools enable departments to use an equity lens and utilize the lived experience of the community to design, implement, and improve programs and services?				✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
EQ-4	How can the County's procurement process foster equitable economic development?				✓	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
EQ-5	What outreach methods are most effective for increasing awareness of and participation in Medi-Cal by older adults age 60+?		✓						✓		✓				

*Primary Topic and Strategic Initiative highlighted

Strategic Initiatives:
J – Justice
S – Sustainability

Strategic Initiatives: J – Justice S – Sustainability		Topic*								Strategic Initiative*					Ongoing Learning Activity
		Homelessness Physical and Mental Health	Children and Families	Government Operations and Efficiency	Economic Development	Climate and Environment	Community Engagement & Trust	Justice System & Public Safety	Community	Empower	Equity	Justice	Sustainability		
J-1	How can the County use alternatives to incarceration approaches to reduce the number of people involved in the justice system?	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓			✓	
J-2	How do the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, social services, public health, and community organizations reduce gun violence in San Diego County?		✓					✓	✓			✓		✓	
J-3	What effect do behavioral health crisis interventions have on law enforcement resources and client outcomes?	✓	✓						✓		✓	✓			
S-1	What climate action measures will produce the most return on investment for greenhouse gas reductions, improved air quality, green jobs, and increased equity?		✓			✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	
S-2	To what extent do alternative strategies for green infrastructure project procurement and implementation impact the speed, quality, and co-benefits delivered (e.g., social, economic, and environmental) in comparison to traditional methods?		✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
S-3	How can the County most effectively meet regional, state, and federal goals in the Regional Decarbonization Framework?				✓		✓			✓			✓		

*Primary Topic and Strategic Initiative highlighted

Appendix B: ASRP Development Process

On May 18, 2021, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors voted to launch a comprehensive approach to evidence-based policy making and to establish an Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics (OEPA). This action instructed OEPA to develop an Annual Strategic Research Plan (ASRP) designed to: identify the most important research and policy questions, key service areas, and program models on which to focus evaluation efforts; and be incorporated into the County's annual strategic planning process. The ASRP was first developed in 2023, and this document represents the first update. The ASRP will continue to be updated regularly to identify how the past year's research and evaluation efforts have forwarded the plan—and to ensure the plan and its goals continue to be aligned with key administrative priorities. The 2025 update process had, and accomplished the following goals:

1. Assess how well the current ASRP is meeting County **leadership priorities**.
2. Identify **progress made** on Learning Agenda questions.
3. Update the ASRP to **strengthen alignment** with the [County Strategic Plan](#).
4. Build **shared understanding** of and **buy in** for learning priorities across County groups and other relevant parties.
5. **Prioritize learning agenda questions** that will guide the upcoming years' activities.
6. **Focus the Learning Agenda**, narrowing from 33 questions in 2023 to less than 20 in 2025.

Process

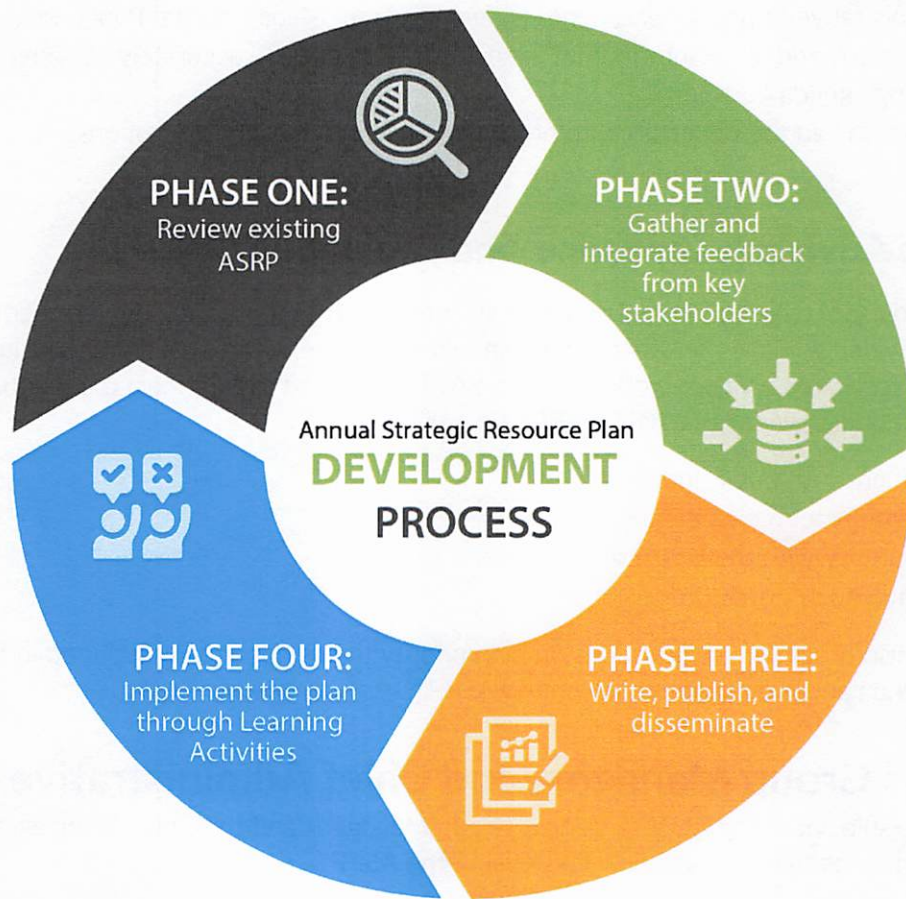
OEPA designed a process to achieve the goals outlined above and to develop and revise the ASRP between July 2024 and May 2025. This cycle will be repeated annually to ensure the ASRP remains timely, collaborative and useful for helping guide County decisions. The process follows a recurring cycle designed to keep the plan relevant and ensure it produces data and evidence that decision-makers can use to take actions to improve services and programs.

Phase One: OEPA reviews the existing Learning Agenda to assess if it continues to be relevant and aligned with the County's Strategic Plan, and that it identifies key stakeholders to involve in the update process.

Phase Two: OEPA engages both County departments and public stakeholders to refine existing learning agenda questions, propose new ones, and prioritize a focused set for the updated ASRP.

Phase Three: Using this input and additional feedback from County leadership, OEPA drafts and publishes the ASRP.

Phase Four: OEPA and other County departments design and carry out Learning Activities—evaluations, projects and studies—designed to answer the prioritized learning Agenda questions.



The remainder of this section describes in more detail how this process was rolled out for this year's update of the ASRP.

County Stakeholder Engagement

The ASRP was developed through an iterative process, led by OEPA and with input from key stakeholders. County leadership; the Strategic Advisory, Guidance and Evaluation (SAGE) team; departments; and the public were engaged. They provided input and feedback on the questions, criteria for inclusion, and overall priorities for evaluation at the County.

Departments

Departments reviewed existing learning agenda questions that aligned with their work. For each question, departments answered the following questions:

1. How would the information from answering this question be used by your department?
2. For this information to be useful, when would you need the answer to the question?
3. Is there a specific program or effort that this information would inform or advance?

4. Who is invested in this question being answered (Board of Supervisors, Chief Administrative Office, Department Leaders, Program Managers, the Public, etc.)
5. Is there any additional information needed for leadership to accurately consider this learning agenda question?

Departments also had the opportunity to propose new learning agenda questions.

Strategic Advisory, Guidance, and Evaluation (SAGE)

SAGE is an advisory team comprised of senior staff from across the County government. Members provided guidance on what criteria should determine which questions to include in the ASRP. OEPA facilitated a virtual workshop with SAGE, which led to four main criteria that were used to select questions for the 2025 ASRP:

1. Alignment with public input.
2. Focus on resource efficiency.
3. Consistency with the Board of Supervisors' priorities.
4. Potential to inform key decisions.

SAGE could also propose new questions on high priority topics not already included in the Learning Agenda and provide feedback on the ASRP.

Business Group Managers and Chief Administrative Office

County leadership, including SAGE, Business Group Managers, and the Chief Administrative Office, provided feedback on and final approval of the ASRP.

Office of Evaluation, Performance and Analytics (OEPA)

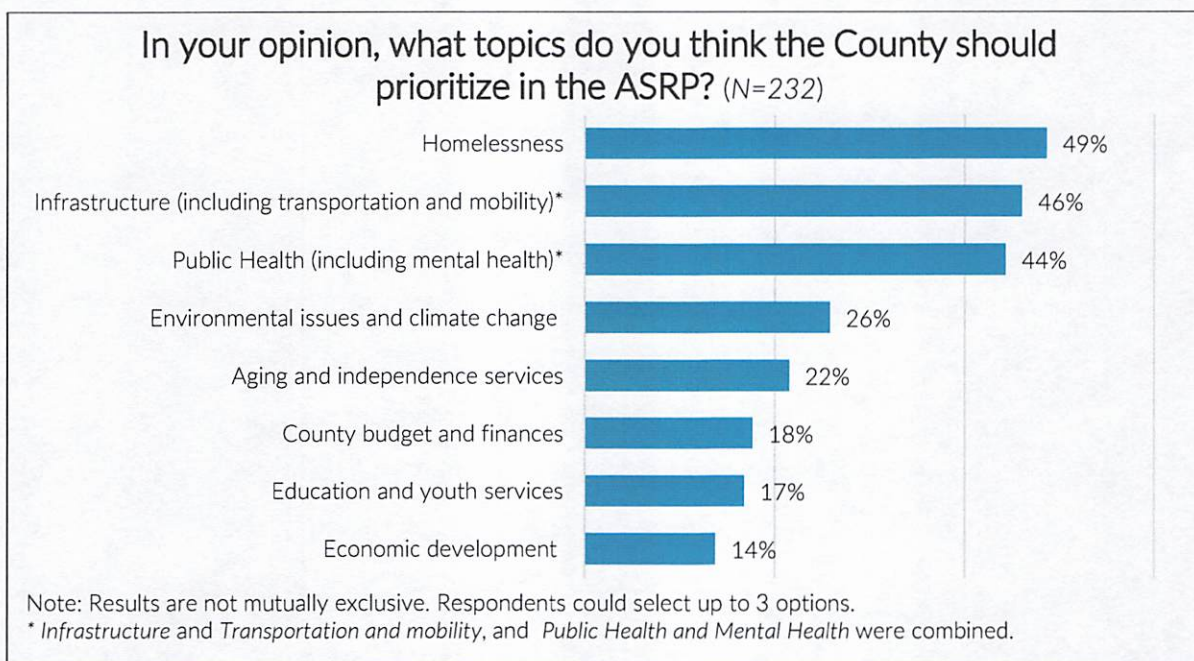
In addition to facilitating the development process, OEPA assessed the technical feasibility of answering the Learning Agenda questions and led the writing of the ASRP.

Appendix C: Public Engagement

Between Jan. 9, 2025 and March 10, 2025, 232 people from 15 of 18 incorporated cities and the unincorporated area responded to the ASRP survey through the [Engage San Diego website](#). The results of this survey informed the update of the ASRP to ensure that the public's highest priorities are represented in the questions that will guide research and evaluation in upcoming years.

The survey was publicized through County social media accounts, the County Library website, listservs, and in person at meetings. Most respondents were residents of the City of San Diego (42%) and the unincorporated area (21%).

People surveyed reported their highest priority policy areas as: **Homelessness** (49%), **Infrastructure** (46%), and **Public Health, including Mental Health** (44%).



In open-ended comments, respondents provided additional research suggestions, such as the following ideas:

- How to improve mental health services, reduce substance abuse, and understand environmental factors that impact health.
- How to ensure that County resources are used efficiently and effectively to reduce unnecessary spending.

When asked how the County should decide what to research, the top reasons people surveyed gave were: **to better understand the community's needs** (65%), **to improve programs and services** (57%), **to support data-driven decision making** (46%), and **to create accountability** (42%).

OEPA will provide opportunities for the public to learn about research being done at the County through our website, [GovDelivery email listserv](#), and other County channels.

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DATE: August 26, 2025

TO: Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, Chair
Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe, Vice Chair
Supervisor Paloma Aguirre, Chair Pro Tem
Supervisor Joel Anderson
Supervisor Jim Desmond

FROM: Andrew Strong
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Public Safety

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ONGOING EMS SYSTEM REDESIGN

Overview

The San Diego County Emergency Medical Services Office (County EMS), a division of San Diego County Fire (County Fire), is the Local Emergency Medical Services Agency (LEMSA) designated by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board), as specified in Board Policy K-12, Emergency Medical System Management, and California Health and Safety Code (HSC) 1797.200. The LEMSAs oversees the region's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system, including credentialing more than 10,000 EMS professionals, supervising the seven Base Station Hospitals that provide real-time medical direction to Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and paramedics responding to 911 calls, and designating six Trauma Center Hospitals, each responsible for specific geographic areas known as Trauma Catchment Areas. These areas determine which trauma center will receive severely injured ambulance patients.

On November 17, 2020 (20), and February 9, 2021 (5), the Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to develop a plan for a comprehensive evaluation of the Base Station Hospital system and Trauma Center Catchment Area Designations. On August 27, 2024 (13), the Board received the consultant's reports. These reports detailed recommendations to improve, modernize, and streamline these critical systems. The Board directed the CAO to coordinate with local stakeholders to develop and pilot changes to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) delivery system that enhance patient care, safety, coordination, data collection, quality assurance, quality improvements, and overall equity in access to emergency care, based on recommendations from the report. This memorandum serves as the 12-month update as directed by the Board. The *Comprehensive Evaluation of the Base Station Hospital System Final Report* and *Comprehensive Evaluation of Trauma Center Catchment Area Designation Final Report*, can both be found at <https://engage.sandiegocounty.gov/ems>.

Background

Base Station Hospitals:

Base Station Hospitals provide the following three primary functions for the region's EMS delivery system:

- Real-time medical direction to the EMTs and paramedics in the field;
- Routing ambulance crews to the appropriate destination, including in large or multi-patient incidents; and

- Assisting the County EMS Medical Director in quality assurance and quality improvement activities that improve the overall EMS system.

The seven hospitals currently designated as Base Station Hospitals are Tri-City Medical Center, Palomar Medical Center, Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla, Scripps Mercy Hospital Hillcrest, Sharp Memorial Hospital, UCSD Medical Center Hillcrest, and Sharp Grossmont Hospital. The Mobile Intensive Care Nurses at these Base Station Hospitals field radio calls from paramedics for nearly every 9-1-1 ambulance transport, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – and collectively answer more than 250,000 calls annually. This system was established over 40 years ago and has not evolved significantly despite technological advancements, increasing population, and medical care improvements on fire engines and ambulances. As a result, the Base Station Hospital system now faces operational inefficiencies including limiting the EMS system's ability to accommodate future growth, mitigating the ability to adapt to evolving emergency response demands, and preventing the full optimization of the EMS delivery system that has occurred in other jurisdictions in the United States.

Trauma Center Hospitals and Trauma Catchment Areas:

San Diego County has a robust system of emergency, specialty, and trauma medical care through its cooperating hospitals, where ambulances transfer critically injured patients to designated trauma centers based on geographic zones.

The six facilities designated as trauma centers in San Diego County are:

- Palomar Medical Center-Escondido
- Rady Children's Hospital (The designated Countywide Pediatric Trauma Center)
- Scripps Memorial Hospital-La Jolla
- Scripps Mercy Hospital-Hillcrest
- Sharp Memorial Hospital
- UCSD Medical Center-Hillcrest

Rady Children's Hospital receives all severe pediatric injuries, regardless of where the incident occurs. This highly effective trauma system benefits from clearly defined geographic boundaries designating which trauma center will receive a severely injured ambulance patient; these are known as Trauma Catchment Areas. Factors used to determine the Trauma Catchment Area boundaries include population, projected population trends, ambulance drive time, EMS response time, and other factors, as determined by the County EMS Office. These Catchments also serve to ensure an optimal patient balance for each Trauma Center and were last reviewed in 2006. A full evaluation is necessary to determine if updates to the system are required to reflect population and ambulance workload changes.

Existing Base Station Hospital System and Trauma Catchment Challenges:

The consultant reports identified some of the following challenges to the existing EMS delivery system design listed below, along with actions currently being taken to mitigate them:

- The Base Station Hospital system is strained due to the high volume of paramedic radio calls, along with a shortage of Mobile Intensive Care Nurses. This results in some ambulances arriving at emergency departments without notice, which can add to challenges for the hospitals.
 - Since the release of the consultant's report, the EMS Office has taken steps to reduce the impact of the more than 250,000 annual radio calls, including implementing shorter radio reports and policies that decrease the need for direct voice contact between ambulance personnel and base station hospital nurses.

- Lack of coordination with ambulances in the field complicates patient routing, impairs system load leveling, and worsens existing ambulance offload delays, a problem that worsens during patient surges, pandemics, and disasters. The ability to securely share hospital system information with ambulance personnel is crucial for strengthening the EMS delivery system.
 - County EMS is working with stakeholders to develop a reliable method to ensure critical information is accessible during emergencies.
- Fragmented electronic Patient Care Reporting (ePCR) data collection and reporting have resulted in County EMS not receiving all the data required by the state. This missing data has hindered system improvements in the past.
 - Over the last year, the EMS community has made significant progress in submitting the required data. County EMS estimates that current data submission rates have increased from less than 30% of all 9-1-1 ambulance transports last year, to over 90% as of August 1, 2025. This substantial increase greatly enhances data-driven decision-making, supporting the Board's goal to improve the EMS delivery system.
- Varied responsiveness among agencies to quality assurance and quality improvement plans makes standardization and system improvements challenging.
 - County EMS has developed a pilot process to standardize all EMS quality assurance and quality improvement processes within a new quality management pathway, that is informed by state and national best practices. This will revolutionize how the EMS delivery system can adapt to new medical needs and enhance the quality of care available to all county residents and visitors.
- Changes in traffic patterns may extend some trauma ambulance transports, prompting a review of alternative geographic designations to enhance care and system resilience.
 - This has led to the formation of a stakeholder task force assigned to develop an evidence-based ambulance destination pilot, to ensure trauma hospital and EMS system needs are thoroughly considered – with the primary focus on the immediate care of patients requiring trauma treatment.

Together, these challenges highlight a pressing need for a system redesign that brings highly sophisticated and robust EMS delivery system into the future.

Stakeholder Engagement and Input

County EMS has prioritized stakeholder engagement since the Board first directed a review of the EMS system. Throughout the development of the independent consultant's reports, input was gathered from all EMS system partners - culminating in more than 588 interviews, survey responses, and listening sessions.

Following the Board's acceptance of the consultant's findings, County EMS continues to advance a stakeholder-driven implementation process. A central element of this approach is the collaboration with three core EMS system partners: the Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties, the San Diego County Fire Chiefs' Association, and the Ambulance Association of San Diego County. These groups are key participants in evaluating recommendations, shaping pilot projects, and guiding system redesign efforts.

To support this work, County EMS has established a 14-member EMS Delivery System Redesign Steering Committee composed of clinical and operational experts from across the region. The Steering Committee meets monthly to advise County EMS on strategic system changes, coordinate stakeholder input, and formally recommend EMS policy updates to the EMS Office. These policies, in turn, are subject

to public review before implementation and may be presented to the Board when further direction is needed.

In addition, three working groups have been formed to focus on the following areas:

- Developing and evaluating pilot projects in alignment with consultant recommendations
- Updating quality assurance processes for ambulance transportation providers
- Assessing trauma system catchment areas

County EMS also uses the Engage San Diego County webpage to share updates on EMS redesign efforts, solicit ongoing feedback, and highlight project progress. County EMS remains committed to a transparent, inclusive process that improves patient outcomes while minimizing operational disruptions for EMS system partners.

Assessments and Pilot Tests

Several recommendations in the consultant's reports were based on best practices implemented in different communities across the United States. Before piloting these efforts locally, the EMS Office has been collaborating with stakeholders to assess the feasibility of bringing these recommendations to our region. In early 2025, a Request for Information (RFI) for online medical direction was posted on the County's BuyNet to explore available, alternative services that could replace the labor-intensive and costly Mobile Intensive Crisis Nurse (MICN) staffing model for real-time medical direction. This RFI aimed to inform County EMS and the Steering Committee of organizations that may be able to provide the following services:

- Staffing capacity and knowledge of physician groups to provide board certified EMS physicians capable of providing 24/7 medical direction, to an estimated 10,000-15,000 calls annually
- The ability to provide additional staffing during times of disaster or regional emergencies
- Telecommunications and office space capabilities
- Medical specialties in the field of stroke, cardiology, pediatrics, trauma, and obstetrics

Several responses were received from organizations that are being evaluated by staff and the Steering Committee to determine feasibility. A second RFI, focused on developing a centralized Emergency Medical Command and Control Center (EMCCC), is currently in progress.

As previously mentioned, it is the requirement for all ambulance transporting agencies to notify Base Station Hospitals through radio communication. The consultant recommended that the current EMS system move away from this outdated method and rely on a digital solution to notify hospitals of arrivals. This helps a hospital determine patient priority and allows ambulances to operate more efficiently. The San Marcos Fire Department and Palomar Medical Center Escondido agreed to a pilot project earlier this year. Both agencies relied on the County's Local EMS Information System (LEMSIS) software platform to conduct the project. This test successfully demonstrated that LEMSIS can effectively transmit information to the emergency department well before the ambulance's arrival, allowing hospital personnel to prepare for the patient, and potentially freeing up hospital resources for other critical tasks. This project proved that digital notifications can serve as an effective alternative to traditional radio-based communication, and provided key information to assess the success of further pilot projects.

Not all EMS partners utilize LEMSIS for their primary data reporting and the LEMSIS cannot require partners to use a specific software solution. To further assess technologies that meet all EMS system user needs and may improve hospital pre-arrival notifications beyond LEMSIS, County EMS, with the endorsement of the Steering Committee, is developing tests with Tigerconnect and Pulsara, two purpose-

built digital tools used for EMS-to-hospital communications. These notification platforms provide efficient, one-touch notifications to receiving hospitals via a web-based application. Pilot projects will run concurrently in diverse EMS and hospital settings, where participating EMS agencies and hospitals will primarily switch to app-based notifications. The County will collect both performance data and user feedback to determine the most effective platform for future system-wide implementation.

Anticipated EMS System Enhancements

The work plan of the Steering Committee will continue its focus on the following five critical areas of system enhancements:

1. Ambulance-to-Hospital Notification

- Improving how ambulances relay critical patient information to hospitals through a streamlined, dependable, and technology-driven system. Demonstration projects with collaboratively-established effectiveness metrics are set to launch within 6 months. A competitive process for an optimal solution is a potential, however the need for additional funding or cost offsets is not anticipated to be significant.

2. Streamlining Online Medical Direction

- All paramedics use common protocols from the County EMS medical director. As a part of the redesign, County EMS is examining different consultation methods between doctors and paramedics in order to improve quick access to expert medical oversight during complex cases. To determine the optimal medical consultation resource organization, additional requests for community information may be conducted with the Steering Committee's recommendation, including procurement of specific services. If needed, staff may request additional board direction, including contract authority or appropriations for this service line with an anticipated implementation in 2027.

3. Systemwide Quality Management Redesign

- Development of a modernized, systemwide quality management framework will replace the current fragmented processes. The new system will include retrospective case reviews, proactive evaluation of shared metrics using state and national standards, and local metrics developed with stakeholders. These processes will promote continuous improvement and ensure agency accountability. Initial implementation is anticipated in Spring 2026 and is not expected to require additional approvals. EMS Quality Management hinges on an approach that focuses on establishing two-way data exchanges with hospital systems for seamless transfer of patient outcomes into electronic records. This data initiative may require additional funding sources, and staff may request authority to pursue grants, establish cost recovery mechanisms, or appropriations, if needed.

4. Trauma Catchment Area Optimization

- We have established a task force to provide trauma catchment optimization recommendations, with a particular emphasis on the Northwestern region. This group, made up of community experts, will help County EMS ensure rapid transport of trauma patients while maintaining the County's robust trauma system. This initiative is anticipated to be completed by mid-2026.

5. Planning for an Emergency Medical Command and Control Center (EMCCC)

- Initial planning is progressing for a future Emergency Medical Command and Control Center (EMCCC). This facility would act as a central hub for coordinating efforts, monitoring hospital

statuses in real time, facilitating dynamic EMS resource deployment, and enhancing responses to mass casualty incidents, patient surges, and disasters. Implementing this centralized system would also boost overall resilience and situational awareness throughout the county and reduce overcrowding at individual hospitals during peak times. Implementation of this model would start in 2027, and with further advice from the Steering Committee, may require additional board direction to establish this type of coordination center.

The San Diego County EMS Office, in partnership with the community and key stakeholders, will continue to utilize innovative technologies and best practices to improve the region's hospital system during this redesign process. For questions or more information about County EMS's efforts on the EMS system redesign, please contact Jeff Collins, Director of County Fire, at (619) 339-0283 or by email at jeff.collins@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Strong', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

ANDREW STRONG,
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Public Safety

cc: Ebony N. Shelton, Chief Administrative Officer
Caroline Smith, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Jeff Collins, Director, San Diego County Fire
Jamie Beam, Director, Medical Care Services
Board of Supervisors Communications Received