



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## AGENDA ITEM

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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**DATE:** May 5, 2026

**05**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

### **SUBJECT**

**UPDATE ON COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO BASELINE INTERSECTIONAL GENDER EQUITY ANALYSIS (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

### **OVERVIEW**

On May 10, 2022 (15), the County of San Diego (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted an ordinance based on the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The ordinance directs the County to review how it serves the public, hires and supports staff, and engages with communities and businesses to identify differences in outcomes based on gender and explore ways to address them across the enterprise. The ordinance also focuses on the importance of intersectionality, meaning it recognizes that gender-based outcomes are often connected to race, income, immigration status, disability, age, and other factors.

In response to direction from the ordinance (Ordinance 10791, Section 3.B.1.), the County procured a contractor through a competitive procurement process, HR&A Advisors, Inc. (HR&A), to develop the County of San Diego Baseline Intersectional Gender Analysis Report (Report). The Report provides an analysis of County operational and regional data on intersectionality and includes recommendations to advance gender equity within the County organization and across the region.

Today's recommended action is for the Board to receive the Report in alignment with the CEDAW Ordinance.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

Receive the County of San Diego Baseline Intersectional Gender Equity Analysis Report in alignment with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women Ordinance.

### **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

All individuals are entitled to equal rights, dignity and opportunity. Discrimination against women and other marginalized members of society violates this basic right and leads to negative impacts. However, persistent disparities, particularly across gender and intersecting identities such as race,

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income, and geography, continue to limit access to economic opportunity, health, safety, and overall well-being, especially for women and girls from historically underserved communities. The County of San Diego Baseline Intersectional Gender Analysis Report received today establishes baseline metrics for County operational and regional data and provides a foundation for developing data-informed, intersectional gender equity action plans aimed at improving outcomes, expanding access, and reducing inequities for those most impacted. By receiving and advancing this report, the County strengthens its ability to make informed, accountable decisions that promote equitable outcomes, while recognizing the need for ongoing community engagement, data refinement, and cross-sector collaboration to ensure meaningful and sustained progress for all residents.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Today's requested actions align with the County of San Diego Sustainability Goals of Economy, Environment, and Resiliency. The County of San Diego Baseline Intersectional Gender Analysis Report will help establish baselines that future progress can be measure against, including but not limited to eliminating poverty for women and girls to promote economic sustainability for all; cultivating a natural environment for residents, visitors, and future generations, including women and girls; and ensure the capability to respond and recover to immediate needs for individuals, families, and the region, including women and girls.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with today's recommendation. There may be future fiscal impacts as implementation of the ordinance continues, such as the development of Intersectional Gender Equity Action Plans. If additional resources are required to implement these actions, staff will return to the Board with future recommendations for consideration and approval. At this time, there will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

The local Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ordinance presents a roadmap to end gender-based discrimination and requires that governments take proactive steps to advance women's human rights. Local cities and counties that have adopted similar CEDAW ordinances evaluated their programs and budgets and worked to ensure that both affect men and women equitably. The evidence from these local outcomes indicates that adopting a CEDAW ordinance is an effective way to achieve gender parity, decrease gender-based discrimination, and work toward the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

The County of San Diego (County) adopted its local CEDAW ordinance on May 10, 2022 (15). The local ordinance has three primary components. First is a statement of values and goals to prevent

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and eliminate discrimination, and to achieve gender equality. Discrimination against women extends to transgender women, gender nonconforming women, youth, and girls and those assigned female at birth, which includes transgender men and intersex communities; and the term “discrimination against women” includes any distinction, exclusion, or restriction based on gender and sex assigned at birth. Second is the requirement to implement a countywide intersectional gender analysis. Through these analyses, the County will identify barriers to gender equity and factors perpetuating gender inequity to implement effective measures to remove barriers and promote gender-equitable practices. Third is the requirement to develop a gender-equity strategy for County operations throughout the region. This includes the implementation of individualized intersectional gender equity action plans for County departments, offices, programs, boards, commissions, and other departments, and a five-year countywide intersectional gender equity action plan setting forth measures to protect the rights and interests of women and girls. As defined in the ordinance, “intersectional” means considering the interconnected nature of social categorizations and individual characteristics that overlap as systems of discrimination.

For the second component, implementing a countywide intersectional gender analysis, the County procured a contractor through a competitive procurement process, HR&A Advisors, Inc. (HR&A) (Ordinance 10791, Section 3.B.1.). The County and HR&A, with advisement from the San Diego County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls, co-created a data methodology plan to provide a structured strategy for implementing the ordinance. The plan outlines the types of operational and regional data that would be requested and collected, the analyses to be conducted, and the framework for organizing findings to provide a clear understanding of the current state of gender equity in the County. This would allow for a baseline to be established, serving as a foundation for all future intersectional gender equity work.

Consistent with the ordinance, the analysis examines regional data from throughout the county to see how gender and other factors affect people’s lives. It reviews the County’s own data to understand how well County services, staff, and structures meet the needs of women and gender-diverse populations. The analysis also compares regional trends and County operations to understand where patterns align, differ, or may be connected.

The analysis and the County of San Diego Baseline Intersectional Gender Analysis Report are rooted in the seven local CEDAW ordinance principles: Economic Development; Criminal Legal System; Political and Civic Engagement; Healthcare; Gender-Based Violence and Harassment; Housing and Homelessness; and Transportation, Libraries, Parks and Recreation, and Environmental Health. While organized around these principles, the analysis also considers relevant data and observations that fall outside them. The data collection focused on Fiscal Years (FY) 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023, with primary emphasis on FY 2022-2023 due to comparability with American Community Survey (ACS) data.

A key feature of the report is the inclusion of ten focus populations to operationalize the ordinance’s human-rights framework through measurable, intersectional indicators. These populations were selected based on relevance to the local CEDAW ordinance principles, the availability of ACS data, and their ability to show how gender disparities intersect with other demographic and socioeconomic factors. The ten focus populations are: households with young children;

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intergenerational households; unemployed residents; severely cost burdened households, older adults, people with disabilities; women veterans, recent immigrants, residents with limited English proficiency, and low-income households without a car. Together, these profiles highlight where gender-based inequities intersect most acutely with caregiving, economic, mobility, health, and structural barriers throughout the county.

To obtain operational data, disaggregated data requests were issued to all County departments in alignment with the ordinance. The OERJ and the consultant held meetings with departments to discuss their lines of business, types of data available, and identify additional qualitative information where quantitative data was unavailable. The report documents data limitations, including where data does not exist, are restricted due to privacy or stigma considerations, or are controlled by state or federal entities.

Key findings of the report, organized by the seven local CEDAW ordinance principles, include:

- **Economic Development**

The County plays an important role in supporting women's economic stability, both as a major employer and as a provider of essential services. Women make up a large share of the County workforce as well as many of the individuals who rely on health, housing, and self-sufficiency programs. Despite this reach, some persistent disparities still exist. This highlights ongoing opportunities to strengthen recruitment, hiring, pay practices, and advancement pathways. Efforts to make contracting more equitable are underway, though legal limits on what data can be collected can make it more difficult to fully evaluate progress.

- **Criminal Legal System**

County departments involved in the justice system predominantly serve men, reflecting broader systemwide patterns. Because women account for a smaller portion of the justice-involved population, their unique needs, including trauma histories and caregiving responsibilities, may not always be fully addressed. More complete and consistent data would help the County better understand women's experiences within the criminal legal system and how effectively current services meet their needs.

- **Political and Civic Engagement**

Overall, County boards and commissions show relatively balanced gender representation. However, participation is not evenly distributed across all groups. Younger women, Asian women, and women from lower-income communities appear less represented relative to the region's demographics. This suggests potential gaps in outreach, awareness, or access that may limit who is able to participate in civic leadership roles.

- **Healthcare**

Departments such as Aging and Independence Services, Public Health, and Medical Care Services serve mostly women, especially older adults and caregivers. More review is needed to understand whether these programs are fully meeting women's health needs, including mental health, reproductive health, and long-term care needs.

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- **Gender-Based Violence and Harassment**

Multiple departments provide programming related to violence, trauma, and abuse, supporting individuals and families affected by gender-based harm. The type and intensity of services vary across the County, reflecting differences in department roles and community needs. More comprehensive program data would help determine whether survivors are receiving timely and adequate.

- **Housing and Homelessness**

Women are more likely than men to face high housing costs and housing instability. Housing and Community Development Services and Self-Sufficiency Services serve a higher share of women than their share of the County population, including strong reach to some groups with high housing needs.

- **Transportation, Libraries, Parks and Recreation, and Environmental Health**

Access to County-managed facilities such as parks can vary significantly depending on where residents live. Women in denser, lower-income areas are less likely to live near County-operated parks, though city parks may provide alternatives. Limited demographic and usage data across several County service areas, such as libraries, transportation, and environmental health, makes it difficult to fully understand who is being reached and whether access is equitable.

Per the ordinance, with the acceptance of the County of San Diego Baseline Intersectional Gender Analysis Report, the County will move toward the third component of the local CEDAW ordinance: the development of a gender-equity strategy for County operations throughout the region. The strategy will provide the opportunity to thread the intersectional gender equity analysis with other equity and program analysis and the recently launched key performance indicators.

The report serves as another one of the County's concrete steps forward toward addressing equity across the region. By continuing to build on this foundation with community input, robust data, and thoughtful planning, the County of San Diego can use this report as one strategic piece of the larger movement toward a more equitable future for all residents.

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

Today's actions support the County of San Diego's 2026-2031 Strategic Plan initiatives of Sustainability (Economy, Environment, Resiliency), Equity (Health, Housing, Economic Opportunity), Empower (Workforce, Transparency and Accountability, Innovation), Community (Engagement, Safety, Quality of Life, Communications, Partnership), Equity (Health, Economic Opportunity), and Justice (Safety, Restorative, Environmental) by establishing intersectional gender equity baselines that progress in these areas can be measured against.

Respectfully submitted,

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**EBONY N. SHELTON**  
Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

County of San Diego Baseline Intersectional Gender Equity Analysis Report