



Media Advisory

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SANDAG BOARD VOTES TO ADOPT COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT, EMPHASIZING INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND LOCAL HIRE

San Diego, CA – On Friday morning, the SANDAG board voted to adopt a programmatic community benefits agreement negotiated with the San Diego County Building & Construction Trades Council. The vote is the culmination of a process that began in July, when the board voted to direct SANDAG staff to enter into a negotiation on the terms of the agreement.

“This item couldn’t have come back to us at a better time -- last week this board approved a bold, transformational regional plan that outlines \$160 billion of infrastructure investments in our region. Now, we made sure these project funds will stay in our community and support San Diego’s working families,” said SANDAG Vice Chair and San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria, as he made the motion to adopt the agreement. “I am incredibly proud of the work that has been done to get us to this vote today.”

The community benefits agreement approved by the board was described by multiple board members and members of the public as setting a gold standard for inclusion, equity, and local hire. It contains provisions that ensure the targeted recruitment and priority dispatch of workers from low income communities and traditionally disenfranchised communities of concern. It also provides advantages for minority-owned, women-owned, and other disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs), to encourage and promote those entrepreneurs in their ability to successfully bid on, win, and fulfill contracts.

“This community benefits agreement focuses efforts and resources towards ensuring that more working families from every community in San Diego County are afforded opportunities to have quality jobs and stable middle class careers—the kind that are made possible by labor agreements, and we’re very proud of that,” said Carol Kim, Business Manager of the San Diego County Building & Construction Trades Council.

The approved community benefits agreement covers an initial period of five years and an estimated \$1.2 billion of work, and has provisions to automatically extend the agreement to over time cover the entirety of the recently-approved \$160 billion Regional Transportation Plan. Should the agreement be fully extended, it would become the second largest agreement in the nation’s history.

“Public investments should provide maximum public benefit. That starts with how we invest in people, especially those communities that have so long been excluded from economic opportunity,” said SANDAG Board Member and San Diego Council President

Sean Elo-Rivera in his comments supporting the agreement. "The inclusive Community Benefit Agreement approved today by the SANDAG Board is a critical step in San Diego closing the gap with other regions when it comes to maximizing public benefit. It is also a thoughtful and responsible way of protecting taxpayer resources by improving cost control and providing the certainty San Diego's educators and workforce development experts need to ensure our community is trained and ready for the life and family changing careers available in the Construction Trades."

The SANDAG community benefits agreement will cover all projects that exceed a threshold of \$5 million in costs, and is expected to be implemented as early as May 2022. The community benefits agreement will also create accountability and transparency on the management of construction projects by establishing the rules and procedures up front, and requiring all parties to meet agreed-upon standards, goals, timelines, and management practices.

"Projects under this agreement will be awarded through a fair, open, and competitive process for union and non-union contractors alike - allowing small businesses and DBEs to grow and thrive," said Gretchen Newsom, Political Director of IBEW 569. "But the true gem of this Community Benefits Agreement is centered on the workforce with local hire, apprenticeship opportunities, and the creation of quality construction careers for local families - including the formerly incarcerated and others who have had barriers to career entry."

The San Diego County Building & Construction Trades Council AFL-CIO consists of 22 unions representing over 30,000 workers in San Diego County.

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