



The City of



Economic Development

MEETING NOTES

San Diego Promise Zone

Healthy Communities Meeting Notes

Thursday, April 10, 2025 | 10:00 – 11:30 AM | via Zoom

Healthy Communities Goal: *Promote access to healthcare and healthy foods*

In Attendance:

Blue Shield California (Ale Ricardez, Patricia Brown), **Circulate San Diego** (Cierra Johnson), **City of San Diego – Promise Zone** (Amber Weber, Roosevelt Williams III, Donika Moreno, Domanic Riley, Oscar Silva, Brandon Tran), **City of San Diego – Urban Forestry Program** (Olivia Mabee), **County of San Diego – Health and Human Services Agency** (Alondra Estrada-Lam, Gabriela Ochoa), **County of San Diego – Office of Equitable Communities** (Shadeh Rassoulkhani), **I Love to Glean** (Karen Clay), **Logan Heights Community Development Corporation** (William Burties), **LEARN Program** (Lee Bardon), **Project New Village** (Victoria Evans), **San Diego Association of Governments - SANDAG** (Khalisa Bolling, Rachel Forseth), **San Diego Community Power** (Melissa Elder), **San Diego Food System Alliance** (Rachel Chapa Oporto), **San Ysidro Health Center** (Alejandra Perez), **Traveler's Aid Society San Diego** (Adrianna Yemhatpe, Marcy Roke), **University of California San Diego** (Liza Trujillo Kirkland)

Meeting Notes:

Introductions, Culture Share, and Agenda Review:

- Alondra Estrada-Lam welcomed everyone to the April Healthy Communities Meeting and shared this month's agenda.
- The culture share for this month was related to **Good Deeds Day** and asked participants, "What is a good deed that they've done recently, either for a person or the natural environment?"

Partner Announcements:

- **Melissa Elder:** Community Power invites you to participate in its Efficient Refrigeration Program. You can receive up to two energy-efficient refrigerators and freezers at **no cost** to stock California-grown fresh produce, nuts, dairy, meat, eggs and minimally processed and culturally appropriate foods. By joining the program, you'll receive:
 - Up to two pieces of equipment ([view available models](#))
 - Optional energy assessment
 - Resources on sourcing, stocking and selling produce
 - To learn more or apply, please click [here](#).
- **Shadeh Rassoulkhani:** The City of San Diego's Parks & Recreation Department with Fern Street Circus will be presenting the Spring 2025 Neighborhood Tour's Big Birthday

Click the following links to stay connected to the San Diego Promise Zone

[Newsletter](#) | [Website](#) | [Email](#) | (619) 236-6700 | 1200 Third Ave, 14th Floor, San Diego, CA 92101

Bash. At this free event there will be a Community Health Resource Fair, a performance by Mariachi Victoria de San Diego, and a live show by the performers of the Fern Street Circus. The event will start at 1:00 pm on April 12, 2025 and will be held at Park De La Cruz. On April 13, the celebration will move to North Park Rec Center. There will be additional events at parks throughout San Diego during the month of April if you're unable to attend on Apr. 12 or 13. If you'd like to volunteer to table at the Community Health Resource Fair, please contact shadeha.rassoulkhani@sdcountry.ca.gov for more information.

- **Victoria Evans:** Project New Village will be hosting an Earth Day Celebration on April 19 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Mt. Hope Community Garden. This family friendly event will feature garden activities, arts & crafts, music, food and drinks, and a give-away of over 300 fruit and vegetable plants as well as 100 bags of soil!
 - [Link with more info](#)
- **Alondra Estrada-Lam:** On April 25, 2025 the City of San Diego's Urban Forestry Department will be celebrating Arbor Day at Colina Del Sol Park by planting trees to create a greener San Diego. If you'd like volunteer or would like more information about the Ready, Set, Grow program, please reach out to trees@sandiego.gov.
 - [Volunteer for Arbor Day at Colina Del Sol Park](#)
- **Rachel Forseth:** SANDAG will be organizing its annual Bike Anywhere Day on May 15. Eligible registrants for this free event will be automatically entered for the chance to win one of three e-bikes, powered by Rad Power Bikes. Pit Stops will be open from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. to assist riders. Businesses interested in being a sponsor can sign up at the link below.
 - [Participant Registration](#)
 - [Business Promotion & Sponsorship](#)

Promise Zone Updates:

- Our team has two open positions, an AmeriCorps VISTA Communications Associate and a Grants & Research Associate, which are both full-time for one year. Both positions are expected to begin in May. Additionally, we plan to post an opening for our next Operations VISTA over the summer.
 - [Grants & Research VISTA Description](#)
- The Promise Zone has recently launched its new partner MOU process. If your organization hasn't signed an MOU and you did not receive an invitation to become a partner, please email us at promiszone@sandiego.gov to set up a meeting to begin the process. All official partners will receive a Promise Zone logo. If you haven't received a logo, and you're unsure whether your organization is an official partner, please check the partner page of the San Diego Promise Zone website, which is linked below.
 - [Current Promise Zone Partners](#)
- On Tuesday, March 18, 2025, the SDPZ hosted its 3rd annual Youth-Led Career Expo. With nearly 200 youth in attendance, 57 vendors (a 43% increase in employer participation), and 44 volunteers. This year's expo provided hands-on career prep, professional headshots, resume reviews, and more. Huge thank you to our sponsors, volunteers, and working group members for making it all possible!

- o [Career Expo Webpage](#)
- The City of San Diego's Access 4 All initiative continues to seek input from Promise Zone residents about their internet quality and affordability, digital skills needs, and computer and tablet needs. If you would like to assist them, then you can take a digital survey at the following link or forward it to others in your network if you've completed it previously: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DZMTTV9>.

Guest Presentation: Alejandra Perez – San Ysidro Health

Alejandra Perez is a Community Relations Director with San Ysidro Health. With San Ysidro Health (SYH) recently beginning operations in the Promise Zone, our Working Group members were curious to hear how SYH was increasing access to healthcare for Promise Zone residents.

- San Ysidro Health (SYH) is a non-profit healthcare provider with 28 locations across San Diego County.
 - o SYH began in 1969 by Founding Mothers to address lack of healthcare for the 7,000 residents in the largely agricultural San Ysidro area.
 - Population of San Ysidro in this time was primarily Mexican-American.
 - Dr. Ruth Covell at UCSD was involved in creating the foundation and securing the funding for San Ysidro Health alongside Founding Mothers.
 - o They have locations in North County – Escondido, East County – El Cajon, and rural San Diego County – Julian & Campo.
 - Latest expansions are to Vista and Alpine.
 - o They've recently expanded into the Promise Zone with their Euclid location located in the Jacobs Center.
 - Have additional Promise Zone location in Sherman Heights.
- Services provided by SYH are medical, dental, behavioral health, chiropractic, and specialty care.
 - o Immigrant status doesn't impact ability to receive care.
 - o Fees are charged based on patient's financial situation. Can be as low as \$5.00.
- SYH has a 3,000 strong workforce, of which 77% are women.
 - o Majority of female employees are women of color from the communities that SYH serves.
 - Alejandra is an example, as she was raised by immigrant parents that were monolingual in Spanish. She had to translate many complex issues for them, including healthcare.
- Of the 162,285 people that SYH serves, 40,407 are seniors (55 and older) and 37,052 are children (0 – 17 years old).
- SYH is the 4th largest and nation's fastest growing SD PACE (Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly) provider. They are 2nd largest in California provider of PACE services in California.
 - o SD PACE provides in-home caregivers for elderly residents, which results in cost-saving compared to traditional nursing homes.
 - Over 3,000 participants are enrolled in 5 locations across San Diego County.

- Children born in zip codes serviced by SYH live 10 years less than their more affluent peers.
 - Half of children will develop type 2 diabetes due to lack of parks and other public spaces.
 - SYH and other healthcare providers can only take care of 20% of a person's wellbeing, as personal and community health requires a holistic approach and commitment from multiple societal actors and institutions.
 - 1 in 3 students in San Ysidro School District are unsheltered.
- SYH acquired Jacobs Center in 2024 and will be opening their PACE & Urgent Care Center there in 2026.
 - There were no Urgent Care centers in the Promise Zone prior to SYH's expansion into the area.

Q&A

Domanic Riley: "How do patients demonstrate their need for reduced prices and what is done if they happen to be uninsured?"

- **Alejandra:** "Eligibility for reduced prices is based on self-reported income, paycheck stub, or financial statement. Staff at SYH can assist with getting uninsured patients enrolled in Covered California or Medi-Cal."

Ale Ricardez: "How have politics at the federal level affected SYH's work?"

- **Alejandra:** "Medicaid is a big topic of conversation, as cuts would be devastating to the work that SYH is doing. Suggests educating people on the importance and influence of Medicaid on the lives of our most vulnerable citizens."

Guest Presentation: Khalisa Bolling – SANDAG

Khalisa Bolling is a Senior Regional Planner with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). SANDAG took the opportunity at this meeting to inform our Working Group members of the programs they had available to improve active living and active transportation opportunities across San Diego.

- SANDAG has over 200 projects across the San Diego region.
 - San Diego region is composed of over 3.3 million people, 18 cities and the county of San Diego, 17 tribal governments, and several major military installations.
- Youth Opportunity Pass (YOP) has provided 55,000 free youth PRONTO passes and there are 150,000+ active Youth PRONTO accounts.
 - Funded by SANDAG and County of San Diego to support MTS & NCTD bus and trolley services.
 - Launched May 1, 2022, and will end on June 30, 2026.
 - Has led to 26% attendance recovery at San Diego Unified schools.
 - Of the 1,000 youth surveyed on YOP program, about 79% say they will continue to ride public transit as adults.

- 90% responded that they are able to do more fun activities, and 91% say they can count on a ride home due to the YOP.
- Flexible Fleets are microtransit programs that will connect communities in Southeastern San Diego with additional routes not covered by other forms of public transit.
 - SANDAG Microtransit Pilot will cover the neighborhoods of Mt. Hope, Chollas View, and Emerald Hills.
 - La Via Verde shuttle will connect the neighborhoods of Logan Heights, Barrio Logan, Stockton, Mt. Hope, Sherman Heights, Grant Hill, and Shelltown.
 - FRED Electric Vehicles will serve Downtown and East Village.
- SANDAG provides free bike education classes, group bike rides, bike maintenance quick checks, bike lockers, and bike maps.
 - Bike lane with buffer is being installed on Imperial Ave.
 - Bike Month is being held in May and events are planned to help get people out into their communities.
 - Bike Anywhere Day will be held on May 15, 2025. Will support those who like to commute to work by bike with pit stops filled with refreshments.

Q&A

Domanic Riley: “Will public transit routes expand to reach new housing developments? Many new developments are far from existing bus stops and have inadequate parking.”

- **Khalisa:** “Flexible Fleets can help fill in gaps until bus stops are expanded. Bike share can also fill in some gaps. SANDAG is investigating where new housing developments are located before planning future public transit plans. [Regional Plan](#) may contain some answers”

Amber Weber: “How do we get additional bike racks installed, as they are difficult to locate?”

- **Khalisa:** “City of San Diego is responsible for bike racks. Must use Get It Done to request additional bike racks. A map of existing bike racks can be found [here](#).”

Alondra Estrada-Lam: “Can you present about SANDAG’s new programs at a future meeting?”

- **Khalisa:** “Currently working with Urban Collaborative Project and other neighborhood groups on Electric Vehicle chargers. If project proceeds past discussion stage and initial challenges, then SANDAG may be able to present on it after Summer 2025.”

Healthy Communities Logic Model Breakout Groups

Group 1: Increase Access to Healthy Foods ([View Objective 1 Logic Model here](#))

Attendance: Karen Clay, Oscar Silva, Donika Moreno, Gabriela Ochoa, Rachel Chapa Oporto, Victoria Evans, William Burties

Notes:

- Karen Clay reached out to Consuelo Martinez about Food System Alliance about green spaces and green cover in urban areas.
 - Karen will connect with Rachel Chapa Oporto to receive an update from Consuelo at Food System Alliance.
- Gabriela Ochoa is focused on community engagement on behavioral health in San Diego; efforts are not focused on Promise Zone.

- Donika suggested she join the healthcare breakout room at the next Working Group meeting.
- All five community gardens that Project New Village added to the logic model are new and do not overlap with existing gardens.
 - Karen requested a list of maps from Victoria Evans to add to Community Gardens map on Promise Zone website.
 - Oscar will connect with Victoria to obtain the list.
 - Karen asked Victoria if Project New Village could provide food distribution charts for any events they are planning to hold.
 - Victoria responded that it will be a while before she is able to provide this list.
- San Diego Food Bank counts number of pounds and number of people as well as agency when compiling its totals.
 - Karen will follow up with SD Food Bank to make sure there are no double counts or other inaccuracies.
- Started to obtain data from SD Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).
 - Approximately 70 families need help. Karen getting things put in place to be able to contact families and provide solutions.
 - Will need to create a program for food drop-offs for folks with disabilities.
 - Karen working on Promise Zone food distribution. A list of food distribution organizations will be published in English, Spanish, and Arabic.
 - Karen is still looking for a translator for phone calls in Arabic.
 - Karen also has CalFresh flyers to distribute.
- Karen met with Lan Nguyen from UCSD Health and San Diego Food Coalition.
 - Her last day at UCSD is May, and Karen would like to have this acknowledged at the next Working Group meeting.
 - Lan will do necessary reformatting of the food distribution list, and Joseph Kendrick from the San Diego Hunger Coalition will do a more specific drill down.
- Karen is waiting on results of the Community Food Action Plan to understand what the County wants to do regarding food distributions.
 - Karen would like to receive an update from them at our next Healthy Communities Working Group meeting.

Group 2: Increase Access to Healthcare ([View Objective 2 Logic Model here](#))

Attendance: Amber Weber, Brandon Tran, Liza Trujillo Kirkland, Alejandra Perez, Ale Ricardez

Notes:

- San Ysidro Health (SYH) will be opening an urgent care facility at the Jacobs Center and wants to invite community members to the ribbon cutting ceremony.
 - As an activity on the Logic Model, the potential outputs and outcomes for SYH's Urgent Care Center are:
 - Output: # of inpatients/participants who utilize the clinic.
 - Outcome: Create 100 new healthcare and supportive services jobs in the Promise Zone.

- Alejandra suggested creating an educational campaign about what an urgent care center is, and the benefits it can bring to the community.
 - A potential Logic Model output for this activity is:
 - Output: # of inpatients based on specific timeframes.
 - Outcome: More residents will have access to urgent care.
- Ale Ricardez from Blue Shield wants to create a community development strategy that would address seniors/disabled people's needs by increasing awareness and education of Medicaid and Medicare.
 - Suggested Logic Model outputs and outcomes for this activity are:
 - Output: Increase # of partnerships and number of participants in Medicaid and Medicare.
 - Partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) will help demystify healthcare for the people they serve.
 - Outcome: Residents will better understand Medicaid and Medicare and how to use it.
- Neither San Ysidro Health nor Blue Shield are not Promise Zone partners, but discussions on a potential Memorandum of Understanding are ongoing.

Group 3: Support Opportunities for Active Transportation and Active Living ([view Objective 3 Logic Model here](#))

Attendance: Alondra Estrada-Lam, Domanic Riley, Roosevelt Williams III, Khalisa Bolling, Shadeh Rassoulkhani, Adrianna Yemhatpe, Marcy Roke, Cierra Johnson

Notes:

- SANDAG is included on multiple activities on the Active Transportation Logic Model.
 - Many Promise Zone working groups would benefit from SANDAG's input, and especially their micro-transit projects.
 - Khalisa Bolling will be at SANDAG's Microtransit Joint Working Group next month. Will be able to provide an update on microtransit program in July or August.
- Adrianna Yemhatpe from Traveler's Aid Society provided an update from the March meeting.
 - Traveler's Aid is accepting new applications for their senior assistance program that helps provide transportation to medical appointments for eligible seniors.
 - The City of San Diego has renewed funding for this program for another year.
- Cierra Johnson from Circulate San Diego would like to review the current Logic Model activities and see where Circulate San Diego fits in.
- San Diego County Health and Human Services is working on their Rapid and Ethnic Approaches to Transit program as part of their Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program.
 - Alondra mentioned that they may be able to give a presentation on this program in a few months.

- Shadeh Rassoulkhani of the San Diego County Office of Equitable Communities offered to help with promoting events that SANDAG offers and is open to collaboration on other initiatives.
- Alondra would like to have a presentation from the City of San Diego's Parks & Recreation Department on how they are improving walkability.
 - Domanic will add to this list of future presenters.
- Alondra asked if there were any gaps on the Logic Model?
 - Khalisa would like to add programmatic goals regarding # of bike classes and # of bike riders in the community.
 - Alondra mentioned that she has been trying to bring in more bike organizations to provide input on the Logic Model.
 - Despite installation of bike lanes, many people are still uncomfortable or unwilling to ride bikes. Bike advocacy and education are key to overcoming this.
 - Khalisa asked how prominent are e-bikes in the Promise Zone?
 - Alondra responded that companies are putting on demonstrations, but e-bikes are still far too expensive for the average Promise Zone resident.

Final Comments and Farewell:

- Co-chairs thanked those who attended the meeting and encouraged them to leave any feedback through the Digital Comment Box.

Meeting Conclusion:

- **Meeting Day for Next Month:** Thurs., May 8, 2025, 10:00 am-11:30 am, via Zoom
- Digital Comment Box: <https://us16.list-manage.com/survey?u=e913b9d30ca18b3436360cf47&id=62c8f5dc2f>