



The City of



# Economic Development

## MEETING NOTES

### San Diego Promise Zone

#### Healthy Communities Meeting Notes

Thursday, May 8, 2025 | 10:00 – 11:30 AM | via Zoom

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

#### In Attendance:

**Barrio Botany** (Christina Abuelo), **Blue Shield California** (Ale Ricardez), **California Coast Credit Union** (Angel Nolasco), **Circulate San Diego** (Maria Walker), **City of San Diego - Economic Development Department** (Christie Marcella), **City of San Diego - Planning Department** (Maureen Gardiner, Magdalena Taylor) **City of San Diego – Promise Zone** (Amber Weber, Roosevelt Williams III, Donika Moreno, Domanic Riley, Oscar Silva, Daniella Salgado, Amairany Macias), **Community Member** (Tanika Taylor), **County of San Diego – Health and Human Services Agency** (Alondra Estrada-Lam), **County of San Diego – Office of Equitable Communities** (Shadeh Rassoulkhani), **County of San Diego – Office of Sustainability and Environmental Justice** (Kim Ridout), **I Love to Glean** (Karen Clay), **Kate Sessions Commitment** (Anne Fege), **Logan Heights Community Development Corporation** (William Burties), **Project Food Box** (Adriana Ramirez), **San Diego Bike Coalition** (Ian Hembree), **San Diego Community Power** (Melissa Elder), **San Diego Food System Alliance** (Rachel Chapa Oporto), **Traveler's Aid Society San Diego** (Adrianna Yemhatpe), **University of California San Diego** (Jamison Langguth, Liza Trujillo Kirkland), **YMCA of San Diego County** (Xiomara Alejandre)

#### Meeting Notes:

##### Introductions, Culture Share, and Agenda Review:

- Alondra Estrada-Lam welcomed everyone to the May Healthy Communities meeting and shared this month's agenda.
- The culture share for this month was related to **National Nurses Week** and asked participants, "Do you have a relative or friend who is or was a healthcare professional? How have their experiences in the medical field influenced you?"

##### Partner Announcements:

- **Karen Clay:** I Love to Glean as part of the San Diego Promise Zone Nourishment Network has compiled a list of food distribution sites located within the Promise Zone, which is hosted on the Promise Zone website. It's currently available in English, Spanish, and Arabic. Karen also wanted to thank Lan Nguyen from UCSD Health for her help on this project. Lan has recently left her position at UCSD, and we wish her the best in her future endeavors.

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

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

- [Promise Zone Food Distribution Sites](#) – English
- [Promise Zone Food Distribution Sites](#) – Spanish
- [Promise Zone Food Distribution Sites](#) – Arabic
- **Karen Clay:** Live Well San Diego's South Region Community Leadership Team Food Insecurity Work Group in partnership with Leah's Pantry will be hosting a virtual Nutrition Security Training webinar on June 9, 2025, from 2 pm to 4 pm. This training will explore the connection between nourishment including both positive and adverse experiences, while emphasizing a trauma-informed approach to community-based work around nutrition. A second session will be held on August 11, 2025, from 2 pm to 4 pm. If you'd like to attend, you may register at the link below.
  - [Register Here](#)
  - For any questions, email Cassandra Muniz at [Cassandra.Muniz1@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Cassandra.Muniz1@sdcounty.ca.gov)
- **Adriana Ramirez:** Adriana Ramirez is a member of Project Food Box, which is an agency of farmers that distributes food to Medi-Cal qualified seniors, children, and individuals with disabilities. Their food boxes contain 15 – 18 lbs of food, are delivered weekly for up to 6 months, and do not preclude individuals from accessing other sources of food assistance unless those food providers also require Medi-Cal eligibility. Adriana expressed interest in having Project Food Box join the SDPZ food distribution network as her organization does similar work, and was unaware of the Promise Zone's efforts prior to this meeting.
  - [Project Food Box](#)
- **Ian Hembree:** May 15, 2025, is Bike Anywhere Day and the San Diego Bike Coalition will be sponsoring a pit stop in East Village for participants. The pit stop will be open from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and will be disco themed with a DJ, photo booth, and free bike tune-up. You can find more information in the attached flyer. Additionally, on June 8, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. the San Diego Bike Coalition will be hosting a City Cycling class that will provide free coffee and safety equipment alongside instructive classes on the Rules of the Road and Bike Handling Skills. The class will be capped off with a Group Bike Ride. See link below for more details.
  - [Downtown City Cycling](#)

### **Promise Zone Updates:**

- Oscar Silva, the Civic Engagement VISTA for the San Diego Promise Zone, ended his term of service early and will be working with City Heights CDC. We wish him the best in his future endeavors and are grateful for his many contributions to the Promise Zone.
- Our team has two open positions, an AmeriCorps VISTA Grants & Research Associate and an Operations Associate, which are both full-time for one year. The Grants & Research position is slated to start in June, and the Operations will be open for applicants later this summer. (The Grants & Research position has since been filled.)
- Healthy Communities co-chair, Karen Clay, was among 14 people named a Live Well San Diego Public Health Champion at the beginning of April. She was selected to receive the Public Health Services Regional Award for the South County region as her work in food

recovery and distribution has had a huge impact, with over 3.8 million pounds of food distributed and over 111,000 meals prepared and delivered since 2020.

- o [2025 Live Well San Diego Public Health Champion Awards Ceremony](#)
- 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 [promisezone@sandiego.gov](mailto:promisezone@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.
  - o [Current Promise Zone Partners](#)
- We would like to recognize Traveler's Aid Society of San Diego, Watering Hope, and I Love to Glean for becoming official Promise Zone partners and supporting the objectives of the Healthy Communities Working Group.
  - o [I Love to Glean](#)
  - o [Traveler's Aid Society of San Diego](#)
  - o [Watering Hope](#)
- The Promise Zone successfully completed its grant reporting requirements for the October 2024 to March 2025 reporting period. We'd like to thank all of our partners who assisted us in completing this report. Together, they reported on a sum total of 350+ grants during the Oct. 2024– March 2025 timeframe.

### **Guest Presentation: Kim Ridout – County of San Diego OSEJ**

Kim Ridout is a Group Program Manager with the County of San Diego's Office of Sustainability and Environmental Justice (OSEJ). During this meeting, she gave an update to our Healthy Communities Working Group members on the Food Justice Community Action Plan.

- Food Justice Community Action Plan (FJCAP) began as a Board of Supervisors directed initiative in 2024 to address food access and security across San Diego County in the coming years.
  - o The OSEJ is currently slated to report back to the Board of Supervisors in early May 2025 with detailed implementation and next steps for select actions.
    - The OSEJ has worked with other County departments to identify fiscal costs and necessary resources for proposed actions.
  - o Email notification will be provided, and a link will be posted on the [FJCAP Engage](#) website after board approval.
- FJCAP was the result of a two-month Community Outreach & Engagement process that saw 107 attendees across six community roundtables provide 1,500+ comments, ideas, and shared experiences.
  - o Out of 200 unique community-informed ideas; 20 were selected as potential County Actions.
- The six primary community-informed objectives of the FJCAP and their May 2025 report back actions are:
  - o **Capacity** – Funding & Asset-Building
    - Increase awareness of community gardens at county parks and explore locations for new gardens.

- Support sustainable community agriculture practices on identified agriculture land.
- **Culture** – Policy, Knowledge, and Food Sovereignty
  - Develop a community food production model with favorable terms for community food production.
- **Connectivity** – Transportation & Resource Accessibility
  - Increase public education around edible food recovery programs.
  - Identify funding for edible food recovery transportation networks.
  - Develop strategies to build capacity of existing food hubs.
- **Safety Nets** – Public Support Programs & Public Health
  - Reduce avoidable CALFresh denials and increase participation among eligible individuals.
  - Incentivize CALFresh use at certified farmers’ market through technical assistance to food providers.
  - Support legislation to add medically-supportive food as a permanently covered benefit for Medi-Cal recipients.
- **Process** – Engagement, Community Leadership, & Transparency
  - Create a clear definition to measure food security.
  - Hire a Food Justice Coordinator to administer FJCAP diagnostic program.
- **Preparedness** – Emergency response planning & Food Insecurity
  - Share information on existing emergency response plans that involve food access and food security.

#### Q&A

**Tanika Taylor:** “I have a community garden that I use to feed my elderly neighbors. The City informed me that they may fine me for the fruit trees that grow over the sidewalk. Is there anyway you can provide assistance with that?”

- **Kim:** “I work for the County of San Diego, and we do not have jurisdiction over the City’s garden ordinances. I will help connect you with someone to help resolve your issue.”

**Domanic Riley:** “What input or suggestions did the County Board of Supervisors have on the Food Justice Community Action Plan?”

- **Kim:** “The Board’s interest in food insecurity across the county was the impetus behind FJCAP, and they are very involved in the planning process. They’ve selected 11 of the 20 community-informed ideas that they’d like to prioritize. OSEJ went back to the board in December 2024 and will present an updated proposal in May 2025 that addresses budgetary concerns that may prove a hindrance to implementing certain ideas.”

**Anne Fege:** “Not a question, but Kate Sessions Commitment would like to get involved with any tree planting initiatives that fall under the FJCAP umbrella. We’re interested in seeing how the program evolves to account for fruit tree maintenance.”

- **Kim:** “Tree planting is not included under FJCAP at this time.”

**Guest Presentation: Maureen Gardiner – City of San Diego Planning Department**

Maureen Gardiner is a Senior Engineer with the City of San Diego's Planning Department. With the recent approval of the City's Mobility Master Plan, the Healthy Communities Working Group members were eager to hear how the previously announced Bike Master Plan portion of it would be implemented.

- The Bike Master Plan began in 2013 and has made significant advances since then.
  - Bike Master Plan is based on a vision that consists of multiple project goals including safety, equity, connectivity, best practices, and innovation.
    - One goal of the Bike Master Plan is to have 10% of all resident trips in San Diego by 2035 be made by bike.
      - They want to achieve this by concentrating on promoting bike use on short trips which are vehicle trips of 3 miles or less.
  - Bike Master Plan will serve as a key component of Mobility Master Plan that will help advance the goals of the City's [Climate Action Plan](#) and [General Plan](#) by supporting investments in sustainable transportation.
- Bike Master Plan had three Working Groups for Public Outreach – Technical, Stakeholder, and Advocacy.
- Three surveys were conducted from August to September 2024 and received record responses.
  - Feedback Map: Spatial Survey with 697 Unique Contributors.
    - Respondents were able to leave comments on specific locations.
  - Trip Map: Spatial Survey with 325 Unique Contributors.
    - Respondents provided input on trips they made, which helped the Planning Department better visualize where trips were happening.
    - 27% of participants own an electric bike (e-bike).
  - Long-Form Survey with 13 Questions: 2912 Unique Contributors.
    - Some feedback from this survey were concerns with driver enforcement and reducing speed limits.
- The number of separated bike lanes have been doubled in the last 18 months.
  - Bike lanes typically share the road with motorist, so this will help improve safety.
    - Bike paths are distinct from bike lanes as they are always separated from the road and not always paved.
    - Rear-end collision is the most fatal type of accident involving motorist-cyclist interactions.
      - Drivers are typically at fault in rear-end collisions compared to other types of accidents.
  - The City's street resurfacing program has improved up to 1,300 miles of bike-related facilities.
    - Gaps still remain in existing and newly designed bicycle facilities network.
      - The gaps most notably affect structurally excluded communities such as the Promise Zone.
  - 15 million dollars has been invested into bike infrastructure since 2015.

## Q&A

**Ian Hembree:** “The Planning Department’s stat team turns a lot of class two facilities into class four. Is that part of the Bicycle Master Plan, or is that more of a city budget issue? Additionally, is the Planning Department working with other municipalities in the San Diego Metropolitan Area, and how is their planning going to connect to yours?”

- Maureen: “I’m connected with the stat team and will ask for clarification on the reclassification of facilities. Secondly, the Planning Department is trying to involve all jurisdictions in the Bicycle Master Plan. The Stakeholder Working Group includes all local agencies that would like to be involved in creating a network of continuous bike facilities.”

**Domanic Riley:** “Is bike education included as a key component of the Bike Master Plan?”

- “Our plan will be looking at this at a higher level including best practices documents, bike parking, and encouragement programs. The City is also aware of SANDAG’s bike education programs. The Bike Master Plan will be wrapped up by the end of April 2026. With the City of San Diego having been selected for the Safe Streets for All grant, we will be working on implementing the provisions of that grant once the Bike Master Plan is completed.”

### **Healthy Communities Logic Model Breakout Groups**

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

**Attendance:** Karen Clay, Donika Moreno, Daniella Salgado, Adriana Ramirez, William Burties

#### **Notes:**

- Adriana Ramirez shared about the work that Project Food Box does.
  - She works with Molina Healthcare of California and offers meals to patients that have chronic illnesses. Offering them fresh fruit and vegetables for up to six months.
    - Karen Clay asked Adriana who she refers people to if they call Project Food Box and do not have insurance coverage through Molina.
      - Adriana answered that they refer them to the food bank.
- William from Logan Heights Development Corporation shared that they do a monthly food distribution.
  - They also do a community market that takes place every third Saturday of the month where they have several different food vendors available.
  - Project New Village also provides people with a \$10 voucher if you fill out their [survey](#).
    - The Project New Village food truck also accepts SNAP/EBT.
- Karen shared the Promise Zone Nourishment Network survey.
  - Results of the survey show that there are about 80 families that are food insecure and need help.
    - Next step will be getting more details on their food needs.

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

**Attendance:** Amber Weber, Oscar Silva, Amairany Macias, Ale Ricardez, Liza Trujilo Kirkland, Jamison Langguth, Tanika Taylor

**Notes:**

- Ale Ricardez manages Blue Shield's Dual Plan that supports individuals eligible for or enrolled in both Medi-Cal and Medicare. Discussion was centered around what the community engagement strategy would be to advertise these social services.
  - Tanika Tayler mentioned that there are many medical services offered that many people don't take advantage of due to lack of knowledge. She would like a tangible way of providing the community with a true understanding of how medical services could help them.
  - Tanika also wondered if there were housing resources available through Medi-Cal. (Housing assistance is not available, but there may be support available through the program for chronic or high healthcare needs.)
  - Tanika is concerned about using the word "resources," to convey to the community what medical services are actually being offered.
  - Ale reassured her that the word resources, while used often at non-profit and medical organizations, is not the focus of the community engagement strategy, which will be culturally sensitive and display humility.
- The Sanford Stem Cell Clinical Center will use the Google form to build onto the Logic Model.

**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, Anne Fege, Ian Hembree, Magdalena Taylor, Maria Walker

**Notes:**

- Ian Hembree mentioned that the SD Bike Coalition would like to engage more with the Promise Zone area by providing educational resources regarding bikes.
  - He also mentioned that SD Bike Coalition is providing free bike education for schools thanks to funding from SANDAG.
- Alondra would like to have SD Bike Coalition present at a future Healthy Communities meeting about their available programs.
  - Ian is interested in presenting and will see if it is possible.
- Maria Walker works at Circulate SD as an Associate Director. She is here at Alondra's request, as Circulate SD is working directly with the County of San Diego on its Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program.
  - Circulate SD also works in schools, senior centers, and other community spaces to educate about bikes and other forms of alternative forms of transportation.
- Magdalena Taylor is an employee of the City of San Diego's Planning Department and mentions that the Bike Master Plan is an ongoing effort.
  - Magdalena also stated that they don't have much to report specifically, as they are fairly new to the City's Planning Department.

- Anne Fege was concerned about the survival of young trees from the City's recent planting efforts.
  - Anne explained that the young tree survival could be as low as 50% in certain areas.
    - The Chollas View area's trees are overall healthy due to the efforts of Groundwork San Diego.
  - Anne would like more community consultation for future tree planting initiatives. She believes that the Trees for Community program could be a model for success if community feedback were taken into account more.

### **Final Comments and Farewell:**

- Co-chairs thanked those who attended the meeting and encouraged them to leave any feedback through the Digital Comment Box. Look for information about an in-person, All-Partner Meeting later this summer.

### **Meeting Conclusion:**

- **Meeting Day for Next Month:** Thurs., Aug. 14, 2025, 10:00 am-11:30 am, via Zoom
- Digital Comment Box: <https://us16.list-manage.com/survey?u=e913b9d30ca18b3436360cf47&id=62c8f5dc2f>