



The City of



Economic Development

MEETING NOTES

San Diego Promise Zone

Economic Activity Meeting Notes

Thursday, Aug. 14, 2025 | 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. | via Zoom

Economic Activity Goal: Increase Economic Activity

In Attendance:

Accessity (Elise Baker, Juliet Terramin), **Access Inc** (Julieta Gonzalez), **Black Tech Link** (Domanic Riley), **Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater San Diego** (Jessica Barajas), **California Coast Credit Union** (Angel Nolasco, Adolfo Vera), **City Heights Community Development Corporation** (Sylvia Ramirez), **City of San Diego - Economic Development Department** (Viridiana Quintana), **City of San Diego Promise Zone** (Amber Weber, Roosevelt Williams III, Daniella Salgado, Chrishael Rose Sanchez, Amairany Macias), **San Diego County District 4** (Eric Henson), **Dream Builders Design & Construction Inc.** (Ramona Jones), **Family Health Centers of San Diego** (Sasha Ross), **Local Initiatives Support Corporation** (Karina Velazquez), **Logan Heights Community Development Corporation** (William Burties), **Mission Edge** (Ana Dominguez), **National University** (Danielle Stephen), **Office of Juan Vargas, Pacific Community Fund** (Maria Bojorquez-Gomez), **San Diego ART Matters** (Michael Angelo Camacho), **San Diego Workforce Partnership** (BreAnn Gay)

Meeting Notes:

Introductions, Culture Share, and Agenda Review:

- Sylvia Ramirez welcomed everyone to the May Economic Activity working group meeting and shared the agenda.
- The culture share for this month was in recognition of **World Entrepreneurship Day on Aug. 21** and asked participants, "What is the most entrepreneurial thing you have ever done, whether or not it made money?"

Partner Announcements:

- **Maria Bojorquez-Gomez:** As of July 28, 2025, Pacific Community Fund is an official Promise Zone partner. Through the end of this year, they are offering special loans: up to \$1,500 for the public and up to \$2,500 for partners, both at a 5% APR. All loans include financial education support. If you are interested in making these opportunities available to your members, staff, or community, please contact Maria at m.bg@pacific-fund.org.

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

- **Ramona Jones:** DREAMbuilders Youth Mentoring Network is seeking parents and community partners interested in learning more about the Driven 2 Win READ2WIN Funding Opportunity and enrolling 100 youth (ages 8–18) in a 12-week virtual Entrepreneurship Training Program, which includes a \$1,000 paid internship opportunity. Email rsjones1169@gmail.com to learn more.
- **Adolfo Vera:** Cal Coast Credit Union has officially opened a new Logan Heights Branch. To celebrate the grand opening, they are offering a \$100 bonus to all new members who open a checking account with electronic statements and online banking. This promotion is available through the end of September. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Promise Zone Updates:

- **Upcoming Promise Zone Events—Save the Date!**
 - All-Partner Meeting: Thursday, Dec. 4, 2025. (If you have a space that will comfortably seat up to 100 people, preferably at tables, please let us know!)
 - Career Expo: Tuesday, Mar. 3, 2026, 10am-1pm at the Balboa Park Club & Recital Hall.
- **New Promise Zone Partners:** Since beginning our new MOU process in April, the Promise Zone has welcomed over 30 new partner organizations. Click [here](#) to see all partner organizations in the Promise Zone. Welcome, new partners!
- **Inclusive Public Engagement Guide:** The San Diego Promise Zone held a community workshop and listening session regarding the development of the City's Inclusive Public Engagement Guide in Summer 2024. At the December 2024 and July 2025 All-Partner Meetings, updates on how the planning was going were shared. The City's Planning Department now has webpage and the Guide has been released for public review. Residents are invited to attend an in-person workshop, including one in the Promise Zone at Valencia Park/Malcolm X Library on Oct. 10, or in a virtual workshop, or will be able to complete an online survey.
 - City of San Diego [Inclusive Public Engagement Guide](#)

San Diego Tourism Authority: Theresa Cunningham

Theresa Cunningham, representing the San Diego Tourism Authority, shared an overview of SDTA's role as the region's destination marketing organization. With over 1,000 nonprofit members, SDTA's mission is to drive visitor demand and economically benefit the San Diego region.

- **Key Areas of Work:** SDTA manages global sales and marketing efforts, representing San Diego in 10 countries through advertising, strategic planning, brand management, and destination stewardship. Their work also includes community engagement, promotional campaigns, and partnerships with paid content creators and ambassadors.
- **Tourism Stewardship Plan:** The plan identifies six pillars of opportunity, including arts, culture, culinary, and the outdoors. During the presentation, Michael Angelo Camacho asked for an update on the plan's implementation, specifically around arts, culinary, and

culture, as well as the role of the steering committee. Cunningham noted that a new website has launched and will soon be publicly available.

- **Tourism Accelerator Program:** Launched in 2021 after the pandemic, the Accelerator provides a year-long program with over \$15,000 in membership, marketing, and services for small tourism and hospitality businesses owned by people of color, women, veterans, and LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs. About 65% of graduates have reported revenue growth.
- **Program Criteria & Timeline:** Businesses must be San Diego-based, tourism or hospitality related, and in operation for at least one year. Applications for the next cohort will be open from Oct. 1 to Nov. 10, 2025.
 - Program Flyer located [here](#).
 - Program Overview Video: [Watch here](#)

Promise Zone Priorities & Transition Activities: Amber Weber provided updates about the federal Promise Zone designation, which ends on June 6, 2026. The Promise Zone team is half the size that it was last year; as such, the number of working groups meetings has been reduced to half. She invited participants to recommend organizations or people to present in future working group meetings.

Priority projects this year include the Youth-Led Career Expo (Mar. 3, 2026), the Community Perception Survey (Mar-April 2026), an Impact Report (for partners to complete), and transition plans. Participants participated in a poll regarding the Community Perception Survey, which resulted in a Google form being created for participants to share their ideas in (link [here](#)) and an ad hoc meeting being scheduled, which was held on Sept. 17, 2025. Survey questions specific to each working group will be narrowed down and presented at the Oct/Nov. working group meetings.

Regarding the end of the federal designation, the City's role as the lead entity will change, and the City will continue to support the Promise Zone in other ways. The Promise Zone Steering Committee will have two planning sessions in September and October, and co-chairs will take ideas from the August and September working group meetings to the planning sessions. Participants discussed how to sustain Promise Zone collaborations after the designation ends. Ideas included hosting quarterly meetings (Logan Heights CDC), seeking funding for a full-time staffer, and engaging council offices, the County, or private foundations like Prebys. Several suggested Live Well San Diego as a potential lead, since its priorities and working groups align with the Promise Zone. Others emphasized exploring capacity-building grants, expansion countywide, and identifying a lead organization.

Key questions raised: Who should lead the transition? How can funding and grants be structured? Could organizations like San Diego Tourism Authority or local foundations serve as conveners? Overall, the group agreed on focusing on transition planning, expanding partnerships, and clarifying responsibilities for a future lead entity in working in working group meetings.

Partners are still encouraged to submit new activities, or update past activities, into the logic model with [this Google form](#).

Wrap Up and Adjourn:

- Co-chairs thanked those who attended the meeting and encouraged them to leave any feedback through the Digital Comment Box: <https://forms.gle/FAbFjw4ZUuAd3Uiy6>