CITY OF SAN DIEGO

RESILIENCY ADVISORY BOARD

CALENDAR YEAR 2026 ANNUAL REPORT*

**Reporting on Calendar Year through October 2026, incorporating feedback from end of 2025*

Climate Resilience | Biodiversity | Equity | Community preparedness

Prepared for the Mayor, Environment Committee, City Council to complete the primary duty to advise the City of San Diego on resiliency related policies

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Introduction to the Resiliency Advisory Board

The Resiliency Advisory Board advises the Mayor, City Council, and relevant City departments on policies and strategies that strengthen San Diego's resilience to climate-related hazards. Its work supports implementation of Climate Resilient SD, Biodiverse SD, Climate Action Plan Strategy 5, the Multiple Species Conservation Program, and related conservation and open-space initiatives.

Purpose of this report

The 2026 Annual Report documents the Board's work, summarizes presentations and public engagement, and presents recommendations for City leadership. It is intended to support accountability, provide timely policy advice, and advance public understanding of the City's resilience priorities. This report is a Calendar year report that covers the Board's activities in 2026. The first report covered the period from the Board's establishment in September 2024 to June 2025.

2026 emphasis

The Board's substantive focus was stormwater management and response. The work plan also emphasized more efficient Board processes and continued attention to biodiversity, urban forestry, extreme heat, coastal and wetland restoration, and resilient public infrastructure.

Board Membership

Member	2026 Role / Designation
Eric Lardy	Chair; District 6
Andrew Meyer	Vice Chair; General Member
Jamie Garrett	Secretary; General Member
Ian Clampett	District 1
Cynthia Rose Harris	District 2
Erika Morgan	District 3
A-bel Gong	District 7
Grace Jones	District 8
Armon Harvey	District 4

Summary of the 2026 Work Plan

Primary Goal

Advise the Mayor, City Council and relevant City departments on climate resiliency and adaptation, wetlands, habitat preservation, and biodiversity matters associated with various City plans, policies, regulations and initiatives

Outcome: Goal met.

Priority Goal 1: Stormwater management and response

Examine changing storm patterns, development patterns, flood response, stormwater operations and financing, community and industry readiness, impacts on people and ecosystems, funding challenges, and practices used by comparable municipalities.

Outcome: Goal met.

Priority Goal 2: Improve Board process and accountability

Strengthen engagement with climate-vulnerable communities, hold meetings in the community, actively recruit candidates for vacant seats, improve how matters come before the Board, and communicate more proactively with the Environment Committee.

Outcome: Goal partially met.

Issues and Recommendations

The recommendations below consolidate the attached 2026 recommendation summary the input submitted from Resiliency Advisory Board Members. The Board additionally supports and recommends prioritization of programs included in the FY2027 budget (see page 10).

No.	Topic	Board Recommendation Summary
1	**Urban forestry and cooling**	Support and prioritize Urban Forestry plans for implementation and acceleration of program effectiveness.
2	**Cooling-center accessibility and learning**	Prioritize use of data to improve Cooling Centers effectiveness.
3	**Stormwater Preparedness and Funding**	Evaluate and address the systemic stormwater funding shortfall.
4	**Wetlands, Habitat, and Natural Resource Management**	Support data-driven ecological management of City's invaluable natural resources for climate resiliency, recreation space, and biological diversity
5	**Energy Implementation**	Increase efforts to create microgrids.

Topic 1 - Urban Forestry, Street Trees, and Cooling

Background: The Climate Action Plan Goal for the City is 35 percent tree canopy coverage; the current trajectory may not be on pace based off the last coverage evaluation and tree planting trends.

The Board identified the following needs:

- Commission an updated canopy study, including a new aerial assessment
- Prepare and fund an updated Urban Forestry Program plan
- Establish an implementation trajectory toward the 35 percent canopy goal
- Evaluate the impact and correlation between Fire Hazard Zone Zero requirements
- Examine the effectiveness and cost efficiency of Grow a Green San Diego
- Quantify tree material removed and produced
- Improve the pruning cycle for shade trees

Council action requested: ***Support and prioritize Urban Forestry plans for implementation and acceleration of program effectiveness.*** Direct staff to complete and return with a new canopy evaluation to inform a funded implementation plan, program performance measures, and a schedule for updating the Urban Forestry Program plan to meet Climate Action Plan coverage goals. Include evaluating tree types, quantity of material cut and produced, pruning trees on a regular maintenance schedule, and publishing outreach resources to help meet these goals with new Zone Zero fire standards. The city should provide updated HOA and resident resources; strengthen support for private tree planting; connect SHADE SD materials to the Climate Action Plan; and focus outreach and investment where heat and canopy burdens are greatest.

Topic 2 - Cooling Centers and Extreme Heat

Background: With the changing climate, extreme heat is a necessary priority to plan around for the residents of this city. Cooling centers are an important component for disadvantaged communities during extreme weather events.

Council action requested: ***Prioritize use of data to improve Cooling Centers effectiveness.*** Request the City Council direct staff to initiate a user-centered evaluation of cooling centers and an implementation response addressing access barriers identified by residents. Immediately increase accessibility for residents by removing ID requirements and by permitting pets in the cooling centers. Publish in accessible formats the locations of centers. For any new or upgraded centers, consider power reliability strategies. Survey how residents are using cooling centers during heat events and reasons why they are using them. Use this information to remove barriers and provide funding recommendations into the Climate Resilient SD Plan.

Topic 3 - Stormwater Preparedness and Funding

Background: San Diego's stormwater program lacks a dedicated established funding source at a time when we need significantly more resources to ensure an equitable and balanced stormwater system that meets the needs of current and future residents. The Board received information on multiple approaches from other California jurisdictions for evaluating and proposing dedicated funding streams. We assessed the multiple public safety, environmental, economic, and community benefits of well-run stormwater programs, which encompasses improved stormwater quality and capacity for flood control, as well as passive green spaces.

Council action requested: ***Evaluate and address the systemic stormwater funding shortfall with a new stormwater funding and financing fee program.*** The Board recommends first pilot-testing, and then implementing a three-pronged approach: (1) a tiered or parcel-based approach to stormwater fees that reflects actual impervious surface and, where feasible, additional risk factors; (2) expand the types of hardscape projects requiring a building permit and associated fee sufficient to disincentivize increasing the amount of impervious surface on existing developed properties; and (3) create an incentive rewards program for property owners to reduce/remove hardscape, modeled on the most successive comparable water conservation programs. Propose to voters a balloted parcel tax, via the Prop 218 process, that clearly defines the structure and rate calculation method within the ballot measure itself. Test the method on several property categories (residential, commercial, industrial) of different areas to provide clear examples of how much property owners would likely pay based on their property's amount of impervious surface.

Topic 4 - Wetlands, Habitat, and Natural Resource Management

Council action requested: ***Support data driven ecological management of City's vast natural resources for climate resiliency, recreation space, and biological diversity.*** Require transparent ecological performance reporting for restoration projects and sustain the staffing and implementation resources needed for site-level management plans. Continue and accelerate Natural Resource Management Plans, that include adequate staffing, technical capacity, and long-term maintenance.

Topic 5 - Energy and Microgrids

Council action requested: ***Increase efforts to create microgrids.*** The Board recommends that the city research mechanisms whereby City authority can be used to expand microgrid operation under "bluesky" conditions, thereby enabling local microgrids to reach financial viability. This would enable these valuable energy resilience facilities to multiply within City boundaries through private investment/local ownership and without relying on public grants.

The City should incentivize rooftop solar that can feed back into the grid, so that facilities with large roofs can produce more than they need and support communities.

2026 Meeting Overview

Month	Description	Presenter/Organization
September 2025	Presentation by Ad Hoc Task Force and consideration of draft 2025 Annual Report for Resiliency Advisory Board for approval.	Committee Business
	Biodiverse SD	Tara Ash-Reynolds, Associate Planner, and Kaelynn Graham, Associate Planner, City Planning Department
	Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)	Carie Chouinard, Fire-Rescue Department
October 2025	Revised 2025 Annual Report and Recommendations. Approval of 2025 Annual Report	Committee Business
	Presentation on Inclusive Public Engagement Guide	Kevin Borja, Senior Planner and Vanessa Tang, Associate Planner, City Planning Department
	Resilience Topic: Presentation on Grid Resilience	Dr. Lorenzo Kristov, Independent Consultant
	Presentation on Water Supply Resilience	Meena Westford, Director of Imported Water, San Diego County Water Authority
November 2025	Environment Committee takeaways, bylaws review, ad hoc subcommittee for 2026 work plan	Committee Business
	Presentation on City's Municipal Energy Program	Lindsey Hawes, Program Manager, General Services
January	Reviewed the draft 2026 Work Plan, identified speaker and meeting approaches, and elected 2026 officers.	Committee Business
	Received the Mission Bay Park Improvements Program Implementation Framework and EIR presentation.	Nancy Graham, Program Manager, Engineering & Capital Projects
February	Adopted the 2026 Work Plan, assigned members to lead resilience topics, and formed an ad hoc group for the April community meeting. Office of Boards and Commissions Policy Recommendations Form	Committee Business
	Climate Change Implications for Homelessness	Jolly Noor, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
	Stormwater 101	Patrick McDonough, San Diego Coastkeeper
March	Atmospheric Rivers, Flooding, and the Changing Climate in the San Diego Region	Dr. Deanna Nash, Scripps Institution of Oceanography and Center for Wester Weather and Water Extremes
	Phase I Los Penasquitos Lagoon Restoration Project	Brianna Menke, Deputy Director, Stormwater Department Ronak Rekani, Senior Civil Engineer, Engineering & Capital Projects Department
	Approved a framework for the April community meeting and listening session.	Committee Business

Month	Description	Presenter/Organization
April	Resiliency Advisory Board Overview and 2026 Work Plan	Andrew Meyer, Vice Chair
	Chollas Blue-Green Collaborative and Vision	Thad Winkle and Ozzy Meneses, Groundwork San Diego-Chollas Creek
May	Stormwater Overview and Projects	Sumer Hasenin, Iman Hosseini Shakib, and Anthony Salvani, Stormwater Department
	Authorized correspondence concerning the Mission Gorge Rock Quarry; approved an amended FY2027 budget recommendation letter	Committee Business
	Urban Forestry Program	Brian Widener, City Forester, Transportation Department
	Energy Resilience in the San Diego Region	Brenda Castruita, San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative and Yichao Gu, Energy Policy Initiatives Center
June	Solutions for Heat Adaptation and Equity in San Diego (SHADE SD)	A-bel Gong, San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative, and Julia Chase, Program Manager, City Planning Department
	Authorized the Chair to join in a multi-board letter concerning teleconference provisions under SB 707.	Process & accountability
July	The Big Picture: Statewide Political and Legal Solutions for Stormwater Funding	Karen Cowan, California Stormwater Quality Association
	Flood and Water Quality Resiliency: Current Challenges with Funding Stormwater Management	John W. Bliss, SCI Consulting Group
	Natural Resource Management Plans: Crest and Gonzales Canyons	Mark Berninger, Natural Resource Manager, Parks and Recreation Department
	Established an ad hoc effort to develop the 2026 Annual Report and Recommendations.	Committee Business
September	Water and Wastewater 101, 2025 Urban Water Management Plan and Water Shortage Contingency Plan	Anna Vacchi Hill, Interim Program Manager, Public Utilities Department Andrew Funk, Principal Water Resources Specialist, Public Utilities Department.
	Draft Resiliency Advisory Board Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Report, Community Engagement, Formation of 2027 Work Plan Task Force	Committee Business
October	Climate Ready SD	Julia Chase, Program Manager, City Planning Department
	El Nino Preparation	Robert Rezende, Assistant Fire Chief, Office of Emergency Services; Dustin Ivers, Program Manager, Office of Emergency Services; Todd Synder, Director, Stormwater Department

Actions Taken by the Board

The table below summarizes recorded Board actions.

Date	Subject	Action	Action/ Status
May 28	**Mission Gorge Rock Quarry**	Authorized correspondence to the Planning Commission Chair and Planning Director summarizing concerns presented to the Board and referring the matter for further review.	Approved unanimously, sent to the Planning Commission and reported at the July 9, 2026, meeting. No action taken at Planning Commission.
May 28	**FY2027 budget letter**	Authorized the Vice Chair to transmit a budget recommendation letter incorporating relevant prior recommendations regarding maintaining current funding for City Recreation Centers, Asset Management, Park Rangers, and Brush Management services for their resiliency value; and maintaining funding for the San Diego Neil Good Center for Homeless Adults; and seeking grant funding for Climate Action Plan-supported projects.	Letter sent to City Council prior to budget approval Final budget included some modifications related to requests.
Jun. 25	**SB 707 joint letter**	Authorized the Chair to sign a joint recommendation letter with other City advisory board chairs.	Approved and sent to City Council. September 16, 2026, Rules Committee approved resolution supporting SB 707