

San Diego Newsline

Downtown San Diego news — the budget, public safety, business, and the civic life of America's Finest City

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COUNTY

Postcards Sent to Registered Voters for District One Special Primary Election



Illustration from a photo by Edward O'Connor (hober) · Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0

Over 376,000 postcards are on their way to registered voters in the County of San Diego’s First Supervisorial District listing their voting options for the April 8 special primary election .

The person elected will fill the district’s vacant seat for the remainder of the current term that ends in January 2029. If no candidate receives a majority vote at the April 8 election, the top two vote-getters will move on to the special general election July 1, 2025. Only those who live in the district can vote in the election.

District 1 spans from the Pacific Ocean on the west to the Otay and San Miguel mountains in the east, and from Barrio Logan in the north to the U.S./Mexico international border on the south. The district includes the cities of Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, National City, and some communities within the City of San Diego, including Barrio Logan, East Village, Golden Hill and more. It also includes the unincorporated areas of Bonita, East Otay Mesa, Lincoln Acres, Sunnyside and La Presa.

If you’re not sure if you reside in District 1, you can look it up at sdvote.com .

Early voting begins Monday, March 10 at the Registrar of Voters office in Kearny Mesa , located at 5600 Overland Ave., San Diego. Voting at the Registrar’s will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. However, the Registrar encourages voters to take advantage of the convenience of voting by mail.

You can vote at home and return your voted ballot through the mail – no postage needed – or drop it off at any of the Registrar’s 26 official ballot drop-boxes that will be located around the district starting Tuesday, March 11 through Election Day.

If you want to vote in person, you can avoid lines by taking advantage of early voting. Starting Saturday, March 29, seven vote centers will be open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. until the final day of voting, Tuesday, April 8, when 13 vote centers will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Learn more about voting in the District 1 special primary election at sdvote.com , or call (858) 565-5800 or toll free at (800) 696-0136.

County of San Diego news release · Jan 27, 2025

COUNTY

Have Your Say at County Today and Every Day

Today is Global Community Engagement Day, a day when people across the world celebrate community efforts to work together in improving their communities.

The County of San Diego recognizes that collaboration and partnership with community are vital and we want to hear from you.

Your input on projects covering a wide range of priorities that may affect you, your neighborhood or the county at large, is important.

You can make a difference with your feedback. Public comments and survey results help shape decisions on how the County moves forward on some of the region’s most challenging issues.

Let’s make sure that every day is a community engagement day and make your voice heard.

Housing Authority of the County of San Diego Agency Plan

Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health – Vaccine Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs

Community engagement is at the center of everything we do at the County. We actively seek opportunities to partner with community to ensure they are part of the processes that impact their lives.

County of San Diego news release · Jan 28, 2025

COUNTY

County and Sharp Chula Vista Partner to Expand Crisis Stabilization Unit Network

The County is expanding its Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) network by partnering with Sharp HealthCare to add six new specialized beds at the Chula Vista Medical Center.

Approved Tuesday by the Board of Supervisors, the new beds will serve Medi-Cal patients at the hospital. This will be the region’s seventh CSU with an eighth expected to open late this year in El Cajon.

The partnership comes as the rate of emergency department discharges for people diagnosed with a behavioral health disorder has climbed from 275 per 10,000 to 304 per 10,000 between 2020 and 2022 at Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center.

“The need and impact of these units is clear. CSUs have been demonstrated to lead to up to 70 percent reductions in inpatient placements,” said Dr. Luke Bergmann, director of County Behavioral Health Services. “Instead, patients cared for in CSUs are more likely to be efficiently and effectively connected to ongoing care in community-based, less restrictive settings, where they have the best chance to sustain long-term recovery.”

The new model of housing these services within a hospital is called

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety

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County and Sharp Chula Vista Partner to Expand Crisis Stabilization Unit Network

Emergency Psychiatric Assessment, Treatment and Healing model, or EmPATH. This model creates a seamless transition to a setting specifically designed for crisis stabilization and eases the burden on emergency departments.

“Sharp recognizes the dire need for the community to be able to access mental health and substance use disorder treatment services across different levels of care, including crisis care,” said Nancy Greengold, MD, MBA, Chief Operating Officer at Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center. “We are proud to partner with the County to provide crisis stabilization services at Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center in our Emergency Psychiatric Assessment, Treatment and Healing (EmPATH) unit.”

Sharp HealthCare received a one-time state grant of \$2.9 million to establish the unit at the Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center. It is anticipated to cost a maximum of \$9.1 million annually to operate the new unit.

Crisis Stabilization Units provide immediate mental health and substance use support and treatment for those experiencing a psychiatric emergency.

Since 2018, the County expanded these specialty units, with locations across the region.

County of San Diego news release · Jan 28, 2025

COUNTY New Advisory Workgroup for Climate and Social Equity

The County’s first grassroots advisory group focused on ways to make the region more livable and resilient will hold its inaugural meeting tomorrow, January 29.

Known as the Environmental Justice Workgroup (EJW), and made up of 21 members, the group is dedicated to benefitting the community through climate and resiliency efforts. The members were selected from 141 applicants by representatives from the County’s Sustainability and Environmental Justice, Equity and Racial Justice, and Immigrant of Refuge Affairs offices, along with the self-governing San Diego Air Pollution Control District.

The group members bring diverse perspectives and experiences from community organizations, Tribal Nations, youth, and academia, and have formal education and/or direct lived experience in ecological and social justice subject areas.

With a focus on social equity, the EJW is intended to help shape sustainability policies, programs and services across our region that

impact air quality, healthy food, and access to safe, clean and green outdoor spaces.

“It is critical for the people facing daily climate challenges and environmental burdens to have the opportunity to shape any formal response,” said the County’s Chief Sustainability Officer, Eden Brukman. “We are honored to partner with the members of this Workgroup and the greater community to advance a just, sustainable, and resilient future for the region.”

The 2025 EJW members serving two-or three-year terms are:

The group will serve in an advisory capacity and its recommendations will be communicated to OSEJ for County efforts and to other jurisdictions directly. For more information, email osej@sdcounty.org.

County of San Diego news release · Jan 28, 2025

COUNTY Local Senior Lives His Best Life in a New Home

Life is sweet for San Diego senior Earl Deshazer eight months after moving into his new affordable home at Levant Senior Cottages in Linda Vista. Earl lives in one of 127-units designed to meet the needs of low-income seniors 55 and up, earning between 25 percent and 50 percent of the Area Median Income.

Built on county excess land by Wakeland Housing and Development, Levant Senior Cottages was the first to open of 11 affordable housing communities planned for county property. It is designed to be a comfortable community for residents and provide social opportunities within walking distance for a population that often feels isolated and alone.

For Earl, the relief and thrill of settling into his own home are a dream come true after a health scare left him unable to work and reliant on his family for housing. Now he says, he is independent again and overjoyed.

Learn more about Levant and their interest list.

Since 2017, the County has invested more than \$314 million into affordable housing, using excess land, its Innovative Housing Trust Fund, and other state, federal, and local funding sources administered by the County. Those funds have helped open doors to over 2,500 homes with 3,100 more on the way.

County of San Diego news release · Jan 24, 2025

COUNTY County Animal Services Offer Microchip and Vaccine Clinic in Valley Center

County Animal Services assisted 100 pets and microchipped 75 of them at a free pet clinic this week in Valley Center.

While this clinic was planned well in advance of the fires that are burning up in Los Angeles, Rachael Borelli, assistant director at County Animal Services said it is critical to prepare before any disaster and make sure your pet is microchipped and vaccinated.

If a pet gets separated from their family, a simple scan of a microchip could help reunite them. It is important to remember that most emergency animal shelters will request vaccination records for animals to make sure they are okay to be around other animals.

Wednesday’s clinic went for four hours at the Valley Center Tractor Supply store.

“That’s an area where there aren’t a lot of microchipped pets, but now there are 75 more,” Borrelli said.

So many people showed up, that they ran out of the microchips on hand, she added.

Pet owners also took advantage of the free vaccines that included rabies shots.

In addition to Valley Center residents, Animal Services also helped residents who traveled there from Ramona, Escondido and Vista.

To learn more about pet vaccination and microchipping, visit the County Animal Services site for locations and hours.

County of San Diego news release · Jan 24, 2025

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

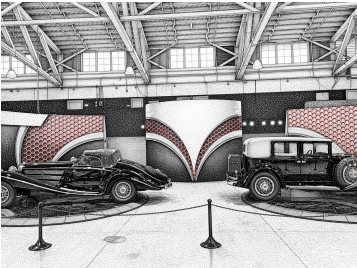


Illustration from a photo by Alan Islas · Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0

BUSINESS Member Spotlight: San Diego Automotive Museum

Located in the heart of Balboa Park, the San Diego Automotive Museum celebrates the artistry, history, and innovation of the automotive world. Through captivating exhibits, community events, and transformative educational programs, we foster a culture of connection and belonging that unites car enthusiasts and the community across generations.

Our award-winning IGNITE Academy is changing the lives of underserved San Diego youth with hands-on technical training, mentorship, and pathways to high-paying careers in the

automotive industry and beyond. From monthly workshops on brake installation, car detailing, and tire maintenance to lessons in financial literacy and resume creation, students gain valuable skills and confidence. Partnering with 26 local businesses, we place qualified students in internships and apprenticeships, creating a pipeline of talent for industries in need and setting students up for lasting career success.

For San Diego’s business leaders, partnering with the Museum is a chance to make a tangible impact while connecting with a passionate community. By sponsoring or underwriting our events, you’ll help us preserve automotive history, empower local youth, and strengthen our city’s vibrant car culture. Upcoming opportunities include our Shifting Gears Rally on March 29 and Cruising for Drivers Golf Tournament on May 19—two exciting platforms to showcase your brand and values while supporting a great cause.

Looking for another way to drive change? Your dream car awaits in our 2025 sweepstakes. Enter today for a chance to win a Porsche Taycan RWD with Performance Package or \$90,000 in cash. Visit sdautomuseum.org/win to see Official Rules and use promo code SDCHAMBER to receive 25% more entries! Proceeds directly support the Museum, including our educational programs and exhibits.

For sponsorships, underwriting opportunities, or to discuss how your business can collaborate with San Diego Automotive Museum, contact Caitlin Fahey, Director of Development, at Caitlin@sdautomuseum.org or 619-398-0302. Together, we can drive innovation, education, and connection across our community. www.sdautomuseum.org

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jan 29, 2025

BUSINESS 2025 State Legislative Outlook

We may only be a few weeks into the new year, but the California legislature has already begun introducing bills for the 2025 session. As we look forward to the 2025 legislative session, we can expect a mix of policy priorities that both continue some efforts from the Assembly, Senate, and the Governor during 2024, and new priorities.

The cost of living and the cost of doing business are growing issues in California. We can expect legislators to bring forth policies to lower the cost of living, from housing to job creation. The Chamber will focus on policy efforts that help reduce the cost of establishing and operating businesses across California, including opposing overly burdensome regulations which affect the ability of California’s industries to thrive.

AI and tech innovation will continue to be a hot-button

issue for the state, from potential regulations impacting autonomous vehicles to public harm testing of AI products. San Diego is a hub for technology and innovation, and the Chamber will continue to advocate for policies that bolster the innovation economy and against regulations that would stymie the industry as a whole.

Public safety will also continue to be a topic of debate in the legislature. While the Senate and Assembly passed theft bill packages last year, voters spoke clearly in support of Prop 36, which took effect last month. The Chamber was a strong supporter of the bill package and Prop 36 and will continue to advocate for public safety that allows San Diego’s businesses to thrive.

Electrification and zero emission efforts are also at the table. While CARB recently dropped their waiver request for their Advanced Clean Fleets rule from the EPA, we expect California to

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BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

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2025 State Legislative Outlook

continue to position itself as a

leader in clean energy policy. Chamber staff will continue to monitor the evolving dialogue between the state and the federal government on

this issue, and will continue to advocate for regulations that truly take into consideration the economic realities of our region.

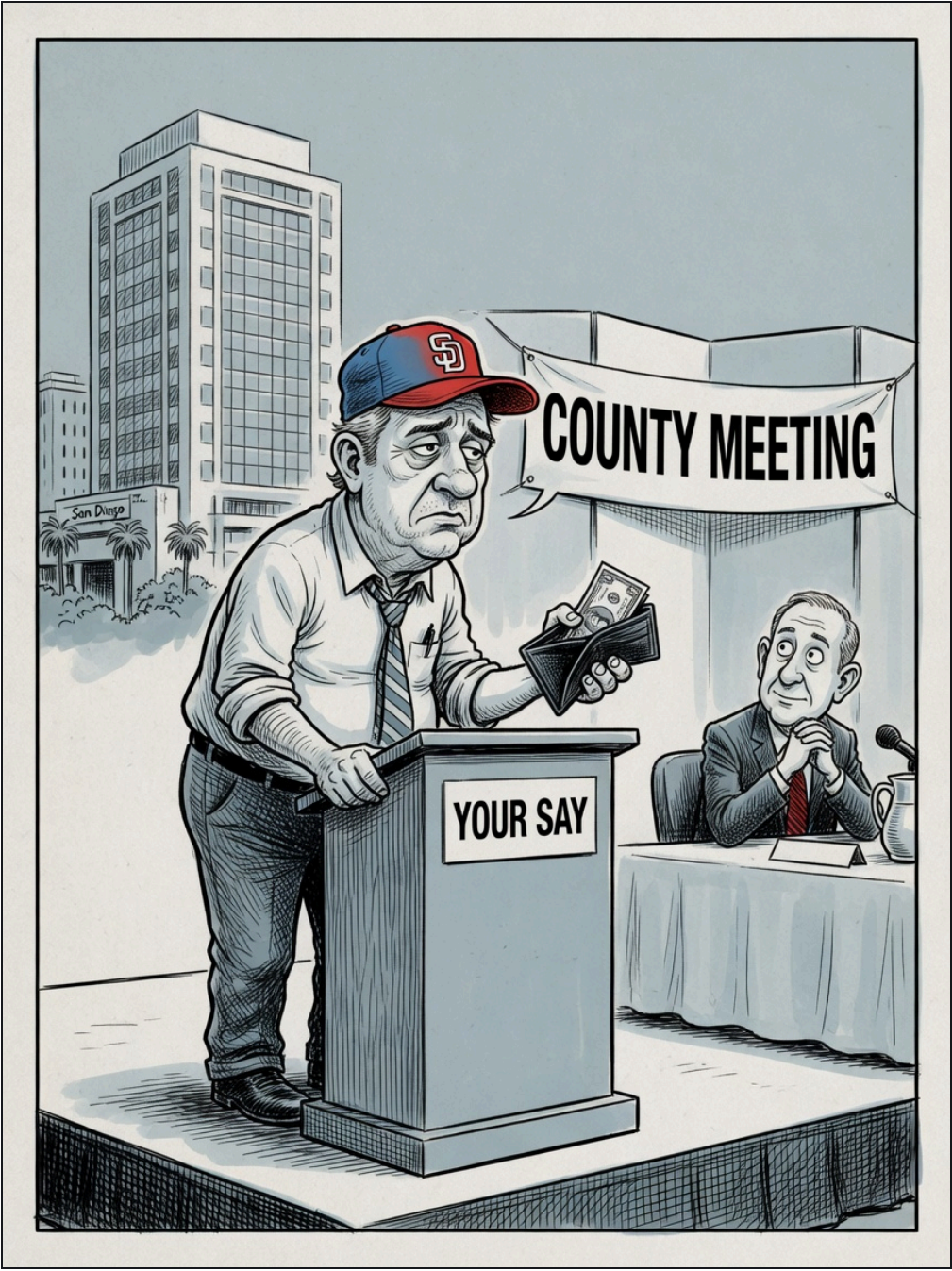
More to come from our policy team in the next few months! In the meantime, we hope you can join us in Sacramento next week as we

elevate our region’s priorities with state officials.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jan 24, 2025

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Have your say today and every day.

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

Opinion — the views of the writers named, not news reporting

COMMENTARY

California’s Affluent Liberals Question Value of High Taxes After Government Shortcomings in January Wildfires

High earners who pay California’s top income tax rate for its amenities and progressive policies may be realizing they receive inadequate services in return, argues Marc Joffe of the California Policy Center.

Conservatives have long questioned why California’s highest-in-the-nation 13.3 percent top marginal income tax rate has not prompted a larger exodus of wealthy residents. A family making \$10 million a year could save more than \$1 million annually by relocating to a no-income-tax state such as Texas or Florida.

Yet many affluent Californians accept the burden because they value the

state’s mild climate, scenic beauty, professional networking opportunities in Silicon Valley and Hollywood, and a government whose progressive policies match their own values. For high earners, the difference between netting \$9 million or \$10 million is relatively small because the additional happiness from each extra dollar declines with greater wealth.

Living in California under these tax rates is like purchasing a luxury item or eating at an upscale restaurant, where buyers reasonably expect premium quality. The state’s wealthy residents have often managed to shield themselves from the worst effects of poor governance. They can reside in gated communities that limit criminals’ access, insulating them from the breakdown in law and order that affects many urban areas and businesses.

The January wildfires, however, did not respect income

levels, and many affluent homeowners in areas like the Palisades suffered direct consequences of incompetent government. Despite officials’ claims that nothing could have been done and that the fires were an unavoidable result of climate change, residents have pointed to clear failures including an empty Santa Ynez Reservoir, disabled fire trucks, and insufficient prepositioned firefighters.

An implicit social contract between the state government and its high-tax-paying residents appears to have been broken. Liberal comedian Bill Maher expressed this frustration openly on the January 17 episode of his HBO show “Real Time.”

Maher said, “That’s why I pay 13 percent of my income in this state every year to people who I assumed were working on things like this.” He also criticized Gov. Newsom’s response about

local officials investigating dry hydrants, stating, “Yeah, you got to do that before the fire.” The comedian highlighted that three hundred other ones around the city are just gone, stolen for parts, and that one of three reservoirs serving the Palisades was offline precisely when it was needed most.

Rather than focusing on practical wildfire preparedness, California governments have directed billions toward fighting climate change. Given the scale of the recent fires, it is impossible to conclude that these efforts have been adequate. Even beforehand, the futility was evident for two reasons.

The state produces only about 0.7 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, meaning its policies cannot meaningfully alter the course of climate change. Some costly initiatives are also failing to deliver results, including the California High-Speed

Rail project, which voters approved 16 years ago. With more than \$13.6 billion spent, it has not removed a single gasoline-powered car from the roads and will not do so until at least 2031. In the meantime, construction activities have actually increased emissions through concrete pouring and truck transportation.

While acknowledging the terrible human cost of the fires, one potential positive outcome is that wealthy liberal Californians may finally recognize they are paying “champagne taxes for soda pop public services.” This realization could lead them to demand better performance from government in exchange for their substantial tax contributions.

Marc Joffe is president of the Contra Costa Taxpayers Association and a visiting fellow at the California Policy Center.

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COMMENTARY (CONTINUED)

Opinion — the views of the writers named, not news reporting

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California’s Affluent
Liberals Question
Value of High Taxes
After Government
Shortcomings in
January Wildfires

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commentary published by the
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ABOUT THIS PAPER

San Diego Newsline covers
downtown San Diego first —
City Hall, the Gaslamp

Quarter, East Village, Little
Italy, Barrio Logan and the
waterfront — and the county
around it. Every item names
its source; read the originals
and our standards at
sandiegonewsline.com.

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