

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

\$1 Million Grant to Help End Girls Incarceration



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San Diego County Probation with San Diego Youth Services are implementing a million-dollar grant from the Sierra Health Foundation, California Office of Youth and Community Restoration and The Vera Institute of Justice to reduce and ultimately end the incarceration of girls and gender-expansive youth.

With the two-year grant and strategic support from the state, Probation has implemented the San Diego Ending Girls Incarceration Initiative that is comprehensive, equity driven, focused on diversion, intervention, and community-based alternatives to detention. The strategy is to improve health outcomes and empower girls and gender-expansive youth who are at risk of or are currently engaged in the youth justice legal system.

“By prioritizing a shift from a traditional, punitive approach to a holistic, youth-centered model, that focuses on healing, accountability, and well-being, we are providing youth with access to meaningful support and a path forward,” said Chief Probation Officer Tamika Nelson. “We are proud of the progress we’ve made in shifting the way our systems respond to girls and gender-expansive youth.”

The San Diego Ending Girls Incarceration Initiative reflects a growing movement across the state and country to dismantle systemic conditions that lead to girls being incarcerated, especially those who have experienced

trauma, exploitation, or are involved in the criminal justice system, and who are Black, Indigenous, Latina, or LGBTQ+.

In San Diego, Probation established a collective that includes county stakeholders, community advocates, and lived experience experts to work together and guide local strategy and accountability. Additionally, youth and community focus groups were conducted to ensure lived experience is considered in policy decisions.

“This work is only possible through strong partnerships, community voice, youth voice, and an unwavering commitment to equity and dignity for all youth,” Nelson said.

Racial disparities and other local data were analyzed by Probation staff to identify situations or factors that drive girls to incarceration. Probation is focused on more individualized and developmentally appropriate responses to cases. This includes establishing a discretionary warrant policy that allows eligible youth to report directly to court on a warrant and not have to be taken into custody.

The initiative underscores Probation’s belief that all youth deserve dignity, opportunity, and the chance to thrive outside of confinement. The department remains committed to system improvement, accountability, and community engagement for this critical work.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 11, 2025

COUNTY

Share Your Input on Housing and Community Development Priorities

The County’s Housing and Community Development Services is seeking your input on how to prioritize funding for things like housing, community improvements and economic development initiatives.

Each year, the County receives entitlement funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and develops an annual plan to outline how those funds will be spent. The input gathered from community members will be used to develop the 2026-2027 Annual Plan.

Examples of projects funded in previous years include affordable housing, home repair, first -time homebuyer programs , building new sidewalks and accessible ramps, the development of neighborhood parks, and supporting services like food assistance. Funding for these types of projects comes from the following federal grant programs:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Supports communities by addressing local housing and community development needs.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) : Primarily used to fund the development of affordable housing and rental assistance to lower-income households.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) : Provides direct services to persons experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Housing Opportunities for Persons With HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) : Provides housing and services to persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families.

“We want to hear from community members, who know best, what kinds

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety

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Share Your Input on Housing and Community Development Priorities

of resources they need and who can share their current experiences,” said David Estrella, director of the County’s Housing and Community Development Services. “These federal funds help bring important services and projects to our community with the greatest need. I invite everyone to share their input either online or at an in-person session.”

Community input and regional data shape the goals and priorities of the annual plan.

The County’s Housing and Community Development Services is hosting six in-person and two virtual community input sessions between June 10 and 20. You can also submit feedback by filling out an online survey.

Del Mar Wednesday, June 11, 2025 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Del Mar Library 1309 Camino Del Mar, Del Mar, CA 92014

Fallbrook Thursday, June 12, 2025 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Fallbrook Library 124 S. Mission Rd, Fallbrook, CA 92028

Virtual Session 1 Friday, June 13, 2025 10 to 11 a.m.

Join the Teams Meeting

Spring Valley Monday, June 16, 2025 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Spring Valley Library 836 Kempton St, Spring Valley, CA 91977

Alpine Tuesday, June 17, 2025 4 to 5 p.m. Alpine Library 1752 Alpine Blvd., Alpine, CA 91901

Borrego Springs Wednesday, June 18, 2025 4 to 5 p.m. Borrego Springs Library 2580 Country Club Rd, Borrego Springs, CA 92004

Virtual Session 1 Friday, June 20, 2025 10 to 11 a.m. Join the Teams Meeting

Find more ways to stay up to date on the annual plan, share your input or learn more about the Five Year Consolidated Plan on Engage San Diego County.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 11, 2025

Local Senior Finds a Happy Home

Life is sweet for some local seniors now living in their new affordable apartment homes on Mt. Etna Drive in Clairemont. The first community event for residents, an ice cream social, was held inside the Senior Wellness Center attached to their building.

It has been five months

since the grand opening of the Paul Downey Senior Residence, a 79-unit apartment building for low-income seniors, 62 years and older. Built on County surplus land, it is one of four buildings planned for this intergenerational campus that will provide 404 new affordable homes when construction is complete in 2026.

The County has invested \$57 million in the Mt. Etna development which is being developed by Chelsea Investment Corp . Supportive services are being provided by Serving Seniors .

Learn more about the Mt. Etna interest list can be found online.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 5, 2025

County The Library’s Summer Learning Challenge is Back, Read Some Books, Win Some Prizes

Everybody knows summer is a great time to catch up on some reading.

And it’s even better when you can earn prizes by doing it!

Well, the County Library Summer Learning Challenge is ready to help you do both. This summer’s “Read, Learn,

Create” reading challenge started June 1 and runs through Aug 31.

Register online or at any of the County’s 33 branch libraries, read some books, have some fun, engage in some new activities and you can earn a prize—a free book or a Library tote bag.

The summer challenge is open to people of all ages. But its main goal is to encourage kids and teens to read during their summer vacations. That can help prevent what some educators call the “summer slide,” a time where students can lose some of what they achieved during the school year.

Taking part is easy. First, register, either by coming to your local County library or by going online at the Library’s “Summer at Your Library” webpage .

Next, pick up a printed “learning log” in any of 13 languages at a County library branch, or by printing one out at home, to track your progress.

Then, over the course of the three-month challenge, track what you read, and mark the activities you complete in the learning log to win stuff.

Activities, which can be marked off on your learning log, include reading to a pet;

trying a new recipe; reading a book from a series; reading a graphic novel; learning to say “hello” in another language; drawing a picture; reading a magazine or newspaper; or attending a library program at any of the County’s 33 branch libraries.

Complete 10 hours of reading, 10 books or 10 learning activities and you win your choice of a free book or a Library tote bag.

And you don’t even have to come into the library to check out books or read. That’s because the County’s e-book collection is available to everyone using your library card through the library’s online Libby platform or by downloading the Libby app and connecting to the library. And if you don’t already have a County library card, you can do that online or at a branch.

So, summer’s here! Read, Learn, Create. And win something too!

To sign up for the Summer Learning challenge drop into any County branch library or go to sdcl.org/summer .

For more information about the County Library, to find programs, activities and more, go to the Library’s webpage .

County of San Diego news release · Jun 5, 2025

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



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BUSINESS Member Spotlight: Von Consulting

VON Consulting: HR Expertise, Now Supporting Businesses in San Diego

Founded in 2003, VON Consulting is a trusted provider of human resources and technology services, supporting companies across Europe and now expanding into the San Diego business community . With over two decades of experience in IT recruitment, HR consulting, and workforce solutions, VON Consulting delivers tailored services that help organizations grow efficiently and compliantly.

IT recruitment and outsourcing – sourcing top-tier tech talent for development, infrastructure, and support roles

HR administration and payroll – full-service solutions for personnel

records, compliance, and salary processing

HR consultancy – expert guidance on labor law, internal procedures, salary benchmarks, and HR strategy

Interested to expand your team or expand operations in East Europe ? Let us know.

As part of our mission to support small and midsize businesses, we’ve launched vonStaff.com , an easy-to-use employee management platform designed specifically for companies with 5 to 200 employees . vonStaff simplifies how businesses manage their internal teams—without the overhead of traditional enterprise HR systems.

Policy distribution and document management

Shift planning, time tracking, and leave management

End-of-month reporting for payroll accuracy

vonStaff.com is free for teams of up to 5 employees , with a simple pricing model of \$2 per employee/month beyond that . It’s a scalable, cost-effective way to stay organized, compliant, and focused on business growth.

VON Consulting is proud to

bring its proven experience and innovative tools to San Diego. We welcome chamber members to explore how our services—and vonStaff—can help streamline operations and empower local businesses to thrive.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jun 9, 2025

BUSINESS From the Desk of Veronica Perondi – June 2025

May 1 st officially marked my one-year anniversary in the role of Executive Director at LEAD San Diego, and what a remarkable year it has been. I’m filled with gratitude and excitement as I reflect on the time that has passed, it feels like a lifetime and just yesterday, all at the same time.

On May 1 st , I also had the honor of presenting to Rotary San Diego, Club 33, where I shared my vision for LEAD and reflected on its incredible 42- year history. I was introduced by Phil Blair (83), a graduate of the first LEAD cohort in 1983, a recipient of the first LEAD Graduate of the YEAR award and a three-time LEAD Board Chair. There were many in the room who have been part of LEADs

history, and whose support and mentorship have meant so much to me over the past year.

In preparing for the presentation, I looked back at historical documents and annual reports and one quote from the 1985-86 annual report stood out:

“LEAD Alumni can be found volunteering for all kinds of projects, programs, committees and boards. They are assisting every major institution in our county”

The same can still be said today, 40+ years later. The LEAD network is unparalleled and it’s the type of people that are drawn to LEAD that make it so unique. LEAD attracts those who are eager to learn, to expand their knowledge and to make a meaningful difference. These are the individuals who form the foundation of our community – a network of changemakers.

One of the most rewarding parts of my role is recognizing the outstanding leadership that contributes to our community. I’d like to celebrate the 2025 Visionary Award Honorees, each of whom exemplifies strong leadership for the greater

good of our region:

The Neil Morgan Memorial Award for Lifetime Achievement – Walt Ekard, Former County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer (posthumously)

LEAD Graduate of the Year – Jim Gruny (23), Community Relations Officer, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego

Innovation & Economic Opportunity Award – Dr. Ellen Neufeldt, President CSU San Marcos

The Ronald Kendrick Memorial Award for Regional Collaboration – Kerri Verbeke Kapich (17), Chief Operating Officer, San Diego Tourism Authority

The Charles Nathanson Memorial Award for Cross-Border Region Building – Dr. Mark Sanchez (21), President/Superintendent, Southwestern Community College District

These individuals have demonstrated dedication, innovation and a commitment to shaping a better future for our region. Their leadership is a testament to the power of vision and purpose and LEAD San Diego is proud to honor

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BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

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From the Desk of
Veronica Perondi –
June 2025
them for their contributions.

LEAD San Diego is also excited to welcome in new leadership with Chris Cate, who recently started his role as the President and CEO of

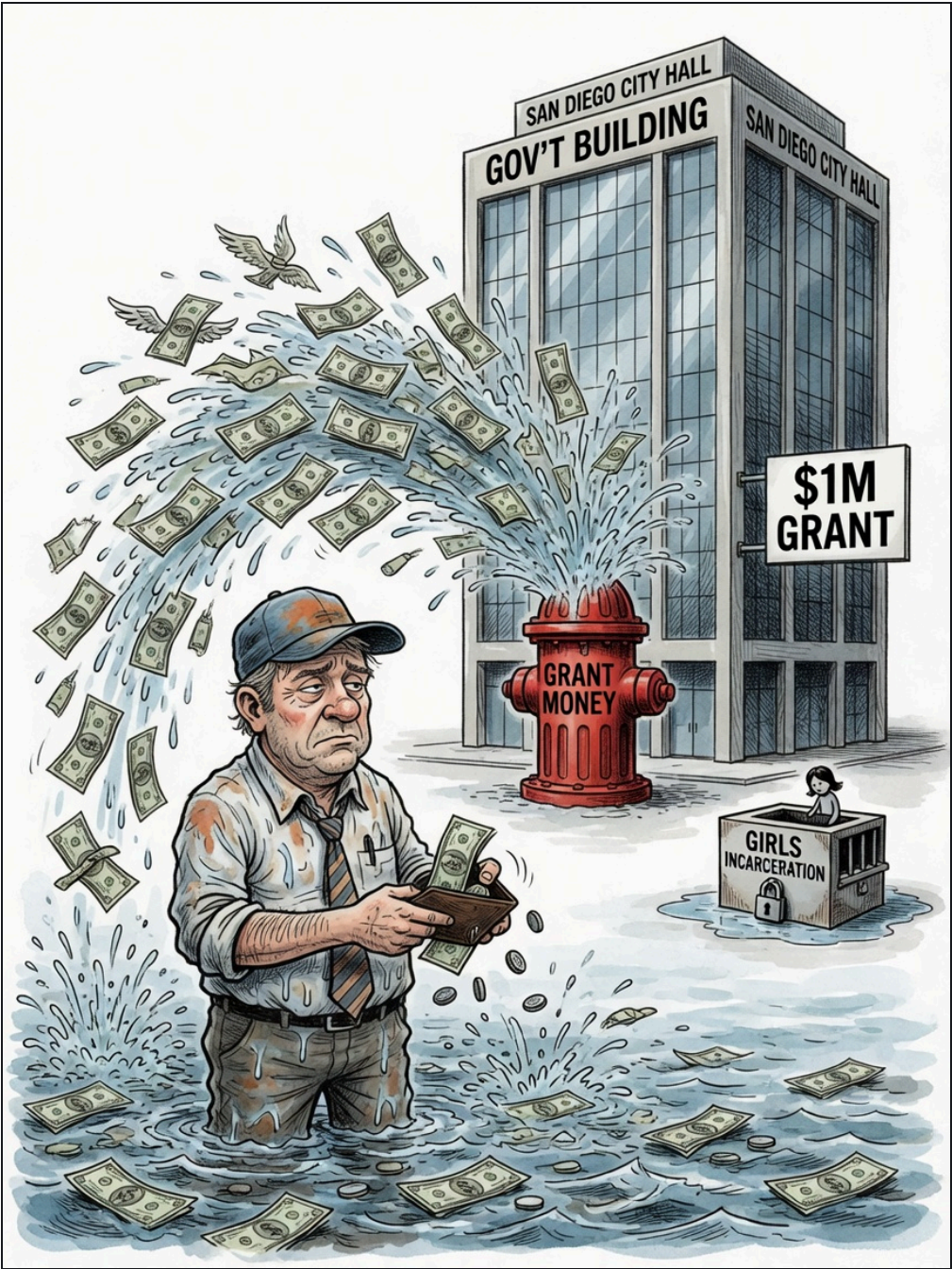
the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce and LEAD San Diego. I, along with the LEAD Board of Directors, look forward to working

alongside him to take LEAD to new heights.
I also want to thank the LEAD network for welcoming me with open arms. I'm eager

to see where the next year will take us.
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jun 5, 2025

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Another million to 'end' what it never touches

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

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

COMMENTARY
Assembly Bill 84 Would
Harm California's
Most Vulnerable
Students, Christensen
Argues

The California Policy Center's Lance Christensen contends that proposed restrictions on nonclassroom-based charter schools would limit essential educational options for children who struggle in traditional settings.

Lance Christensen, vice president of government affairs and education policy at the California Policy Center, strongly opposes Assembly Bill 84, sponsored by Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi of Torrance.

Christensen, a father of five and former candidate for state superintendent of public instruction, writes that the legislation, presented as a measure for accountability, would instead restrict the growth of

nonclassroom-based public charter schools.

These schools currently serve tens of thousands of students who have not succeeded in conventional classroom models, according to Christensen. He describes them as lifelines for children facing bullying, chronic health conditions, academic struggles or learning styles that do not fit standard school environments.

Christensen draws from personal experience, noting that two of his children benefited significantly from online charter options. One daughter received targeted curriculum support to overcome speech problems that her neighborhood school had been unwilling to address properly.

His son, the commentary states, used the flexible setting to focus on mathematics, catching up to middle-school peers and later

advancing ahead of his freshman class. Christensen traces much of that success to the online charter opportunity and adds that the son will soon graduate as salutatorian from his traditional high school.

Rather than helping families like his, AB 84 threatens to eliminate or severely limit access to these personalized educational choices, Christensen argues. The bill would impose arbitrary restrictions and burdensome regulations that could lead to school closures or enrollment caps.

Such measures would harm students already on the margins, he writes, including those with medical conditions, mental health challenges or difficult home lives. Nonclassroom-based charters offer flexible scheduling, one-on-one support and a sense of hope, safety and stability.

Christensen acknowledges the importance of accountability and transparency in education policy but maintains that AB 84 limits opportunity without improving quality. He questions who truly benefits from a measure that appears to punish successful alternative schools.

The commentary asserts that every parent should have the right to select the educational path best suited to their child without yielding to political agendas or opposition from interest groups hostile to school choice.

Instead of restricting these public schools, policymakers should examine what can be learned from their successes with overlooked and underserved students, Christensen writes. He criticizes one-size-fits-all mandates that reduce family agency.

At a time when California continues to recover from pandemic-related academic and emotional setbacks, the state should expand educational options rather than curtail them, according to the California Policy Center official.

Christensen urges lawmakers to reject Assembly Bill 84 and support the full range of public school choices, including nonclassroom-based charters that help vulnerable students regain academic footing.

Christensen concludes that our most vulnerable students deserve better and that we have a responsibility to provide them with the support and opportunities they need to succeed.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Jun 10, 2025

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About this paper

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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