

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 Raises Incentives for Landlords Renting to Veterans



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County of San Diego news release · May 13, 2026



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The County has increased leasing bonuses five-fold for landlords who rent to veterans experiencing homelessness, aiming to bring more rental units into the system and expand landlord participation.

The County’s Landlord Incentive Program now offers a \$2,500 leasing bonus to every newly leased unit, up from \$500.

The expanded incentive is funded by a \$1.67 million state allocation secured by Sen. Catherine Blakespear in last year’s state budget.

“This investment allows us to bring more units into our housing system and move veterans into stable homes more quickly,” said Housing and Community Development Director David Estrella. “We are grateful for the Board and the state’s support and for every landlord who partners with us to make a real housing difference in our community.”

The incentive program provides a range of support to property owners, including risk mitigation funds, reimbursement of application-related expenses and dedicated staff who work directly with landlords throughout the leasing process.

More than 375 landlords currently partner with the County Housing Authority, providing homes to more than 850 veterans holding VASH vouchers. The County encourages landlords interested in giving back to those who have served to submit an interest form.

DOWNTOWN California’s First Urban Pickleball Courts Are Coming to Downtown San Diego

California’s First-Ever Urban Pickleball Experience Is Taking Over Downtown San Diego This Summer

Move over rooftop bars and beach volleyball. This summer, Downtown San Diego is turning Fifth Avenue into an open-air pickleball playground.

The Gaslamp Urban Pickleball is officially bringing California’s first-ever urban pickleball courts to the streets of the Gaslamp Quarter , transforming one of the city’s most iconic nightlife corridors into a high-energy sports and entertainment experience unlike anything else in the state.

For six Thursdays this summer, players will rally beneath the downtown skyline while DJs spin courtside, crowds flow through Fifth Avenue, and local restaurants and bars keep the atmosphere alive with exclusive Paddle Hour specials.

It’s pickleball — but built for the middle of a city.

The Streets of Downtown San Diego Are Becoming Pickleball Courts

Beginning Thursday, July 30, Fifth Avenue between Island and K Street will shut down every Thursday evening through September 3 to make room for eight urban pickleball courts in the heart of Downtown San Diego.

The weekly event runs from 4 PM to

sunset and combines sports, nightlife, music, food, and social culture into one massive street-level activation.

Unlike traditional pickleball tournaments or suburban court setups, Gaslamp Urban Pickleball is designed to feel immersive and energetic — blending the fast-growing sport with the atmosphere of the Gaslamp Quarter itself.

A Game Day Market featuring local vendors and brands

Paddle Hour food and drink specials at nearby restaurants and bars

A vibrant open-air downtown atmosphere under the city lights

Whether you’re a seasoned player or someone who just bought a paddle last week because your entire friend group suddenly became obsessed with pickleball, the event is built for all skill levels.

Gaslamp Urban Pickleball Event Information

Gaslamp Urban Pickleball Dates: Every Thursday, July 30 – September 3 Time: 4 PM – Sunset Location: Fifth Avenue between Island & K Street Cost: \$45 per player Registration includes:

Players are encouraged to bring their own paddles, though limited rentals will be available onsite.

This summer, Downtown San Diego isn’t just watching the pickleball craze.

It’s putting it directly into the streets.

Why This Isn’t Your Typical Pickleball Event

Pickleball has exploded across the United States over the last few years, but most experiences still happen inside recreation centers, country clubs, or dedicated court facilities.

The Gaslamp Urban Pickleball flips that concept entirely.

Instead of separating sports from city culture, the event drops pickleball directly into one of the busiest entertainment districts in Southern California.

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

California’s First Urban Pickleball Courts Are Coming to Downtown San Diego

Gaslamp Urban Pickleball is being introduced as Downtown San Diego’s first-ever urban pickleball court experience — and one of the first large-scale street-style pickleball activations in California.

The concept feels closer to a street festival than a traditional sports league.

You’re not driving to a sports complex surrounded by parking lots.

You’re playing in the middle of Fifth Avenue while music echoes through historic buildings, people walk between bars and restaurants, and sunset hits the downtown skyline.

Gaslamp Quarter Association news release · May 11, 2026

COUNTY

Youth Take VR Auto Skills into a Working County Garage

Four young men at the East Mesa Youth Detention Facility spent three months learning automotive repair using virtual reality. This week, they stepped into a real garage to use those skills alongside County mechanics and help maintain County vehicles.

“This program is unique because it blends virtual reality with hands-on training,” said Supervising Probation Officer Eduardo Calderon. “Through our partnership with San Diego County Fleet Services, the youth can work on real fleet vehicles while in custody — an opportunity rarely offered in programs like this.”

County Fleet mechanic Geovanny Gallardo led the group through a six-month vehicle safety inspection and walked them through an annual preventative inspection and service. He demonstrated each step, handed them tools, showed them how to check and reinstall tires, and encouraged them to document everything. He also answered their questions about his own career path.

One participant said he is exploring as many trades as he can while in custody.

“I’m trying to learn every trade I can now so that when I go home, I have options,” he said. He is studying psychology because he wants to help others, but he also enjoys

working on cars and may pursue that path.

Another young man said he is considering becoming an auto mechanic. “It’s a work of passion for me,” he said. “It’s a big responsibility, so I make sure I understand everything.”

Probation Officer Ricardo Macklem, who develops youth programs, said he is proud of the progress.

“I feel honored to be part of this program,” Macklem said. “We’ve put in a lot of work to get here and they’re excited to learn.”

County Fleet Services Chief David Fernandez said staff hope to show students how virtual training connects to real maintenance work.

The automotive program is also offered at the Kearny Mesa Youth Transition Campus, where both young women and young men participate. Macklem said the two classes will rotate time in the County garage.

San Diego County Probation offers several vocational programs for youth in custody, including a fire academy, construction, culinary arts, health care assistance, automotive training and more. The programs help youth build skills, earn certifications, and access resources that support their future success.

County of San Diego news release · May 13, 2026

COUNTY

More Affordable Homes Coming to North County

Construction is underway on Coast Villas, a new affordable housing community in Oceanside for older adults with low incomes. A groundbreaking ceremony was held today at 1111 S. Coast Highway to celebrate the start of the 56-unit development.

Coast Villas will provide homes for people ages 55 and older who earn 30 to 50 percent of the area median income . Fifteen apartments will be set aside for veterans experiencing homelessness, including 12 units for veterans with behavioral health needs.

Located within walking distance of Buccaneer Beach and the Oceanside Pier, the four-story building will feature 35 studio apartments, 16 one-bedroom units and two two-bedroom units. Amenities will include a

community room, wellness center, covered parking and laundry facilities on every floor.

The project is being developed by National CORE through public-private partnerships. The County of San Diego invested \$2.4 million in No Place Like Home (NPLH) funding, and County Behavioral Health will provide supportive services for 20 years. Coast Villas will remain affordable for 55 years.

Visit the National CORE website for more information and to join the mailing list.

Since 2017, the County of San Diego has invested more than \$334 million in affordable housing using strategies like using excess County land, the Innovative Housing Trust Fund and other state, federal, and local sources. These investments have created more than 3,700 homes, with another 2,300 in development.

More information about the County’s housing initiatives is available through the County’s Housing Hub .

County of San Diego news release · May 12, 2026

COUNTY

Health Officials Urge Complete JYNNEOS Series For Best Mpox Protection

County Public Health officials are urging people at higher risk for mpox to get both doses of the JYNNEOS vaccine as cases rise statewide and globally, including reports of the more severe Clade I strain.

San Diego County has reported 12 Clade II cases this year , mostly among people who were not fully vaccinated. All involved men between ages 17 and 52.

The two-dose JYNNEOS series offers the strongest protection. People who have received only one dose are urged to complete the series as soon as possible. Protection peaks two weeks after the second dose. No additional doses are recommended for people who have already completed the full two-dose series. Recent data shows that the JYNNEOS series greatly lowers the risk of severe disease, especially important for people with weakened immune systems, those with certain skin conditions, and other risk factors.

“It is really important that people complete both doses of JYNNEOS vaccine. You are best protected against mpox

that way,” said Sayone Thihalolipavan, M.D., MPH, County Public Health Officer. “Now is a great time to get up to date as we head into summer events.”

Statewide, mpox activity has more than doubled compared with the same period in previous years. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is also investigating a travel-associated Clade I case in San Francisco. No Clade I cases have been reported in San Diego County.

Mpox spreads through close physical contact. Symptoms can include a painful rash or sores and sometimes flu-like symptoms. Avoiding contact with people who have rashes or scabs, not sharing personal items and frequent hand-washing help reduce risk.

The JYNNEOS vaccine is available through healthcare providers and County Sexual Health Clinics for people who need help accessing it.

Text COSD MPOX to 98256 for mpox updates and find more information on the County’s mpox webpage.

County of San Diego news release · May 12, 2026

COUNTY

Public’s Help Needed to Identify Burn Victim

The San Diego County Medical Examiner’s Office is asking for the public’s help to identify a man who died from burn injuries at a National City shopping center in February.

Due to the extent of his injuries, investigators have not been able to identify him through standard methods. He had no identification, personal items or clothing that could help determine who he was.

In the early morning hours of Feb. 21, firefighters responded to reports of flames coming from a dumpster enclosure at The Galleria shopping center at 2720 E. Plaza Blvd. After extinguishing the fire, crews found the man deceased inside the enclosure, according to Medical Examiner Investigator Jennifer Wright.

An anthropology examination suggests the man may have been African American, likely between his late 30s to late 40s, and approximately 5 feet 5 inches tall. No additional could be determined.

Investigators reviewed surveillance video after a witness reported seeing

someone enter the dumpster enclosure on the evening before, Feb. 20. The video shows a man matching the possible victim’s description wearing a dark hooded sweatshirt, dark pants and red slippers.

Anyone who recognizes the description or has information that may help identify the man is asked to call the Medical Examiner’s Office at 858-694-2905 and reference case number 2026-00525.

County of San Diego news release · May 8, 2026

COUNTY

Lemon Grove Family Resource Center Moving to New, More Accessible Location

The Lemon Grove Family Resource Center will soon provide the same essential services in a new, more accessible location in the heart of the community.

The center is moving one mile from its longtime site (at 7065 Broadway) to 3285 Lemon Grove Avenue on May 18, 2026. The new location—formerly a Union Bank—is being remodeled to better support client services and is only a block away from the Lemon Grove Depot trolley stop.

More than 32,000 people received assistance at the Lemon Grove Family Resource Center in 2025. The current site will remain open through 3 p.m. on Friday May 15, 2026.

Since 1990, the Broadway location has offered nutritional assistance through CalFresh, medical insurance enrollment for Medi-Cal and workplace readiness support through CalWORKs. The new site will continue to offer these safety net programs that help individuals and families access food, health coverage and stable income supports.

The center’s operating hours will remain unchanged, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m . , Monday through Friday.

The Lemon Grove Family Resource Center is operated the County’s Self Sufficiency Services, which serves more than 1.4 million San Diego County residents. The County of San Diego administers public safety net programs on behalf of the State of California, with most programs funded by both the state and federal government.

County of San Diego news release · May 7, 2026

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BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



BUSINESS
Member Spotlight –
BASK Digital Media

BASK Digital Media is a full-service digital strategy and marketing agency specializing in public affairs efforts, legislative advocacy, ballot measures, and crisis management across the United States. With nearly two decades of experience at every level, from national issues to local initiatives, our team of 30 delivers unmatched speed, precision, and strategic clarity.

Campaign veterans lead every project and combine bold creative, innovative media strategy, and real-time data analytics to persuade audiences and drive impact. Powered by in-house design, development, and media placement teams, BASK offers turnkey solutions including digital advertising, ad production, social media management, grassroots advocacy, email and text marketing, website development,

and comprehensive data integration.

BASK has had the honor of supporting over 450 high-stakes initiatives and campaigns including some of California’s most consequential ballot measures and legislative efforts. We offer our clients turn-key services, meaning they can rely on us to deliver an end-to-end marketing program in a quick turn, fast-paced environment.

BASK doesn’t just execute campaigns, we also build the tools that power them. Our suite of proprietary solutions is designed to enhance performance and deepen engagement. This includes InfluenceEdge™, our proprietary tool to reach key decision makers and policy insiders, as well as AdvoSTORY™, our “share your story” platform that enables advocacy efforts to seamlessly capture grassroots supporter video testimonials.

Streamlined Process. Fast Turnarounds. Comprehensive Strategy. BASK turns complex challenges into real strategies that win.

Website URL:
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San Diego Regional Chamber of
Commerce news release · Apr 29, 2026

BUSINESS
Member Spotlight –
Rivair Apartment
Homes

Located in West Mission Valley, Rivair is a brand-new apartment community, consisting of 316 homes, offering studio, 1 and 2 bedroom floor plans in a community designed with high-end finishes, functional spaces, and offering an incredible lifestyle.

Inspired by the natural elements, Rivair was intentionally designed to reflect the balance of water, grounding earth, shimmering lights and open air. From material selections to shared spaces, the community draws influence from its surrounding environment, creating a seamless connection between modern living and the natural landscape that defines Mission Valley. Located across from Fashion Valley Mall, each residence features polished quartz countertops, USB outlets, stainless steel appliances, and wood-style plank flooring, creating a clean,

modern look that doesn’t compromise function. That same thoughtful approach to urban living extends beyond individual homes—where integrated storage and in home washers and dryers support daily routines—to shared spaces designed to encourage interaction and community engagement.

Apartment interiors are further elevated through Rivair’s thoughtfully curated SALT and SAND interior design packages. These two distinctive palettes draw inspiration from coastal textures and natural tones. SALT offering a lighter, airy aesthetic, and SAND embracing warmer, grounded hues. Each package allows residents to choose an interior style that aligns with their personal sense of comfort while maintaining Rivair’s cohesive, design-forward vision.

On-site amenities such as the WATER YARD, which includes a saltwater pool and spa, SUMMIT, a rooftop terrace, and FLUX, a fully equipped fitness center are designed to complement the surrounding neighborhood rather than compete with it, while its proximity to Fashion Valley Mall and Fashion

Valley Transit Center puts the city’s best dining, shopping, and nightlife within easy reach. Rivair also incorporates energy-efficient systems across the community for responsible resource management, demonstrated by its LEED Gold certification.

A strong focus on community is at the core of Rivair’s approach to San Diego living. Throughout the year, the on-site team hosts events such as social gatherings, cooking classes, and networking mixers to foster connections and help residents feel more at home. These efforts, paired with attentive service and clear communication, help create an environment that feels welcoming, responsive, and well cared for.

Rivair is proud to be part of the Mission Valley community and to play a meaningful role in the continued growth and vitality of San Diego’s central corridor. More information is available at <https://www.rivairapartmenthomes.com/>.

Find your element at Rivair Apartment Homes.

San Diego Regional Chamber of
Commerce news release · Apr 29, 2026

AROUND CALIFORNIA

Statewide news

CALIFORNIA
Sacramento Faces
\$66.2 Million Deficit as
Officials Target Police,
Parks and Pools for
Cuts

Mayor Kevin McCarty and the City Council propose reductions in law enforcement and recreation services while not cutting the Unsheltered Homelessness Six Point Plan amid the city's claimed shortfall.

SACRAMENTO — City leaders are preparing to trim police staffing, close community pools for parts of the year and reduce park services as they confront a \$66.2 million shortfall in the proposed budget for fiscal year 2026-27.

According to a city staff report, the reductions would eliminate violent crime reduction teams, the internet crimes against children team and traffic enforcement units. Dispatch and burglary units would also face cuts.

Roughly 40 vacant police positions and 20 vacant fire positions would go unfilled.

The Sacramento Police Department’s mounted unit would be dismantled entirely. Funding for the Shotspotter gunfire detection system would end.

Recreation programs would take hits as well. Community pools would see reduced hours and staffing. Discounts for community centers and clubhouses used by qualifying groups would shrink. The X Street Navigation Center for people experiencing homelessness could lose funding or be moved.

These steps come as the Sacramento City Unified School District revised its own projected shortfall upward by \$128 million, from an initial \$43 million to \$171 million.

Mayor Kevin McCarty’s “Unsheltered Homelessness Six Point Plan” would not be cut. That plan calls for three “micro-communities” containing a total of 120 tiny homes. Seniors would pay 30 percent of their income to live in the 120-square-foot units equipped with

electricity, bathrooms, showers and laundry.

The city received a \$12.35 million Encampment Resolution Funds grant in 2025 from the California Department of Housing and Community Development to buy and build more tiny homes.

The mayor proposed the latest homelessness plan even though the city’s budget gap continues to widen. Earlier this year McCarty floated nearly quadrupling the real estate transfer tax on high-value properties to raise at least \$9 million annually for housing-related programs.

The tentative proposal would lift the city’s real estate transfer tax from 0.275 percent to about 1 percent — from \$2.75 to \$10 per \$1,000 in property value — but only on transactions likely above \$1 million or \$2 million.

McCarty has said the higher tax could help first-time homebuyers, renters and the homeless “without affecting most homeowners.”

City officials have not proposed reductions to the homelessness programs that have included tiny homes, renovated hotels, single-room occupancy apartments, sheds and RV trailers, most of which sit empty.

The suggested cuts to core services are expected to fall short of closing the entire gap. The source author says the reductions appear designed to pressure residents ahead of future requests for higher taxes.

Police departments in the city have long operated with vacancies. The latest plan would remove specialized units focused on violent crime, online offenses against children and traffic safety.

Taxpayers who fund these services are expected to feel the effects on daily quality of life. Officials have not detailed alternative savings from programs that serve fewer residents or have shown limited results.

The mayor and council members, all Democrats, have not proposed scaling

back the six-point homelessness strategy despite the deficit. A city staff report outlines the specific service reductions now under consideration.

Capital Public Radio previously detailed many of the same proposed changes, including the loss of Shotspotter, pool hour reductions and the possible relocation of the navigation center.

A \$1 million home sale currently generates \$2,750 in transfer tax. Under the mayor’s plan that figure would rise to nearly \$11,000. The source author argues the link between the tax increase and homelessness services may not fully reflect how the new revenue would be spent.

City leaders have not addressed whether streamlining permitting, development fees and regulations could ease housing costs more directly than new taxes on property transfers.

San Diego Newsline · Based on
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2026

SAN DIEGO NEWSLINE

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Downtown priorities: pickleball before potholes

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

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

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 sandiegonewslne.com.	
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MORE NEWS

Downtown, City & County

COUNTY County’s “Oops Tag” Campaign Aims to Reduce Recycling Contamination If you notice someone lifting lids on your waste bin or get an “Oops” tag on collection day, there is no need for concern. It’s all part of County Public Works (DPW) efforts to help residents sort their trash, recycling and organic waste correctly. These brief inspections, also known as “lid flips”, are required under state law Senate Bill 1383. They help identify items that don’t belong in curbside bins and provide quick, helpful feedback to help avoid sorting mistakes. For example, if food waste or plastic bags are found in a blue recycling bin, crews may	place a “Recyclables Only” tag on the bin handle. Blue bins are for glass, metal, paper, cardboard and rigid plastic. This reminder helps reduce contamination in recycling. trash and organics containers in unincorporated communities. Starting next week, inspections will take place on collection days within the unincorporated area. Starting as early as 6 a.m., County representatives will lift the lid and briefly scan items visible on top. They will not dig through waste bins or open bags, and the contents of all tagged bins will still be collected unless they contain hazardous waste. Residents who sort correctly may also receive a “Thank You” tag as encouragement to keep up the good	work. “Safety is the County’s top priority when it comes to protecting the public and waste collection staff,” said Eric Wolff, program coordinator for DPW’s Waste Planning & Recycling section. DPW reports that contaminants such as propane tanks, lithium-ion batteries and other hazardous waste can cause fires or equipment damage, creating a dangerous environment for everyone. “Helping customers understand the dangers of items like propane tanks, lithium-ion batteries, and other household hazardous waste in collection bins is critical to preventing accidents and keeping everyone safe.” He added that proper sorting also supports the County’s waste reduction	goals. “With ambitious waste reduction goals and a desire to preserve landfill capacity, proper recycling and waste reduction are essential. By working together, we can ensure sustainable and cost-effective waste management in San Diego County for years to come.” No. Receiving an “oops” tag doesn’t result in any penalties. It simply provides information to help avoid mistakes. Do not place batteries or other household hazardous waste (HHW) in any curbside bin. For proper disposal options, visit the County’s HHW website or call 877-R-1-EARTH (877-713-2784). Do not recycle plastic bags. Even bags labeled compostable don’t break down	properly and can jam the recycling equipment. Do not bag recyclables. Items placed in blue bins should be loose. Learn more online or reach County staff at 858-694-2456 or recycle@sdcounty.ca.gov. General recycling questions also may be answered at WasteFreeSD.org County Public Works plans, build and maintains safe, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure and deliver services to connect communities, improve lives, and protect the environment. Its vision supports thriving unincorporated communities through collaboration, resilient infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and innovative ideas. County of San Diego news release · May 8, 2026
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