



# **NATHAN FLETCHER**

## **CHAIR**

**SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** July 13, 2021

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

#### **SUBJECT**

**SUPPORTING THE SAN DIEGO REGIONAL POLICY AND INNOVATION CENTER  
(DISTRICTS: ALL)**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The San Diego Foundation (TSDf) has established the San Diego Regional Policy and Innovation Center (SDR PIC), a new 501c(3) organization of TSDf designed to gather data, create buy-in on the core needs and directionality of the region, and to develop and implement world-class policy solutions to enhance the well-being of San Diego residents and long-term sustainability and prosperity of the region. The entity will hire national experts, scholars, and researchers to better position local governments for federal and state resources and serve as a bridge among these entities.

The County of San Diego has a unique opportunity to join in partnership to support SDR PIC, which will have numerous benefits for the County and our region. This partnership can leverage the recently formed Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics, which will oversee the County's new focus on evidence-based and research-based policymaking and ensure positive outcomes for County residents. SDR PIC will coordinate with and amplify the research priorities identified by the Office, and also include broader, regional research opportunities.

SDR PIC has reserved two seats on the Leadership Advisory Council for the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the Land Use and Environment Group and the Director of the County's Health and Human Services Agency, or their designee. The appointment of our County leaders to the Advisory Council will ensure our regional needs are prioritized. Annual progress reports will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors outlining research, funding opportunities, and additional metrics to analyze the impact SDR PIC is having on our region.

**SUBJECT: SUPPORTING THE SAN DIEGO REGIONAL POLICY AND INNOVATION CENTER**

Today’s action provides authorization to County staff to negotiate and execute a grant agreement to provide operational funding to the SDR PIC. The grant agreement will specify the anticipated outcomes and objectives that will be achieved by the SDR PIC, including researching national best practices, conducting original research, gathering data, designing and recommending world-class policy solutions, and working to coordinate municipalities, to prioritize our communities of concern, along with additional long-term metrics for success.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**CHAIR NATHAN FLETCHER**

Direct the Chief Administrative Officer, or designee, to negotiate and execute a grant agreement with The San Diego Foundation to provide \$2,500,000 of funding for operational expenses associated with the San Diego Regional Policy and Innovation Center.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

From the digital divide to homelessness and housing instability, to climate change and crumbling infrastructure, the needs of our communities are diverse and immediate. As this Board works to achieve the Framework for The Future, we need to ensure that the policy mechanisms we implement do indeed help our most vulnerable residents and working families. Joining the San Diego Regional Policy and Innovation Center will help advance equitable policy solutions in our region, not just at the County of San Diego but also with our regional partners. The organization will identify projects, policies, research and actions to support historically disadvantaged communities and neighborhoods experiencing heightened environmental injustice, digital inequities, and a lack of affordable housing. Researching national best practices, conducting original research, gathering data, designing and recommending world-class policy solutions, and working to coordinate municipalities, to prioritize our communities of concern will benefit all our regional partners and make our region stronger and more resilient.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2021-23 Operational Plan in Finance Other. If approved, this request will result in costs of \$2,500,000 in Fiscal Year 2021-22. The funding source will be unassigned General Fund fund balance. There will be no additional staff years.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

The San Diego Foundation (TSDF) has established the San Diego Regional Policy and Innovation Center (SDR PIC), a new organization of TSDF designed to conduct research, gather data, and create buy-in on the core needs and directionality of the region, and to develop and implement world-class policy solutions to enhance the well-being of San Diego residents and long-term sustainability and prosperity of the region.

**SUBJECT: SUPPORTING THE SAN DIEGO REGIONAL POLICY AND INNOVATION CENTER**

TSDF has established this nonprofit organization to conduct original and applied research to build resilient and inclusive communities. In support of this goal, and to ensure communities in the San Diego region can adapt and persist through changing circumstances, researchers will conduct original and applied research, and produce long-form reports, targeted analyses, and policy guidance documents. Through this research framework, regional business, civic, and government leaders can rigorously analyze the region and constituent needs; identify strategies by which to capitalize on their unique assets; specify catalytic products, policies, and interventions; and establish detailed operational and financial plans.

It will also serve as a trusted and inclusive network among municipalities and key stakeholders in the San Diego region, and serve to build regional consensus on our environmental, infrastructure, and financing needs. Through convenings and public engagement, the research will form a platform for policy, economic, and technology innovation. SDR PIC will improve our capacity to implement multi-jurisdictional policies and decision-making capacity. It will also support a regional ideas forum, and will host researchers for presentations and convene regional stakeholders for targeted workshops.

SDR PIC will facilitate the adoption of innovative public policies and scale best practices to peer regions to provide clear, collaborative direction for the region's core needs and bring more significant financial capital and employment opportunities to the area. This will better position our region for federal and state resources.

The County of San Diego has a unique opportunity to join in partnership to support SDR PIC, which will have numerous benefits. As we seek to implement the vision and direction from our new Board of Supervisors – addressing equality of opportunity, adoption of digital products and services, environmental and infrastructure needs, fiscal health and inter-jurisdictional coordination, and racial and social justice – we have an opportunity to better leverage world-class resources and research to ensure our priorities are achieved.

The Board has recognized the importance of research in order to create positive impact, and supporting SDR PIC will align with that objective. Our research needs, as identified by the newly formed Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics, can be supported through the original and complementary research proposed under SDR PIC. There is room for alignment and synergy to collaborate with the research conducted by the County in-house staff in this Office. SDR PIC will amplify the research priorities identified by the Office, and also include broader, regional research opportunities. As we build internal research capacity and infrastructure through the Office, collaboration with SDR PIC presents an opportunity to create a nexus with regional learning and research. The County has a means to become a regional driver of innovation and evidence-based policymaking, and achieve the policy goals of our Framework for the Future.

There will also be two County representatives on the SDR PIC Advisory Council, the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the Land Use and Environment Group and the Director of the County's Health and Human Services Agency, or their designee. Through the appointment of our County leaders to the Leadership Advisory Council, we will have a direct line to ensure that the Board's priorities are incorporated into the SDR PIC research framework and policy initiatives.

**SUBJECT: SUPPORTING THE SAN DIEGO REGIONAL POLICY AND INNOVATION CENTER**

Annual progress reports will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors outlining the research conducted, regional funding sought, and additional metrics to analyze the impact SDR PIC is having on our region.

Today's action provides authorization to County staff to negotiate and execute a grant agreement to provide operational funding to the SDR PIC for a five-year period. The grant agreement will specify the anticipated outcomes and objectives that will be achieved by the SDR PIC, including researching national best practices, conducting original research, gathering data, designing and recommending world-class policy solutions, and working to coordinate municipalities, to prioritize our communities of concern, along with additional long-term metrics for success.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's proposed action to support the San Diego Regional Policy and Innovation Center supports the Sustainable Environments/ Thriving Strategic Initiative in the County of San Diego's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan by advancing policy, programs, and research to meet our regional needs.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Fletcher". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

NATHAN FLETCHER  
Supervisor, Fourth District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A

**SUBJECT:** SUPPORTING THE SAN DIEGO REGIONAL POLICY AND INNOVATION CENTER

**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**REQUIRES FOUR VOTES:**  Yes  No

**WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED**

Yes  No

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**

05/18/21 - Launching a comprehensive approach to evidence-based policymaking and establishing an Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics.

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**

N/A

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**

N/A

**MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:**

N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):**

N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** Fourth Supervisorial District

**OTHER CONCURRENCE(S):** N/A

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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