



# San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission

Regional Service Planning | Subdivision of the State of California

# 7C

**AGENDA REPORT**  
Business | Discussion

August 4, 2025

**TO:** Chair Whitburn and Commissioners

**FROM:** Priscilla Mumpower, Assistant Executive Officer  
Meghan Traynor, Analyst I

**SUBJECT: Update on High Priority Project |  
Municipal Service Review on the San Diego Association of Governments**

## SUMMARY

The San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) will receive an update on its scheduled municipal service review of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) – one of 10 high-priority projects included in the approved work plan. This item is being provided consistent with earlier Commission direction to receive regular updates on the status of high-priority projects during the administrative process and in doing so help ensure the scope of work and planned deliverables align with Commission expectations. As detailed in the update, staff and the lead consultant, William Fulton Group, have further refined the scope while transitioning from data gathering and analysis to focusing on interpretation, including the development of meaningful performance measurements. The update is provided for information with an opportunity to provide feedback to staff with the current expectation of delivering a complete draft report as early as April 2026.

## BACKGROUND

San Diego LAFCO's current fiscal year work plan includes 30 projects divided into two distinct categories – statutory and administrative – along with priority assignments. One of the 10 high priority projects involves a municipal service review of SANDAG, which has been carried over from 2024-2025 and ties to a recommendation from an earlier white paper exploring regional growth management and SANDAG's evolving activities and their connectivity to LAFCO's duty to plan and regulate local government boundaries and services with community needs.

### Administration

Keene Simonds, Executive Officer  
2550 Fifth Avenue, Suite 725  
San Diego, California 92103  
T 619.321.3380  
E lafco@sdcounty.ca.gov  
www.sdlafco.org

Paloma Aguirre  
County of San Diego

Joel Anderson  
County of San Diego

Monica M. Steppe, Alt.  
County of San Diego

Kristi Becker  
City of Solana Beach

Dane White  
City of Escondido

John McCann, Alt.  
City of Chula Vista

Chair Stephen Whitburn  
City of San Diego

Marni von Wilpert, Alt.  
City of San Diego

Vice Chair Barry Willis  
Alpine Fire Protection

Jo MacKenzie  
Vista Irrigation

David Drake, Alt.  
Rincon del Diablo

### Vacant

General Public

Brigette Browning, Alt.  
General Public

## San Diego LAFCO

August 4, 2025 Meeting

Agenda Item No. 7c | Update on High Priority Project: SANDAG MSR

LAFCO retains discretion in determining the appropriate scope of each municipal service review and currently does so through policy delegation to the Executive Officer. Nonetheless, all municipal service reviews must meaningfully address the following statutory factors:

- Growth and Population Projections
- Present and Planned Service Capacities
- Adequacy of Services Relative to Community Needs
- Financial Standing
- Opportunities for Shared Facilities
- Accountability of Governmental Structure and Alternatives
- Any Other Factors Required by Local Policy
  - Environmental Justice (local policy)

## DISCUSSION

This item is for San Diego LAFCO to receive an update on one of San Diego LAFCO's highest placed workplan priorities involving a municipal service review of SANDAG. This study marks the first municipal service review prepared for SANDAG with LAFCO staff being assisted by outside consultant Bill Fulton of the William Fulton Group. The project's scope of work generally follows San Diego's standard municipal service review format with a focus on three core service buckets or functions collectively tasked to SANDAG via its various roles under federal and state statute as well as local agreements: (a) transportation (planning and construction classes), (b) housing planning, and (c) climate adaptation planning.

A summary of key milestones achieved and pending work to be completed on the MSR follows along with emerging topics of interest to the Commission.

### Engagement with SANDAG Staff

Eight meetings have been held since August 2024 between LAFCO and SANDAG staff to discuss the SANDAG MSR. Over the course of these meetings, SANDAG staff have provided LAFCO staff with critical data, documentation, and insights that have substantially informed the MSR's development—particularly supporting the data-intensive requirements of Consultant Fulton's analysis.

### MSR Progress + Emerging Themes

Consultant Bill Fulton is nearing completion of his contribution to the MSR and the analysis of the availability, delivery, and performance of SANDAG specific to the three functions targeted as part of the review by the Executive Officer: transportation, housing planning, and climate adaptation planning. Key areas of underlying this analysis and emerging themes follow:

- **SANDAG's Organizational Roles**  
An in-depth examination of SANDAG's complex identity as a Council of Governments (COG), Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), highlighting the agency's unique governance structure.

- **Unique Transportation Responsibilities**  
A review of SANDAG’s transportation construction responsibilities, a role shaped by Senate Bill 1703, distinguishing SANDAG from other MPOs and RTPAs in California.<sup>1</sup>
- **Management Turnover and Agency Stability**  
Consideration of the significant senior management turnover at SANDAG over the past decade, exploring how these leadership changes have impacted the implementation of regional transportation plans and the ability of agency staff to maintain operational continuity and stability amid shifting priorities.
- **Performance Measurement Practices**  
Evaluation of SANDAG’s current methodologies for tracking and reporting project delivery (outputs) and regional impact metrics (outcomes), including SANDAG’s transparency and accountability.
- **Special District Oversight**  
Consideration of the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) as a special district subject to LAFCO oversight, complementing LAFCO’s existing jurisdiction over the North County Transit District (NCTD) and expanding the scope of regional governance considerations.

As Mr. Fulton advances toward finalizing the Section 6 draft, his current analytical focus centers on assessing the progress of capital projects funded under the original 2004 TransNet ordinance.<sup>2</sup> In parallel, he is conducting a detailed examination of the correlation between SANDAG’s project delivery and measurable regional impacts over the fifteen-year evaluation period spanning Fiscal Years 2009 through 2024. Concurrently, LAFCO staff have made headway in drafting the remaining sections of the MSR. These include comprehensive analyses of SANDAG’s institutional background, jurisdictional boundaries, demographic context, governance framework, and financial health. Staff anticipates delivering a complete draft report as early as April 2026.

## ANALYSIS

None.

## RECOMMENDATION

This item is presented to San Diego LAFCO for information and feedback.

---

<sup>1</sup> The 2002 San Diego Regional Transportation Consolidation Act (SB 1703) created a consolidated regional transportation authority to manage and implement transportation planning and infrastructure in the San Diego region. San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board’s (MTDB) transportation planning and capital construction responsibilities were transferred to SANDAG, while transit operations remained with MTS (the successor to MTDB) and the North County Transit District (NCTD).

<sup>2</sup> The TransNet program is San Diego County’s half-cent sales tax ordinance dedicated to transportation. Through TransNet, SANDAG oversees the implementation of Regional Plan projects with locally sourced funding.

## ALTERNATIVES FOR ACTION

None.

## PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION

This item has been placed on San Diego LAFCO's agenda for information as part of the business calendar. The following procedures are recommended:

- 1) Receive verbal presentation from staff unless waived.
- 2) Invite comments from interested audience members if any.
- 3) Discuss and provide general feedback as needed.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meghan Traynor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Meghan Traynor  
Analyst I