



*“The San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center is a true partner for helping our region grow. From tackling difficult issues around climate resilience to workforce development, we are in a better position to secure funding that will enable a brighter future for all.”*

MARNI VON WILPERT

*San Diego City Councilmember  
(District 5)*



2022

SEE  
*Our Vision*

2023

SUPERVISOR TERRA  
LAWSON-REMER

*Vice Chair, County of San Diego  
Board of Supervisors (District 3)*



*“The Policy & Innovation Center is working to find regional alignment on major issues. Using their data-driven research and policy analysis, they are helping move our region toward solutions for our most troubling challenges. PIC’s efforts are good for San Diego’s future.”*

## WELCOME

September 2023

It has been a year of growth at the San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center –both in terms of our team and our pursuit of creating transformational change across the region. With this growth comes a renewed sense of purpose and belief in three guiding principles:

*Everyone should live in a safe, thriving, and inclusive society.*

*Everyone should have the opportunity for economic advancement.*

*Everyone should have access to a clean and sustainable environment.*

To make these beliefs a reality, we must continue to break down the silos that exist within our region and build strong working relationships among our elected leaders, government agencies, municipalities, and other community stakeholders. Only through a cross-sector, coordinated approach can we solve the complex challenges that extend beyond the reach of any single entity, agency, or department.

Once we identify those challenges, the Policy & Innovation Center’s work follows an iterative process to collaborate, research, plan, implement, evaluate, and scale the projects and programs proven to generate positive outcomes.

We invite you to look back at all we have accomplished in the last year and **SEE Our Vision** for the future to better our Society, Economy, and Environment.

In gratitude,



**Susan Guinn, Esq.**

President & CEO



**Ben Haddad**

Chair, Board of Directors

SEE What We've Done

*July 1, 2022 to July 31, 2023*  
*Highlights*



# People Working Together

Forging strong alliances that will stand the test of time. Creating these bonds is reflected both internally and externally as PIC grows and works to bring about a thriving, equitable region.

*“There is no limit to what we can accomplish for our region when we work together, listen to one another, and engage thoughtfully, and I am thankful for the Policy & Innovation Center for providing San Diego leaders that opportunity.”*

JOEL ANDERSON

*Supervisor, County of San Diego,  
Board of Supervisors (District 2)*



# Our Partnership with The Brookings Institution

**Our partnership with The Brookings Institution helps our region understand national trends, and in turn, these insights influence local and national policy conversations.**

Together with Brookings, the Policy & Innovation Center is closing the gap on local climate risk data that will inform planning and investments by government agencies.

The research highlights key issues, provides data-rich maps and potential financial solutions. Our collaboration also helped to inform and fund Brookings' report on the relationship between people's travel habits and proximity to asset-rich neighborhoods. From this analysis, we learned that helping people live closer to centers of economic activity – from downtown hubs to local main streets – can help save the average San Diego household \$1,000 and reduce their carbon footprint by 2,500 pounds annually.



ALAN BERUBE

*Interim Vice President and Director,  
Brookings Metro*

*“Brookings Metro’s partnership with the San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center enables our two organizations to jointly develop new evidence-based approaches for tackling the region’s most pressing challenges, and to lift up creative local responses that can serve as models for the rest of our nation.”*





RAUL CAMPILLO

*San Diego City Councilmember (District 7)*

*“One of my first calls for support when approaching a significant municipal problem is to the San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center. Their staff and leadership have the answers—and more importantly know the right questions to ask—and civic leaders who collaborate with them quickly realize the power of their contributions, for the benefit of the public and our constituents.”*

## Government & Agency Council

Facilitated by the Policy & Innovation Center and the Brookings Institution, the Government & Agency Council is comprised of the County of San Diego, 18 municipalities, and core local agencies. Its purpose is to promote collaboration, leverage federal and state funding, engage in policy discussions, discuss research findings, and coordinate action.

This year’s meetings focused on quality jobs, workforce development, decarbonization, government grants and building coalitions to pursue resources.

Participating members of the Government & Agency Council include:

- County of San Diego
- City of San Diego
- City of Carlsbad
- City of Chula Vista
- City of Coronado
- City of Del Mar
- City of El Cajon
- City of Encinitas
- City of Escondido
- City of Imperial Beach
- Port of San Diego
- San Diego Airport Authority
- City of La Mesa
- City of Lemon Grove
- City of National City
- City of Oceanside
- City of Poway
- City of San Marcos
- City of Santee
- City of Solana Beach
- City of Vista
- San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
- Metropolitan Transit System (MTS)

Together we submitted \$73 million in funding applications, developed policy dashboards, and created infrastructure maps to inform investments, mitigate flooding and attract capital. While we await federal funding decisions, we can celebrate the region’s coordinated action to bring resources to the region.

# Research for the Common Good

Applying equity-focused research to our region's most pressing challenges.

## SAN DIEGO COUNTY'S EQUITY ASSESSMENT

Through collaboration with the County of San Diego's Office of Equity & Racial Justice, the Policy & Innovation Center completed the region's first Equity Report. Significant disparities were found in every domain and demographic, but some of the starkest were racial disparities in employment and income. Black and Native American residents, for example, are more than twice as likely to live in poverty as white residents and 35% percent of all residents live in households not earning self-sufficient wages. These findings tell us much about San Diego's most pressing economic needs and will support federal and state funding applications.

## YOUTH WELLBEING

Thanks to support from the San Diego Foundation and The Conrad Prebys Foundation, Policy & Innovation Center researchers are analyzing and reporting on essential indicators of educational access and economic stability for San Diego children and young adults. By tracking trends over time, we're able to see the progress San Diego County's youth have made – despite a variety of obstacles from discrimination to homelessness – and identify the most promising opportunities for targeted assistance.

## WATER AFFORDABILITY

Water prices in San Diego County vary across communities, with some residents paying much more for water than others. Our research in partnership with the County of San Diego's Land Use and Environmental Group examines the drivers on water prices and potential financial solutions to mitigate water poverty.

## TOURISM

Our report, created for the San Diego Tourism Authority, describes the impact of tourism on San Diego's economy, the perspectives of San Diego's tourism workers on the quality of those jobs, and the types of jobs tourism workers transition into when they leave their jobs. This information offers a high-level view of the economics of tourism in San Diego and adds nuance to the picture of employment and economic activity in this thriving industry.





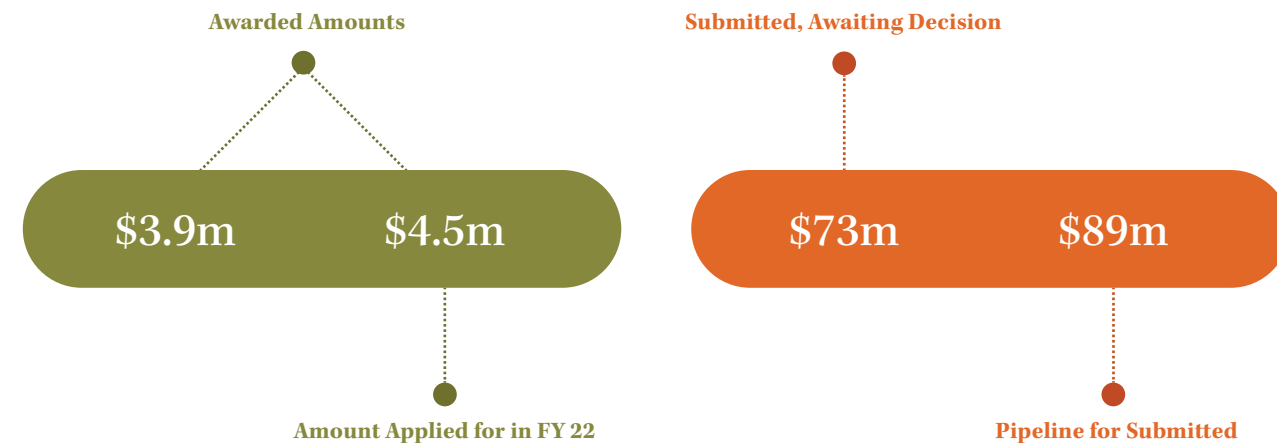
# Resources for the Region

## Adding and activating capital to strengthen the region.

Through August 2023, the Policy & Innovation Center is leading grant applications and contract proposals totaling over **\$173 million**.

Of this sum, proposals in the amount of **\$73 million** are awaiting decision, with **\$89 million** in the pipeline for submission. Awards in the amount of **\$3.9 million** were secured alongside work on continuing grants of **\$4.5 million**.

Partners include the County, municipalities, the Port of San Diego, universities, community colleges, community-based organizations, the San Diego Workforce Partnership, school districts, and economic development centers.



CHAIRMAN RAFAEL  
CASTELLANOS

*Port of San Diego Board of Port Commissioners*

*“The San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center is one of our go-to partners to help bring in federal and state dollars that support commerce, community, and the environment throughout the region. When we’re not collaborating on important economic opportunities, we’re working together on policies that ensure San Diegans enjoy a remarkable way of life for years to come.”*

# Ideas Brought to Life

Using research and resources to develop creative, effective, and equitable solutions.

## SAN DIEGO EMERGING LEADERS

As part of a national emerging leaders program, the Policy & Innovation Center is working with a diverse group of public employees from the City of Escondido to leverage cross-departmental efforts, increase capacity, and pursue green infrastructure solutions that center equity and community input. Participants are also learning how to identify and secure federal funding opportunities.

## LAND LOCATOR MAP

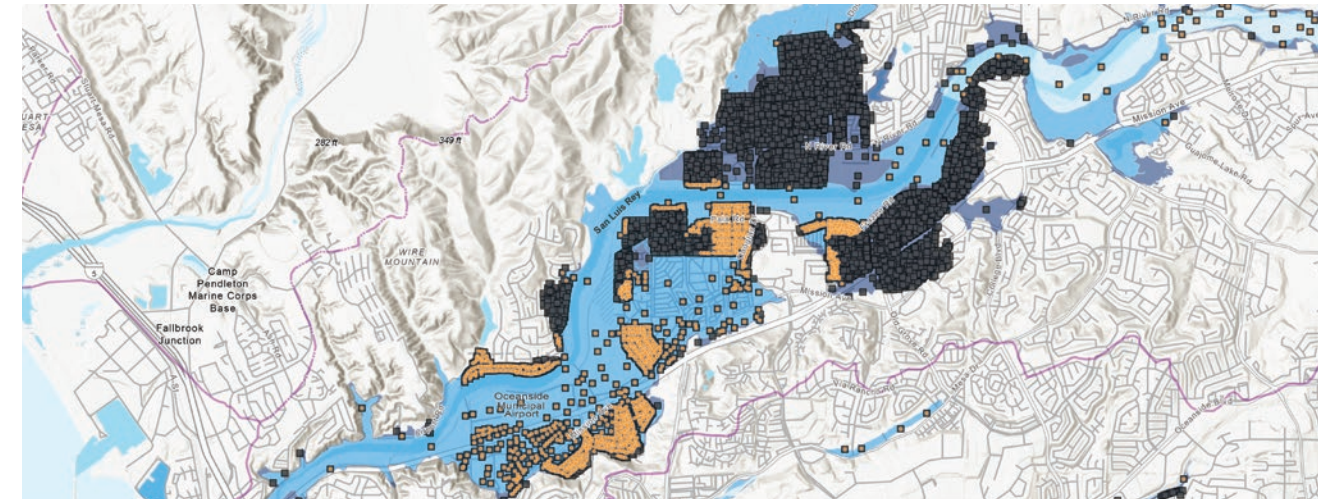
The Policy & Innovation Center developed the “Land Locator Map” to identify lots owned by the State, County of San Diego, City of San Diego, and City of Chula Vista, that are potentially suitable for affordable housing projects. The map allows local government and stakeholders to more easily work together to determine the highest and best use of government parcels. Unveiled at the October 2022 Joint Meeting on the Housing Crisis of the San Diego City Council and San Diego County Board of Supervisors, both entities pledged to leverage government-owned land, with an ultimate regional goal of 10,000 housing units over the next decade.

## WATER INNOVATIONS NAVIGATOR

When trying to solve challenges related to drinking water, storm and wastewater management, or water energy and use efficiency, decision-makers do not always have time to research innovations across the country. The Policy & Innovation Center’s new Water Innovations Navigator tool will help local governments and agencies identify unique interventions that have worked elsewhere, access funding sources, and find vendors. So far there are 55 innovative solutions identified, complete with funding resources, case studies, costs, and permitting information.

## WATER RESOURCE MAPS

An integral part of our work on climate resilience is better understanding our water supply, water resources, and infrastructure needs. The Policy & Innovation Center has developed interactive maps



Buildings within 100-year flood plan



Buildings within 500-year flood plan



100-year Floodplain



100-year Floodway



500-year Floodplain

that offer comprehensive insights into public water infrastructure within the San Diego region. The maps are accessible on our website and provide a wealth of information on the following:

**Pollution:** Numerous datasets on water quality highlight where efforts are needed to combat water pollution.

**Watersheds:** Detailed watershed data shows the natural flow of water across the region and opportunities for investment.

**Flood Risk:** Many San Diego residents and businesses live within active flood plains. Our maps demonstrate flood risk and assist policymakers with solutions to mitigate it.

## WATER UTILITY COST DASHBOARD

Our interactive dashboard analyzes water utility costs by jurisdiction and allows users to model different financial interventions to test potential utility bill policies and their impact on costs. This will help policymakers and others better understand the implications of water costs and find strategies to mitigate them. It is a first-of-its-kind tool for our region and highlights the Policy & Innovation Center’s innovative approach to solving our toughest problems.

SEE Our Vision


## *Upcoming Projects*

*“The Policy & Innovation Center has emerged as an invaluable partner and trailblazer, fearlessly tackling some of San Diego’s most complex problems. With their data-driven approach, collaborative mindset, and widespread support, they have swiftly become trusted leaders, spearheading positive change and driving innovation throughout our region.”*

JAMES SLY

*President and Chief Executive Officer,  
East County Economic Development Council*



A black and white portrait of Dr. Hei-Ock Kim, a woman with shoulder-length dark hair, smiling and wearing a dark jacket. Her arms are crossed. The background is a solid orange color.

DR. HEI-OCK KIM

*Founder & Executive Director, Center for Social Balance*

*“We’re proud to stand with the Policy & Innovation Center at the forefront of the fight for equity in San Diego County. When the opportunity arose to address the full scale of gender discrimination at the regional level, the Policy & Innovation Center was our first choice of partner. The rigor of their research and depth of their policy expertise make the Policy & Innovation Center a powerful voice for the voiceless.”*

Our priorities have evolved to encompass three overarching themes that best describe our work:

SOCIETY  
ECONOMY  
ENVIRONMENT

# SEE



Here is a glimpse of a few of our projects.

**SOCIETY::** *Everyone should live in a safe, thriving and inclusive society.*

## Bringing Four-Year Degrees to South Bay

Chula Vista is California's largest city without a four-year public university. This often forces students to endure lengthy commutes or forego college. To help make higher education more accessible, the Policy & Innovation Center is working in partnership with Southwestern College and the City of Chula Vista on a workforce and academic needs assessment to inform academic planning that will bring bachelor's degree programs to South Bay residents. This will result in additional educational opportunities, quality jobs and an increased, skilled workforce for an important part of our region.

**ENVIRONMENT::** *Everyone should have access to a clean and sustainable environment.*

## “PROTECT”ing Our Waterfront

The Harbor Drive seawall is in danger of liquefaction, a phenomenon during which soil loses its stiffness in the wake of an earthquake, causing it to act more like a liquid. With Harbor Drive on a natural fault line, the risk of deterioration poses major concerns for the Embarcadero, roadways, airport, adjacent buildings, and people using this area.

The Policy & Innovation Center partnered with the Port of San Diego to **pursue \$44 million** in federal PROTECT grant funding to help shore up the seawall and safeguard our waterfront for years to come.

**ECONOMY::** *Everyone should have the opportunity for economic advancement.*

## Workforce Freedom Fund

Over a third of San Diego County residents earn less than the minimum income needed to cover the basic costs of living without government assistance. The Policy & Innovation Center is on the path to establish a fund that would provide San Diegans with a monthly stipend while they upskill their education or expertise to earn higher wages. This first-of-its-kind program is estimated to generate more than **\$10.5 billion** in regional income in the next decade. The Policy & Innovation Center is partnering with San Diego Foundation as its philanthropic fundraising partner to raise \$50 million in FY24. The Policy & Innovation Center is also pursuing **\$50 million in federal grants** to support the creation of quality jobs.

# Our Team

## The Brookings Institution Collaborators

Adie Tomer  
Senior Fellow

Jenny Schuetz  
Senior Fellow

Joseph W. Kane  
Fellow

## Policy & Innovation Center Staff

Susan Guinn, Esq.  
President & Chief Executive Officer

Jamal Russel Black  
Senior Officer, Analytics & Impact

Josh Jacobsen  
Government Relations & Policy Officer

Emily Wier  
VP, Chief Policy & Strategy Officer

Alicia L. Jurek, Ph.D.  
Economist

Clint Smith  
Project Engineer

Daniel Enemark, Ph.D.  
Chief Economist

Michelle Zaloom  
Controller

Arnold Cerdinio  
Accountant

Audra Herrmann-Hayes  
Director of Government Grants

Niloufar Nasrollahzadeh  
Research & Analytics Associate

Victoria Vasquez  
Executive Assistant

Karen Boyd, Ph.D.  
Economist & Director of Research

Gabriela Gonzalez  
Economic Analyst

Leeanne Singleton  
Policy Fellow

Rachel Lozano Castro  
Director of Innovation

Tedi Doychinova  
Network Engagement Officer

Karen Connolly  
Senior Director of Workforce Development

## Policy & Innovation Center Board of Directors

Ben Haddad  
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CHAIR, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE  
Chief Executive Officer, *Casa Familiar*

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Susan Guinn, Esq.  
President & CEO,  
*San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center*

P. Kay Coleman  
IMMEDIATE PAST BOARD CHAIR & CURRENT VICE CHAIR  
President & CEO, *Del Mar Venture Group*

Susan A. Davis  
BOARD MEMBER  
Former U.S. Congressperson

## SUSAN DAVIS

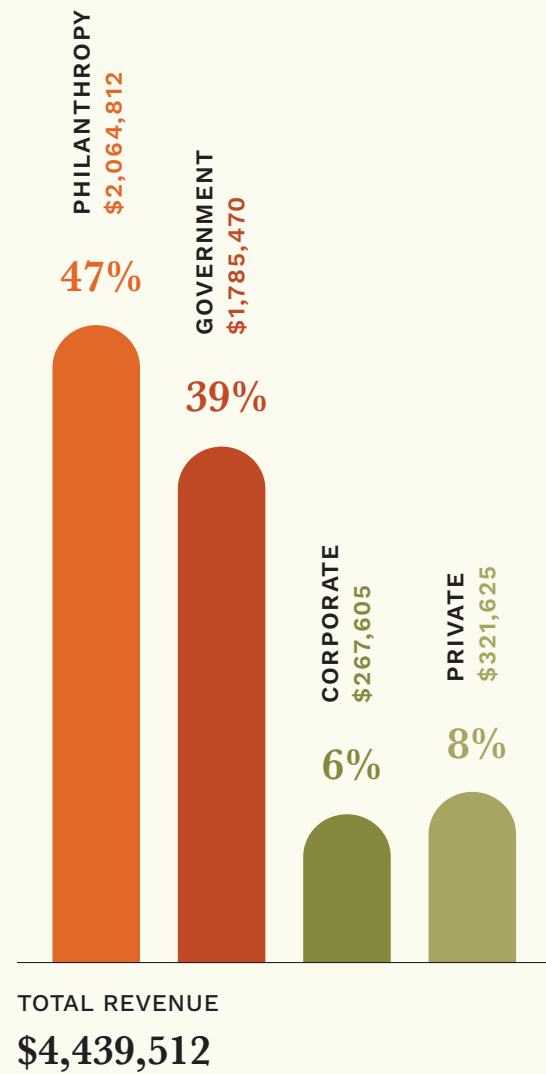
*Former Congresswoman & San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center Board Member*

*“The opportunity to join the board of the San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center challenges and inspires me. I look forward to collaborating with so many hard working and imaginative partners who believe in the power of multifaceted local initiatives.”*

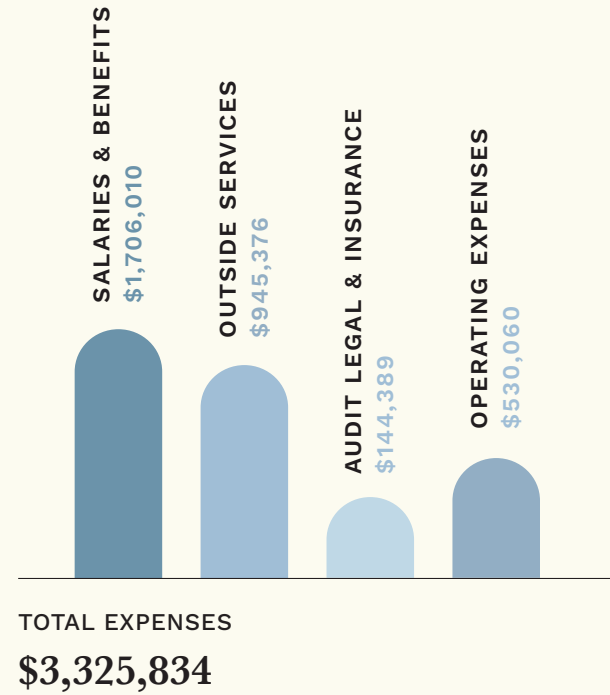


## FY2023 Financials July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, Unaudited

### REVENUES



### EXPENSES



### BALANCE SHEET ITEMS

CASH  
**\$3,461,746**

DEFERRED REVENUE  
**\$3,308,546**

## Awards

**San Diego Business Journal  
Asian Pacific Islander Leaders of Influence**  
*Awarded to Susan Guinn, Esq.*  
President & Chief Executive Officer

**40 Under 40 Honoree by  
San Diego Metro Magazine**  
*Awarded to Rachel Lozano Castro*  
Director of Innovation

**San Diego Business Journal 40 Next  
Top Business Leaders Under 40**  
*Awarded to Emily Wier*  
Vice President, Chief Policy & Strategy Officer

**Finalist for 2023 San Diego Business  
Journal CEO of the Year**  
*Awarded to Susan Guinn*  
President & Chief Executive Officer

**San Diego Business Journal Nonprofit  
Board Leader of Influence**  
*Awarded to P. Kay Coleman*  
Immediate Past Board Chair & current Vice Chair,  
President & CEO, *Del Mar Venture Group*

*“In just two years, the San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center has accomplished so much, and its trajectory is pointing sky high. As a founding partner, alongside the Brookings Institution and the County of San Diego, San Diego Foundation is proud of what the Policy & Innovation Center has done and so excited for what is on its horizon.”*

**MARK STUART**  
*President and Chief Executive Officer,  
San Diego Foundation*



[SDRPIC.ORG](http://SDRPIC.ORG)

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