

2023 San Diego Policy Priorities



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Industry Impact

According to Biocom California's 2022 Life Science Economic Impact Report¹, San Diego County's life science cluster employs 71,149 people in five sectors: research, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and diagnostics, bio-renewables, and wholesale and distribution. The county's life science employees support an additional 44,009 jobs for a total countywide impact of 115,158 jobs. These jobs pay an average wage of \$149,528 and generate \$49.8 billion in annual economic activity. Biocom California represents more than 1,700 member companies in California; we focus on initiatives that positively influence the region's life science community in the development and delivery of innovative products that improve health and quality of life.

LAND USE

One of the most important factors impacting life science development is where our facilities are allowed to locate, and the activities allowed within facilities. The preservation of the Prime Industrial Land map and Employment Mixed-Use zone are vital to regional long-term economic stability and encouragement of industry growth.

Biocom California consistently hears from our members that there is a need for workforce housing to be located near transit access points and around the life science hub in University City. We are therefore advocating for increased density of housing and employment centers in proposals such as Sustainable Development Areas, Blueprint SD, and the University Community Plan Update.

PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS

Biocom California supports efforts to make city and county permitting processes predictable, transparent, and efficient. We appreciate efforts to ensure inspections are done consistently and in collaboration with businesses.

ACCESS TO WATER & OTHER UTILITIES

Since its inception, Biocom California has communicated with legislators and regulators about how the life science industry uses water, and why reliable, constant access to water is necessary for our member companies to conduct daily business activities. Biocom California supports practical ways to diversify water supply, such as indirect potable reuse and desalination, and the city's ongoing implementation of the Guaranteed Water for Industry Program. This program offers enrolled companies who implement water conservation methods assurances that their mitigation efforts will be considered when proposing future mandatory drought conservation measures.

Similarly, natural gas, electricity, telecommunications, and other utilities are critical to research operations, and we advocate for reliability and transparent pricing.

¹ Deloitte, 2022. Biocom California's 2022 Life Science Economic Impact Report.



STORM WATER SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Flooding in Sorrento Valley during storm events threatens businesses, especially along Roselle Street. There are many Biocom California members located throughout the impacted area. Floods cause physical damage to businesses and result in interruptions to research and manufacturing when workers are evacuated and then businesses are closed for repairs.

The City of San Diego has developed a long-term plan to address flooding issues and restore the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon. Biocom California supports the city's efforts to pursue funding for implementation of the plan and urges the city to pursue parallel permits where possible.

BUILDING ELECTRIFICATION MANDATES

Cities throughout California have been considering "reach codes" over the past few years. These proposals seek to reach beyond state building code related to energy efficiency and often include an all-electric requirement for new buildings and retrofits for existing buildings.

Certain laboratory uses such as backup power and boilers will continue to require access to natural gas, as these technologies do not exist in other forms. There are no existing batteries that can power a laboratory facility in case of a power outage, nor electric boilers with temperature control necessary for research processes.

We also have concerns about electric grid capacity for all-electric developments. Fourteen of the California cities that passed a building electrification ordinance in 2022 had at least some kind of exemption for laboratories. We advocate for cities to consider alternative compliance measures and/or exemptions for research buildings.

²
City News Service. "You Need to Make \$206K to Purchase a Median-Priced Home in San Diego, All for a 5K Mortgage." NBC 7 San Diego, 5 April, 2023. <https://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/you-need-to-make-206k-to-afford-a-5k-mortgage-payment-on-a-median-priced-911k-home-in-san-diego-report/3203254/>

Since its founding in 1995, Biocom California has emerged as the most respected association voice for California life sciences in regional government, the State Capitol, and Washington, D.C.

Please direct any questions to

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HOUSING

It is common knowledge that there is a housing shortage in the San Diego area—the median price of an existing single-family home is \$911,000². Biocom California supports incentivizing the building of additional middle-income housing units via a variety of approaches, including:

- exemption of middle-income housing from new/existing construction fees as appropriate
- increased density around transit hubs
- relaxation of parking and related requirements

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a key element in the quality of life in San Diego County, impacting the ability of employees to commute in a reasonable time as well as the ability of companies to attract the necessary workforce and transport goods and products. Investment in transportation infrastructure is critical for San Diego's future growth and population needs. We were very supportive of the Blue Line Trolley extension and continue to work with our members to ensure their employees are connected to transit options.

