

CPAB Member Spotlight

Lauren Garces, Council District 5

With more than 15 years of experience in community organizing and event production, Lauren Garces brings a strong community-focused perspective to her role as the Council District 5 representative on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board (CPAB). Through her work with organizations serving diverse communities, Lauren has listened directly to community members and learned about the meaningful ways she can continue to uplift and support the important work being done to help others. That experience also shaped her interest in joining CPAB.



"I was inspired to join CPAB knowing that the Board plays an important role in helping to make sure designated federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds are appropriately distributed to communities tackling some of the City's biggest challenges. Serving on the Board allows you to learn about countless organizations bringing to light solutions for challenges within our most vulnerable communities," she shared.

Each year, CPAB members review and score Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications and make recommendations about outreach, scoring, resources and funding. Looking ahead, she hopes CPAB will continue making its processes as accessible and equitable as possible while still meeting federal HUD requirements.

"Our goal with CPAB should be to continuously stay engaged in understanding the challenges for our most vulnerable communities and make meaningful investments into organizations doing the work for short- and long-term solutions," she said. "My hope is we continue to move the needle forward for systemic equity, build generational wealth for more communities, and provide sustainable mechanisms of support for people to call San Diego home."

When asked to share a favorite place in San Diego, Lauren shared, "There are so many gems for everyone to discover in the Convoy District. From delicious food, desserts, drinks, grocery stores, third spaces, services, events and more; It's a wonderful example of how our neighborhoods flourish when we tell their stories and invest in making it a welcoming community for all."