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INSIDE THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO'S NEW APPROACH TO INFRASTRUCTURE LEADERSHIP





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PRESENTS





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MARKO MEDVED |
DIRECTOR OF GENERAL SERVICES



When Marko Medved looks out across San Diego County, he doesn't just see buildings, roads, and libraries—he sees living proof of what public trust and strong leadership can create. As Director of General Services for the County of San Diego, Medved has overseen the construction of everything from libraries that reflect the character of their neighborhoods to a \$70 million community hub that has already become a civic landmark. It's an unlikely second act for a man who spent three decades in the U.S. Navy, but perhaps that military foundation is exactly why he thrives at the intersection of public service, infrastructure, and community engagement.

"I spent 25 years in the Navy," Medved recalls. "From the very start, you're thrown into leadership. My first assignment was leading twelve people on a ship. Over time that grew to 3,500 people and a \$7 billion program." Those early experiences forged habits that continue to define his civilian leadership: an engaging approach to safety, a near-obsession with follow-through, and a clear ethic that "the gap between what you say and what you do should be as close to zero as possible."

FROM MILITARY COMMAND TO CIVIC LEADERSHIP

The transition from military command to county government might seem like a leap, but Medved insists the through-line is service. "What I missed most after leaving the Navy was having a complex leadership role anchored in service," he says. After a short stint in private consulting, he found his way to the County of San Diego, attracted not only by the chance to make an impact but also by the simple fact that San Diego is, in his words, "a great place to live."

That blend of personal and professional motivation matters. San Diego is not just where he works—it's where he raised his family, where he first met his wife 35 years ago, and where he can cycle, surf, or hike year-round thanks to the



region's climate. "It's one of the few places in the world where you can be on a snowy mountain in the morning and surfing in the afternoon," he says.

That connection to place helps explain why he leads as if every project is personal.

THE LIVE WELL CENTER: A CASE STUDY IN TRUST

Nothing captures Medved's approach better than the Southeastern Live Well Center, a \$70 million facility that has been lauded nationally for its design, inclusivity, and community impact. "It was probably the most inclusive project we've ever done," he says. From the earliest planning stages—which started five years before ground was broken—local residents were asked what they wanted the center to deliver. They responded with a two-page list: community rooms, spaces for elected officials, local community business offices, even a meditative garden, and local business and worker hiring in the construction. Skeptics assumed much of it would be quietly dropped. Instead, the county delivered every item.

The result? A center that not only provides services but also embodies the neighborhood's identity. Its walls are etched with community sayings, from

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“We want to be a good owner,” Medved says. “If you’re fair, predictable, and have interesting projects, the industry wants to work with you – and you both win.”



We celebrate nearly two decades of partnership with the County of San Diego and the commitment to excellence established at the County Operations Center. It has been our privilege to work with this esteemed team, led by Marko Medved.

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“hope” to “family,” and it now hosts gatherings, meetings, and celebrations. “The real test is whether people actually use the building and make it part of their community,” Medved says. “That’s what’s happening.”

Underlying that success is Medved's conviction that trust is built through action, not promises. “I always feel I’m trustworthy—I’ll do the right thing. But people come with different experiences. You have to meet them where they’re at and build trust through shared experiences.”

ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY: RETHINKING HOW GOVERNMENT BUILDS

The Live Well Center also showcased another Medved priority: alternative delivery. Rather than relying solely on design-bid-build, the county has embraced design-build, best-value and task order construction management delivery, and creative real estate agreements to accelerate timelines and foster innovation.



To support this, the county has strengthened the way it delivers and maintains projects. One example is its job order contracting (JOC) program—an essential tool for smaller construction projects, upgrades, and renovations. In recent years, Facility Optimization Solutions (FOS), has significantly modernized this system. Through its intelligent Simplebid® platform, FOS provides a comprehensive JOC program management solution that creates a centralized management framework for organized, competitive procurement. This system, supported by FOS's team of account managers and software specialists, enhances the contracting process from work order to completion, with robust performance tracking and transparent procurement data, leading to greater efficiency, reduced project timelines, and an auditable program that empowers not only the county but local small businesses as well.

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SUSTAINABILITY: FROM NICE-TO-HAVE TO BUSINESS IMPERATIVE

If safety and community engagement are the bedrock of Medved’s philosophy, sustainability is its forward edge. He lights up when talking about it. “It’s probably the most fun part of my job,” he says. “And it makes sense. We’re saving energy, saving money, and not spending frivolously. These are practical solutions.”

San Diego County now boasts more than 70 LEED-certified buildings, including 14 net-zero energy facilities that operate off the grid. A dedicated sustainability team of just four people acts as the brain trust, training colleagues across maintenance, construction, planning, and fleet management.



One of their newest priorities is embodied carbon—reducing emissions from the manufacturing and transport of building materials. “We’re using sustainable timber, lower-carbon concrete, and local steel,” Medved says. That dovetails neatly with his drive to include local and small businesses in procurement.

Meanwhile, the county is pushing aggressively to electrify its 4,500-vehicle fleet. Already, 20% of the “light-duty” vehicles are electric, supported by 600 charging stations. The challenge, Medved says, is balancing the state’s aggressive targets with what the market can realistically supply.



THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY YOUTH TRANSITION CAMPUS (YTC)

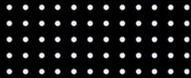
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“People take infrastructure for granted. They assume it just stays there. It doesn’t. We have to take care of what we own.”

“It’s a chicken-and-egg problem. You need the chargers before the vehicles, but the technology and economics aren’t fully there yet for certain models.”



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ACCELERATE PROJECT DELIVERY WITH SIMPLEBID® JOB ORDER CONTRACTING

STREAMLINING CONSTRUCTION PROCUREMENT

Construction purchasing is often complex and slow, but Facility Optimization Solutions (FOS) has the answer: Simplebid®. This intelligent Job Order Contracting (JOC) platform simplifies and accelerates the entire lifecycle. Designed for maximum configurability and transparency, Simplebid® enables agencies to bid and award contracts rapidly, often allowing projects to break ground in just days or weeks.

Simplebid® streamlines JOC by integrating program management, cost estimating, proposal development, and review into a fast, secure web-based system. FOS backs this technology with expert human support, including dedicated account managers, cost estimators, and software specialists. For agencies seeking a turn-key solution, we also offer fully managed programs complete with project managers and support staff.

EFFICIENT PROCESSES FOR RAPID RESULTS

Our process begins by coordinating on-site meetings and defining detailed scopes of work (SOW) to ensure total alignment among stakeholders. Approved contractors then use our client-specific Unit Price Book (UPB) to develop price proposals, which we rigorously review for compliance and scheduling. This transparency and seamless integration significantly enhance efficiency and stakeholder satisfaction.

FOS also leverages strategic partnerships, such as our collaboration with Sourcewell. This gives clients access to the collective purchasing power of more than 50,000 member agencies, helping government, education, and nonprofit entities save time and money.

PROVEN EXPERTISE

Founded in 2009 and recognized as the #1 facility management service by World Architecture 100 since 2021, FOS created Simplebid® in direct response to client needs.

A prime example of our impact is our work with San Diego. Our expertise in facility condition assessments, asset inventory, and preventative maintenance planning ensures that San Diego's 10 million square feet of infrastructure performs optimally. By providing consultations on energy optimization and long-term planning, we offer the discipline required to turn ambitious goals into measurable results. Our partnership minimizes timelines and administrative overhead, providing immediate access to qualified contractors while reinforcing strict budgetary control.

TRANSFORMING YOUR WORKFLOW

JOC is ideal for diverse projects, ranging from time-critical repairs to complex ADA upgrades. Serving federal and state agencies, educational institutions, and housing authorities, our approach fosters teamwork, quality, and collaboration.

Ready to get more done? Achieve significant cost savings, reduce procurement time, and boost transparency for your construction projects. Visit www.foscd.com today to learn how Simplebid can streamline your procurement process and deliver projects faster with higher satisfaction!



MARKO MEDVED DELIVERING HIS REMARKS AT THE GRAND OPENING OF THE SAN DIEGO PUBLIC HEALTH LAB



MEASURING SUCCESS BEYOND BUDGETS

In the private sector, success often boils down to profit margins and shareholder value. In public infrastructure, the metrics are more nuanced. Yes, projects must meet cost, schedule, and budget. But for Medved, the ultimate measure is whether people embrace the spaces created.

He points to Waterfront Park, once a stretch of parking lots, now a thriving community hub where children play in a 400-meter fountain and families gather for concerts and marathons. “It didn’t exist before. Now it does. People count on it. And I definitely hear about it if the fountain isn’t running,” he laughs.

Or the historic county headquarters building, an FDR-era project that the county is carefully seismically retrofitting to thrive another hundred years. “It’s a cornerstone of San Diego,” Medved says. “You don’t reinvent it. You preserve it.”



Steinberg Hart: Designing Award-Winning Buildings for the County of San Diego for 20 Years

Architecture firm Steinberg Hart has proudly partnered with the County of San Diego for over two decades, leading the design of award-winning public and community buildings at the San Diego County Operations Center Campus and beyond. With over \$2B of work completed for the public sector in its 72-year history, Steinberg Hart’s work enriches lives, strengthens community, and honors the environment.

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LOOKING AHEAD: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND BEYOND

San Diego County covers 4,600 square miles and manages 10 million square feet of infrastructure. For Medved, that means balancing upkeep with innovation. “People take infrastructure for granted. They assume it just stays there. It doesn’t. We have to take care of what we own.”

At the same time, new priorities are emerging. Behavioral health is one of the fastest-growing portfolios, intersecting with public safety as the county shifts from a correctional to a rehabilitative mindset. “We’re building facilities that keep people out of the legal system and get them the help they need,” he explains.

The county is also experimenting with workforce development programs that bring probation youth into trade apprenticeships—repairing vehicles, painting, etc. “It’s still early, but we’re seeing real potential to give youth meaningful skills, pathways to employment and successful community reintegration,” Medved says.



THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY TEAM FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING



And then there are the projects that stretch the imagination in the best ways: emergency vehicle training tracks — essentially a racetrack with a purpose, built for the basics of lifesaving training - along with animal shelters, affordable housing, specialized laboratories, and even tunnels. Each one brings its own learning curve. “You have to engage with the owners, bring in experts, and figure it out. That’s the fun part.”



THE PERSONAL EQUATION

Through it all, Medved insists his motivation is simple: seeing people use and enjoy the things he helps create. “You talk about something one year, and a few years later kids are running through the fountain, folks have a new home, or neighborhoods are holding events in the community center. That’s incredibly satisfying.”

It’s also deeply personal. San Diego is where the Navy first brought him, where he met his wife, and where he has spent much of his career building both military and civic infrastructure. “When we drive to Los Angeles to visit my daughter, we pass the Camp Pendleton hospital I helped build. It’s lit up at night on a ridge. That’s a lasting reminder of what we’ve accomplished.”

For Medved, nearly everything comes full circle: service, leadership, trust, and community. The Navy taught him to lead. San Diego gave him a home. Now, as the county’s chief builder, he is ensuring that future generations have places that not only function but inspire.

“Family,” one of the etched words on the Live Well Center, may be the one that resonates with him most. It’s a reminder that in public service, the true measure of success is not in steel and concrete but in the lives those structures touch and the collaboration that made them possible.

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