

April 14, 2020

Mayor Kevin Faulconer
202 "C" Street
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Recommendations for Active Transportation Actions as COVID-19 Response

Dear Mayor Faulconer,

On behalf of the undersigned transportation and community-based organizations, we are writing with recommendations for how to address the public health crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic through addressing transportation needs. *Our recommendations aim to aid essential travel needs for individuals and household units and relieve pressure from overcrowded sidewalks; in no way do we aim to encourage group activities with these recommendations.*

Based on the need to allow for safe physical distancing of at least six feet to reduce the risk of transmission, we recommend the following immediate actions be taken:

- **Modify Pedestrian Signal Activation** - Most streets with pedestrian crossing buttons require that they be pushed to change the light and activate the walk sign. Some streets provide more time to cross the street safely when the pedestrian crosswalk button is activated. Yet no one should need to push a button – and risk spreading the virus – to cross the street safely during this pandemic.

Pedestrian crosswalk buttons should be switched to automatically provide the walk sign to a pedestrian without having to press it, citywide.

- **Prioritize Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safe Travel on Crowded Corridors** - People are walking and cycling, either for essential travel needs or for their physical and mental health. At the same time, car travel and congestion has significantly declined. We recommend that you take action to provide appropriate safe space for people by widening walking space and opening streets where pedestrian overcrowding already is occurring and where people access essential needs such as grocery stores by walking, cycling, or accessing transit.

Issues relating to enforcement in communities of concern remain and it will be vital for San Diego to implement these safe physical distancing measures equitably. We do not want these safe streets measures to result in additional enforcement in communities of concern. The city should not issue additional citations and no additional police presence should be allocated.

In no way do we desire to impede the travel needs for essential workers, many of whom are residents in underserved communities. Emergency vehicles and residents who live on those streets will still be able to access the roads by motor vehicle.

We recommend opening the streets by removing one or more parking or travel lanes on the following three corridors immediately, followed by continued deployment of more corridors:

- 6th Avenue
- Mission Boulevard
- University Avenue
- More corridors and networks based on existing demand and planned networks which have already received community buy-in

These recommendations are a first step towards addressing transportation needs that must be implemented as soon as possible, with an eye towards scaling up. Next steps include analyzing additional corridors and connected routes to ensure safe travel in communities across the City of San Diego by using signage to close some streets to through traffic while still allowing necessary vehicular traffic. *We are available to work collaboratively with the City to identify next phases of the transportation response to the COVID-19 crisis.*

- **Reduce Speeds to 20mph in Transit Priority Areas** - Reducing speed of traffic to 20mph in Transit Priority Areas can improve safety for all essential trips. Likelihood of slight, serious, and fatal injuries increases exponentially for pedestrians when hit by a motorist travelling faster than 20mph. Reducing speed of car traffic will prevent serious injuries, which reduces the volume of people making emergency hospital visits that are not COVID-19 related.

We recommend 15mph speed of traffic on corridors that may become partially opened.

- **Community Engagement** - We recognize that during this pandemic traditional community engagement must adapt to the shelter-in-place directive. We encourage the City to develop creative community engagement strategies in collaboration with community-based organizations along the proposed routes. It is important that essential businesses along the proposed routes and essential workers not be negatively impacted. This is especially critical in communities identified in the City of San Diego’s Social Equity Index who have been historically excluded and who are disproportionately vulnerable to COVID-19 impacts.

We thank you for your strong leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. We urge you to take the above actions to further flatten the curve and reduce unnecessary loss of life.

Signed,

Maya Rosas Director of Policy Circulate San Diego	Andy Hanshaw Executive Director San Diego County Bicycle Coalition	Susie Murphy Executive Director San Diego Mountain Biking Association
Judi Tentor Executive Director BikeSD	Tara Hammond Founder & CEO Hammond Climate Solutions	Joyce Lane Public Policy Team Co-Chair SanDiego350

Randy Torres-Van Vleck Senior PM, Transportation & Planning City Heights CDC	Ginger Partyka Rise North Park	Patrick Santana Rise Up Town
Noah Harris Transportation Policy Advocate Climate Action Campaign	Marissa Tucker President YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County	Connor Franklin Rey Partnerships Team Lead Sunrise Movement San Diego

CC:

- Council President Georgette Gómez
- Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry
- Councilmember Jennifer Campbell
- Councilmember Chris Ward
- Councilmember Monica Montgomery
- Councilmember Mark Kersey
- Councilmember Chris Cate
- Councilmember Scott Sherman
- Councilmember Vivian Moreno