



November 6, 2020

San Diego City Council President Georgette Gómez
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Support healthy communities and economic recovery by passing Mobility Choices

Dear Council President Gómez, Mayor Faulconer, and Councilmembers:

As a very tumultuous year draws to a close, there is a decision you can make right now to bring certainty for San Diego's future, and generate economic growth for the city's small businesses.

We urge you to pass the Mobility Choices ordinance to boost San Diego's local economy by acting to address the climate emergency and climate equity and build a more walkable, bikeable city.

Mobility Choices won the full support of the City's Mobility Board on June 3, 2020 and was passed by the Planning Commission and Land Use and Housing Committee earlier this year.

The City of San Diego is now four months past the State deadline of July 1, 2020 to adopt a local threshold for Senate Bill 743 (SB 743). Mobility Choices aligns the City's climate goals with the State requirement in SB 743 to analyze transportation impacts using VMT (vehicle miles traveled).

In addition to meeting this state requirement, Mobility Choices will support San Diego in the following ways:

Advance climate equity:

Your passage of Mobility Choices puts San Diego on the right track to addressing historical disinvestment in our Communities of Concern.

- With less than five percent of the City’s Development Impact Fees spent in Communities of Concern since the 1980s, policies guiding more equitable investment in San Diego are long overdue.¹
- The Mobility Choices ordinance guarantees that at least half of the funds collected will be invested in Communities of Concern. These communities are, and have been, bearing the brunt of the impacts of racism and climate change, decades of under-investment, and as a result have the fewest resources to combat these effects.
- Transportation investments in Communities of Concern can help improve health and safety and connect people to good jobs and opportunities.

Address the climate emergency:

Your passage of Mobility Choices will demonstrate your leadership on the climate crisis.

- The San Diego City Council passed a climate emergency declaration on March 10, 2020, and Mobility Choices is a key strategy to address that emergency.
- Transportation is San Diego’s largest source of greenhouse gas emissions—over half of the city’s total emissions come from cars and trucks on city streets.² Statewide, this is also true; SB 743 helps address our climate crisis and the impacts of gas-powered transportation on our environment. The Mobility Choices policy will shift new development from being built around driving and fossil fuels, and instead prioritize green, emissions-free, healthy transportation.
- This will enable San Diego to make real progress toward achieving its Climate Action Plan goals, which aim for significant increases in walking and biking as a percentage of all trips in the city.

Support local business:

Your passage of Mobility Choices will support local businesses. By funding improvements to walking and biking, the ordinance makes it easier for people to reach local businesses. People on foot and on bikes stop more easily and shop in neighborhood stores and restaurants, on average spending more money than customers who drive.

For example, one of the improvements that Mobility Choices will support is bike lanes. Many cities have seen how the creation of new protected bike lanes boosts local business³:

- In Los Angeles, retail vacancies dropped by 44% and commercial real estate sales prices increased by 240%;
- In Salt Lake City, protected bike lanes increased local sales by 8.8%;
- In Indianapolis, over half of local businesses reported more customers and 48% reported more revenue.

¹ Statistic presented by Planning Department Director Mike Hansen to [City Council’s June 24, 2020 Land Use and Housing Committee meeting](#) (time marker 58:20)

² https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2019_cap_digital_version.pdf

³ <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/protected-bike-lanes-benefits.pdf>

- In San Francisco, shoppers that walked to their dining or retail destinations spent more per month than shoppers that traveled by car⁴

Bring certainty for new development:

Your passage of Mobility Choices will support new development by providing certainty and predictability for developers in San Diego.

- Mobility Choices will make mitigation requirements clear and consistent for new development, reducing costly uncertainty and streamlining the approval process.
- It will streamline development near transit, accelerating much-needed housing production in areas that align with the City's Climate Action Plan. Mobility Choices can help San Diego reach statewide infill development goals while achieving more affordable and efficient commute options for more San Diegans.

Support healthy communities:

Your passage of Mobility Choices would make healthy, sustainable forms of transportation such as biking, walking, and public transit safer and more convenient.

- With only five years left to achieve the City's goal of zero traffic-related fatalities or severe injuries, infrastructure that reduces single drivers and gives people on foot and bikes more space, protection, and visibility will be key to achieving Vision Zero commitments.
- Mobility Choices will spur walking, biking and transit investments where they are needed the most and will be used by the most people.
- Mobility Choices promotes sustainable and equitable growth of the City through investment in transit and active transportation infrastructure.⁵ With the City's population growth and the existing housing shortage, San Diego must support and implement sustainable development practices where transportation options make communities accessible and enjoyable by everyone.

Your passage of Mobility Choices will propel San Diego to a clean, green, equitable future for local businesses, for the city's economy, and for the climate. It will enable residents to get around safely and it will make our community more inviting for visitors, further boosting the local economy.

We urge you to pass Mobility Choices to invest in a healthy, green, prosperous San Diego, and we thank you for your leadership.

⁴https://archive.sfcta.org/sites/default/files/content/Planning/CongestionPricingFeasibilityStudy/PDFs/SF-ModalChoices-SpendingPatterns_RevisedFinal.pdf

⁵ City of San Diego, Complete Communities: Mobility Choices, available at <https://www.sandiego.gov/complete-communities-mobility-choices>

Signed,

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CC: Mayor Kevin Faulconer
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