



December 15th, 2022
Mayor and City Council
San Diego City Hall
2020 C Street San Diego, CA 92101
Via Email

Re: Recommendations for City of San Diego FY 2024 Budget

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers,

Climate Action Campaign is a non-profit organization based in San Diego and Orange County with one mission: to stop the climate crisis through effective and equitable policy action.

We are encouraged by the City Council budget memos released in September, which outlined key climate investments such as funding for the implementation of the Climate Action Plan, an increase to the Climate Equity Fund, and funding to expand our Urban Forestry and complete the Bicycle Master Plan Update.

With a newly elected Council and multiple state and federal funding sources available, the City is now in a unique position to demonstrate its commitment to a more equitable and sustainable San Diego by ensuring key investments in climate, transportation, energy and housing policies. On behalf of all San Diegans, we urge you to improve our quality of life and address the climate crisis by funding the implementation of the City's Climate Action Plan and the Climate Resilient SD Plan, as well as other initiatives like Vision Zero and Blueprint SD.

Please consider our recommendations below for the FY2024 City Budget:

Climate Action Plan

Seven Councilmembers have already expressed their support for the CAP in their budget memos. As the Sustainability and Mobility Department develops the CAP Implementation Plan, we urge the City to approve resources and funding for the initiatives listed below.

Increase Sustainability and Mobility Department Funding for CAP Implementation

We recommend that the City allocate funds to hire a senior level Program Manager and provide resources to lead and accelerate CAP Strategy 1 *Decarbonization of the Built Environment*. Additionally, the City should hire a grant writer to seek state, federal, and private grants to meet the Sustainability and Mobility Department needs.

Estimated Cost: \$300,000

Building Decarbonization Roadmap Funding

The City should conduct the necessary community outreach to begin the task of retrofitting existing buildings, as identified in Strategy 1 of the Climate Action Plan. We recommend that the City hires two full time positions to lead decarbonization outreach efforts and to oversee projects and contracts as part of the Municipal Energy Implementation Plan.

Estimated Cost: \$416,000

Core Benefits: Resiliency, Air Quality, Jobs & Economy

Expand Renewable Energy Generation

The City must work closely with SDCP to expand customers enrolled in the 100% renewable energy subscription in order to increase the amount of renewable energy supplied to the City. To implement local renewable energy resource projects as identified in Strategy 2 of the CAP, the City should partner with SDCP for program development and incentivization.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Core Benefits: Jobs & Economy, Resiliency

Expand Tree Canopy in Communities of Concern

The City of San Diego is not making progress to reach its tree canopy goals, a failure that mainly impacts low-income areas, such as Barrio Logan, which only have 1% tree coverage. As the Updated CAP calls for more ambitious goals to reach 35% by 2035, we urge the city to address tree deficiency by expanding tree canopy in Communities of Concern.

Estimated cost: \$554,000

CAP Core Benefit: Resiliency, Air Quality, Public Health

Complete the Mobility Master Plan

To accelerate the construction of much-needed bicycle and transit infrastructure and help reach the CAP mode shift target goals, we urge the City to allocate funding to complete the Mobility Master Plan (MMP) by December 2023.

In last year's budget, \$350,000 was allocated for this purpose, though the total cost had been estimated at \$500,000. Without knowing whether that initial \$350,000 was spent, we are requesting the full amount again this year, to ensure that this critical plan is completed as soon as possible.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

Core Benefits: Air Quality, Equity, Public Health

Climate Resilient SD Plan

On December 14, 2021, the City Council adopted the Climate Resilient SD Plan which included planning and policy documents with ambitious goals and actions to prepare our communities for the impacts of climate change. The FY 2024 budget should provide ample funding to support the newly elected Chief Resilience Officer on the implementation of these goals.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Core Benefits: Resiliency, Public Health, Jobs and the Economy

Climate Equity Fund

To ensure equitable infrastructure and resilience investments, we ask the City to increase the Climate Equity Fund budget by \$10,000,000 in FY24. The CEF should be utilized to fund projects in Communities of Concern including the construction of Beyer Park and the Cypress Drive Cultural Corridor in San Ysidro and the Chollas Creek Trail in Barrio Logan.

Estimated Cost: \$15,000,000

Core Benefits: Equity, Resiliency, Public Health

Stormwater Department Grant Writer

In order to take advantage of regional, state, and federal funding opportunities for stormwater infrastructure projects, we recommend the City hire a grant writer who seeks funding opportunities for these activities and projects.

Estimate Cost: \$100,000

Core Benefits: Water Quality, Public Health, City Services, Equity, Economic.

Storm Water Department and Public Utilities Department Joint Stormwater Capture and Reuse Analysis

In addition to hiring a grant writer, we ask the City to increase the budget for Operations and Management of our stormwater system. This should include a stormwater harvesting system funded jointly by the Public Utilities Department (PUD) and the Stormwater Department.

Estimated Cost: \$400,000

Core Benefits: Water Quality, Public Health, City Services, Equity, Economic.

Cost of Service Study for City-Provided Trash Service

The City should allocate funds for a cost of service study for city-provided trash service. A “pay-as-you-throw” program would help the City achieve its zero waste goals, and the opportunity presented through repeal of the People’s Ordinance should not be ignored. Details on cost are outlined in the Independent Budget Analyst report 22-23 from August 18, 2022.

Estimated Cost: \$1,000,000

Core Benefits: Equity, Resiliency

Vision Zero

The City has set the ambitious goal of zero traffic-related fatalities and severe injuries by 2025. Making our streets and sidewalks safer to walk, bike, and drive will require the immediate completion of key planning documents that are long outdated.

Updated Bicycle Master Plan

Five Councilmembers have called for funding of an updated Bicycle Master Plan. A plan has not been updated since 2013, when the safest, Class IV classification of bikeways was not used. We recommend that the City fund and complete a updated Bicycle Master Plan to put San Diego on the right track toward its CAP mobility Goals.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

Core Benefits: Air Quality, Public Health, Resiliency

Safe and Sustainable Transportation for All Ages and Abilities Team (STAT)

The STAT team's current mandate to build nine miles of quick-build bikeways per year are insufficient to meet the city's Climate Action Plan and Vision Zero goals. We recommend that the City double the current mandate to build nine miles of quick-build bikeways per year to eighteen miles.

Estimated Cost: \$2,700,000

Core Benefits: Public Health, Air Quality, Resiliency

Blue PrintSD and CPU Outreach

The Blueprint SD framework must create more efficient and equitable CPUs with specific modeshift targets that comply with CAP Measures 3.1 and 3.2, which call for a 50% modeshift target for biking, walking, and transit by 2035. More specifically, we recommend the FY24 budget allocates funds to:

Hire a grant writer for the Planning Department that specializes in grants related to Blueprint SD goals and Measure 3.1 Safe and Enjoyable Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists and Measure 3.2 Increase Safe, Convenient, and Enjoyable Transit Use

Hire 2 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) CPU Outreach staffers that will lead meaningful and equitable CPU outreach, ensuring that:

1. Specific current and projected modeshift data is shared with communities at the beginning of the CPU process; and
2. The community is informed of how Blueprint SD will affect each future CPU.

Estimated Cost: \$300,000

Equity, Air Quality, Resiliency

General Fund secured Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA)

San Diego, like the rest of California, has high levels of housing insecurity, and the pandemic and inflation have exacerbated the situation for many of our residents. We urge the city to address the housing crisis through multiple investments including gap financing for shovel-ready affordable housing projects through a General Fund Secured Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA).

Estimated cost: \$50,000,000

Core Benefits: Equity, Resiliency

Rent Registry Nexus Study

To help stabilize rent prices, we recommend that the City fund a nexus study to implement the recommendations of the initial rent registry feasibility study that was approved for FY2023. A rent registry will allow the city to collect data including rent prices, vacancies, property ownership, and tenant turnover.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000

Core Benefits: Equity, Resiliency

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations for the FY2024 Budget. We look forward to partnering with you on these initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Garcia Millan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping tail.

Brenda Garcia Millan
Research and Policy Analyst
Climate Action Campaign