



January 4, 2020

To: Mayor Todd Gloria, Council President Jennifer Campbell, Council President Pro Tem Stephen Whitburn, and Councilmembers LaCava, Montgomery, Von Wilpert, Cate, Campillo, and Moreno

Re: CAC FY 2022 Budget Priorities

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

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

We are well aware of the budgetary challenges this council will navigate this year, and encourage you to champion budgetary priorities that provide relief to San Diego families, particularly communities of concern, hit hard by layered devastating impacts of COVID-19. However, we also urge you to prioritize addressing our other health, safety, and economic crisis—the climate emergency—by updating our legally-binding Climate Action Plan (CAP) to align with climate science and best practices, as well as put the plan into action by funding implementation. We offer the following budget priorities to do so:

Create a Climate Equity Fund for Mitigation, Adaptation, and Resilience

The City of San Diego needs a separate and dedicated fund for equitable climate mitigation, adaptation and resiliency projects and planning (including the City’s new CAP Update and Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan) to support neighborhoods most vulnerable to the climate crisis. These funds should be allocated to very low to low access to opportunity areas identified in the City’s Climate Equity Index. Sustainability and equity must go hand in hand, and a Climate Equity Fund can better leverage and deploy City resources to fight the climate crisis.

Estimated Cost: N/A

Council District(s) Impacted: All

Maintain Current Sustainability Department Budget to Develop the CAP Update

In order for the Sustainability Department to finish developing an equitable, zero carbon Climate Action Plan Update (“San Diego Green New Deal CAP”) in consultation with the community as well as maintain other basic operations and projects, it is imperative that the Sustainability Department maintain the modest budget they have received in the FY 21 Budget. We strongly recommend that funds for this department not be cut.

Allocate Funds to the Sustainability Department for the Development of Critical Climate Policies

In order to begin implementation of the equitable zero carbon CAP Update, it is critical that the Sustainability Department develop citywide policies in consultation with key stakeholders, including communities of concern and workers, that help us reduce our largest source of emissions and promote environmental and climate justice. While the planning document is critical, the Sustainability Department should also be funded to also put the plan into action.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000 - \$150,000

Council District(s) Impacted: All

Allocate Funds to the Sustainability Department for Implementation of the Municipal Energy Strategy

In the current CAP, the City commits to reducing energy consumption at municipal facilities by 15% by 2020 and an additional 25% by 2035 through the Municipal Energy Strategy. While the City has the plan, the Sustainability Department should be funded to begin implementation of this strategy. It is important that the City demonstrate its commitment to climate action by beginning reducing its own emissions.

Estimated Cost: \$250,000

Council District(s) Impacted: All

Fund a Citywide Grantwriter for Climate Mitigation, Adaptation, and Resiliency GrantsAs a hire that will many times over “pay for itself,” we recommend funding a grantwriter that secures funds to achieve the goals of the CAP and the Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan without exposure to the general fund.

Estimated Cost: \$60,000

Council District(s) Impacted: All

Use Senate Bill 1 Funds for Complete Streets Improvements

SB 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, has generated millions of dollars for fixing neighborhood streets, freeways, and bridges in San Diego. Though these funds have generally been used for basic road maintenance and rehabilitation, they may also be used for complete streets elements, including active transportation, bike, and pedestrian safety projects. The Transportation & Stormwater Department should work closely with the resurfacing team to ensure SB 1 funds are used for projects that will help us meet our Climate Action Plan mode share targets.

Estimated Cost: N/A

Council District(s) Impacted: All

Five-Year Climate Action Plan Outlook

We request the (overdue) release of the CAP Five-Year Outlook as an addendum to the Five-Year Financial Outlook. That Outlook, a five-year CAP implementation plan with associated costs that has been completed but not released, would offer the Mayor and Council a clear understanding of the actions

and investments needed to hit CAP targets. The City must take a holistic programmatic approach to CAP implementation, rather than continuing a piecemeal approach to CAP implementation through the annual budget cycle.

Estimated Cost: N/A

Council District(s) Impacted: All

Preparing for a Green & Just Recovery

As federal stimulus packages are predicted to trickle down from the Federal Government in the coming year, we urge the City to plan projects that not only prioritize relief for communities most devastated by the impacts of COVID-19, but also ensure a downpayment on a sustainable future. As elected leaders, we urge you to champion this concept as you collaborate with other local, state, and federal elected leaders.

Conclusion

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations for the FY 22 Budget. If you have any questions or need further elaboration, do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,



Maleeka Marsden
Co-Director of Policy
Climate Action Campaign

CC: Director of Policy Jessica Lawrence, Policy Advisor Randy Wilde, Sustainability Department Director and Chief Sustainability Officer Erik Caldwell, Planning Director Mike Hansen, Transportation & Stormwater Director Kris McFadden, Mobility Program Manager Everett Hauser, Deputy Director of Environment and Mobility Planning Alyssa Muto, Senior Planner Julia Chase