



December 17, 2021

Mayor and City Council  
San Diego City Hall  
2020 C Street  
San Diego, CA 92101  
Via Email

**Re: Climate Action Campaign FY 2023 Budget Priorities Memo**

Honorable 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 congratulate the City on new commitments to climate mitigation and resiliency in the past year, but are concerned that without specific implementation plans and funding, the City is not setting itself up for success. Below, we have detailed our budget recommendations to do so.

Additionally, we want to flag that the City of Denver has emerged as a strong model for climate planning, implementation, funding, and equitable outreach, and we urge the City of San Diego to review [Denver's strategies](#) to improve our best practices.

**FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTING THE CAP**

***Implementation Plan with Associated Costs and Funding Sources for the CAP Update***

While we celebrate the City's commitment to a CAP that aligns with the urgency of the crisis, we are concerned that without detailed specifics around implementation and funding, the CAP 2.0 will suffer the same fate of the 2015 CAP, which has largely gone unimplemented and underfunded.

In order to plan for success for CAP 2.0, the City should fund and adopt Recommendation #5 of the 2021 CAP Performance Audit, which states: "Once CAP 2.0 is developed, Sustainability should develop an implementation plan, including an estimate of associated costs, information on funding sources, and identification of funding gaps. Sustainability should consider seeking assistance, such as from the Department of Finance, Department of Performance and Analytics, or a consultant, if necessary."

Due to the urgency of the climate crisis and the fact that the City is behind on its legal commitments to reduce emissions as mitigation for continued project development, we urge the City to fund a consultant to complete the Implementation Plan.

More specifically, we recommend the Implementation Plan include:

- Detailed associated cost estimates for each measure and strategy.
- Specific funding/financing sources for each measure and strategy, including local, state, federal, non-governmental and private sector opportunities.
- Clearly identify implementation funding gaps and challenges for the City to prioritize and problem solve.
- A strong commitment to prioritizing Communities of Concern, as identified in the City's Climate Equity Index, and Climate Equity Fund projects and programs.

*Estimated Cost: \$300,000*

*Council District(s) Impacted: All*

### ***Sustainability Department Funding Needs***

One of the recommendations within the CAP Audit is to complete staffing assessments for all CAP-departments, including the Sustainability Department, and to fund those needs. Our understanding is that staffing assessment for the Sustainability Department should be available to Council offices in January 2022, if not already. We recommend the FY 23 Budget fund the Sustainability Department staffing needs in full.

*Estimated Cost: Unknown*

*Council District(s) Impacted: All*

### ***Procedural Equity***

We thank the City for collaborating with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to conduct outreach on the CAP Update in our most vulnerable communities. We think this is a critical step to advancing procedural equity not only for the Climate Action Plan, but for other City projects and plans. To ensure success, the City should aim to create authentic partnerships between the CBOs, communities, and the City that is collaborative, transparent, and communicative.

At a high level, we recommend the City dedicate funds to the following points of action to ensure procedural equity:

- Continue collaborations with CBOs to ensure robust outreach to Communities of Concern in all stages of the adoption of the CAP and Resiliency Plan process so the City can incorporate community insights into project objectives and outcomes. This involves

ensuring that feedback is considered, responded to, and meaningfully integrated into all stages of the CAP.

- Compensate community members for their time to encourage and make possible continuous participation in decision-making processes.
- Implement education initiatives to build capacity and knowledge about climate impacts and possible solutions.

*Estimated Cost: \$400,000*

*Council District(s) Impacted: All*

### ***Mobility Master Plan (MMP) (formerly titled Mobility Action Plan 2.0)***

Transportation accounts for more greenhouse gas emissions than any other sector. Accordingly, the 2015 CAP called for 50% of commutes in Transit Priority Areas to be taken by bike, walk, and transit by 2035. However, annual monitoring shows that the City has made little progress towards these mode shift targets, which are key to the CAP's overall emissions reductions.

The CAP update proposes even more aggressive mode shift targets. We urge the City to fully fund and finish the MMP, to provide the needed roadmap to achieve the CAP's legally-binding mode shift targets. The MMP should demonstrate through mode shift modelling (similar to the Downtown Mobility Plan) how the City's proposed network of sustainable transportation projects will close the gap between SANDAG's 2021 Regional Plan and the CAP's requirements for mode shift. The MMP should include specific projects, costs, and implementation timelines. See our latest report—[Missing the Mark](#)—for further analysis.

*Estimated Cost: \$500,000*

*Council District(s) Impacted: All*

### ***Climate Equity Fund***

In order to meaningfully center climate equity in CAP implementation, the city must dedicate the funds to do so. We recommend the City commit to increasing the climate equity fund by \$5,000,000 in FY 23 and in future years.

*Estimated Cost: \$5,000,000*

*Council District(s) Impacted: 4, 8, 9*

## **FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTING THE RESILIENCY PLAN**

### ***Implementation Plan with Associated Costs and Funding Sources for the Climate Resilient SD Plan***

While we applaud the City’s plan to form an adaptation working group to coordinate on climate adaptation implementation efforts, and we appreciate the City’s ongoing collaboration with community-based organizations to shape the resiliency plan, we are also concerned and disappointed that the Climate Resilient SD Plan is not in fact a plan, but a framework that lacks the specificity necessary to implement projects and programs to protect San Diegans from the harmful effects of climate change.

In order to plan for success for the Climate Resilient SD Plan, the City should fund and develop an implementation plan, including a precise estimate of associated costs for each proposed strategy, information on funding/financing sources, and identification of funding gaps, similar to the recommendations for the CAP Update above.

*Estimated Cost: \$300,000*

*Council District(s) Impacted: All*

### ***Apply for State Resiliency Funds***

This year, Governor Newsom approved a three-year California Climate Resilience budget totalling \$3.7 billion dollars, with \$819 million going to local and regional initiatives. The City should apply for these funds to begin implementation of key climate resiliency funds.

*Estimated Cost: N/A*

*Council District(s) Impacted: All*

### ***Citywide Grant Writer for Climate Mitigation and Resiliency***

As a hire that will many times over “pay for itself,” we recommend funding a grant writer 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: \$100,000*

*Council District(s) Impacted: All*

## Conclusion

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations for the FY 23 Budget. We look forward to partnering with you on these important initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maleeka Marsden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Maleeka Marsden  
Co-Director of Policy  
Climate Action Campaign