

May 4, 2020

To: Mayor Kevin Faulconer and City Councilmembers
202 "C" Street
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Phase 2 San Diego Slow Streets Implementation Comments and Recommendations

Dear Mayor Faulconer and City Councilmembers,

Thank you for launching the San Diego Slow Streets initiative allowing residents and essential workers to make essential trips and recreate safely while maintaining necessary social distancing to prevent further spread of COVID-19. The pilot Phase 1 has proven to be a huge success. Now, more must be done to expand the initiative to additional neighborhoods.

It is critical we launch Phase 2 of San Diego Slow Streets as soon as possible to create a network of streets throughout the City to benefit all communities, eliminate a single street from becoming a dangerous destination point for people to gather, and provide long term relief for residents as physical distancing becomes the "new normal". Thankfully, the City has the information it needs to expand the program citywide.

Council offices have submitted individual memos with their own recommendations and are collecting feedback from residents in real time on where Slow Streets should go, and how they should be implemented. Additionally, the City should continue to work with community-based organizations, leaders and residents who can provide more critical information on Slow Streets planning and implementation. This valuable data can guide the City to realizing the full potential of the San Diego Slow Streets initiative, and we hope City staff will work with council offices and the community to bring Slow Streets to their respective districts, as soon as possible.

In addition, pedestrian crosswalk buttons should be switched to automatically provide the walk sign to a pedestrian without having to press it, citywide, with prioritization for corridors outlined in our coalition's April 14th letter, which is attached. Pushing the crosswalk button with an elbow or other body part is not feasible for many and it should not be required to touch a potentially contaminated surface during this pandemic. Disability Rights California has written a letter supporting this request, which is also attached.

We continue to urge the City to make special considerations for community engagement and enforcement as the Slow Streets initiative rolls out.

We are pleased the City has not allocated additional police presence and resources as it rolls out the Slow Streets initiative, a policy the City absolutely must continue. Communities of color have been proven to be the most affected by this virus in terms of infection rates and financial burden. The City of San Diego shall not place additional financial burden and stress on these

communities and other vulnerable populations through Slow Streets-related citations and enforcement.

In order to keep equity and essential needs at the forefront of this initiative, the City must seek creative ways to engage the public as Slow Streets policies roll out. Neighborhood streets should not be planned without the crucial input of community members who are currently suffering and surviving. Our public agencies should engage all residents, including harder to reach populations like seniors and folks with limited-English proficiency in the roll-out of Slow Streets policies. The City could hold phone public workshops with live public comments and simultaneous interpretation to discuss Slow Streets and other COVID-19 related relief policies. Please refer to the Safe Routes Partnership Blog Post ([linked here](#)) on how to enact equitable open streets policies during this time.

Additionally, the City may consider using Federal Stimulus funds to provide resources to implement and expand key emergency-response components of the initiative, specifically wider sidewalks, automated push-activated crosswalk buttons, and speed of traffic reductions in Transit Priority Areas and Vision Zero corridors, to reduce costs to the city.

Thank you again for your leadership, and congratulations on the initial success of this important initiative to keep San Diegans healthy and safe during these challenging times.

We appreciate your support and look forward to further partnership.

Signed

Matthew Vasilakis Co-Director of Policy Climate Action Campaign	Maya Rosas Director of Policy Circulate San Diego	Andy Hanshaw Executive Director San Diego County Bicycle Coalition
Judi Tentor Executive Director BikeSD	David Grubb Transportation Chair Sierra Club San Diego	Randy Torres-Van Vleck Senior Program Manager, Transportation & Planning City Heights Community Development Corporation
Oscar Medina Transportation Justice Policy Advocate Environmental Health Coalition	Tara Hammond Founder & CEO Hammond Climate Solutions	Marissa Tucker President YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County

Cc:

Almis Uldris, Conrad Wear, Cody Hooven