



July 26, 2021

San Diego City Hall
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92102
Via Email

SUBJECT: Community members demand immediate improvement to bicycle network in response to the increasing frequency of preventable deaths; 25 miles of protected bike lanes per year

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers,

Our organizations urgently demand Mayor Todd Gloria, the San Diego City Councilmembers, and SANDAG immediately improve the safety of bike riders and pedestrians throughout the City of San Diego by installing a complete network of separated bicycle infrastructure on San Diego's most dangerous streets.

The ongoing epidemic of traffic violence continues to contribute to countless injuries and—in the last month alone—the untimely and tragic deaths of five bike riders in our region. When the City of San Diego adopted the Vision Zero 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, it committed to achieving a goal of zero traffic-related fatalities and injuries. The continued traffic violence has shown that we are still far from achieving that goal.

San Diego has made significant efforts to improve bike safety by supporting SANDAG projects and building separated cycling infrastructure. However, these efforts take years to complete and are often subject to long bureaucratic delays. Pershing Drive, where a bicyclist was killed Tuesday, July 20th, is currently targeted for completion in 2024, six years after it was initially planned to begin construction.

Bike riders are some of the most vulnerable road users in our City, and our elected leaders have the power to end the senseless loss of lives. We demand that the City of San Diego take the following actions as soon as possible to improve the safety of active transportation users:

Build 25 miles of protected bike lanes annually by completing a quick build network, expediting planned SANDAG bike projects, and fully funding and finishing the mobility action plan.

Please see below for details on our demands:

- 1) While the City of San Diego is taking important steps to fund the Safe Transportation for All Ages and Abilities Team to build 9 miles of class IV bikeways per year, the rise in bike rider fatalities has shown that this is not enough. The City of San Diego must build 25 miles of protected bike lanes annually by completing a quick build network immediately, and no later than by the end of this year, 2021, through the following framework:
 - a) Prioritize projects in our urban communities which have the highest likelihood of shifting transportation modes in order to meet our Climate Action Plan mode share goal of 18 percent of trips being completed via bicycle and other micromobility vehicles.
 - i) Urban, higher speed corridors that lack bicycle facilities consistent with the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide, such as Washington Street, University Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, Broadway, 54th Street, Euclid Avenue, Imperial Avenue, Market Street, Orange Avenue, and Park Boulevard¹ should receive quick build protected bike lanes by the end of 2021.
 - b) Prioritize projects in the areas of highest risk by developing a **Vision Zero Quick Build framework** with mechanisms to streamline future bike safety infrastructure projects. For a strong example of a quick build framework, see [SFMTA's Vision Zero Quick Build Projects](#). Projects should be selected using injury data and prioritized in Communities of Concern, as identified by the Climate Equity Index. For data on high-risk areas, please see the [Transportation Injury Mapping System](#) and Circulate San Diego's [Hope For A Vision Zero report](#).
 - c) Immediately address the sites of recent deadly collisions through the following recommendations:
 - i) The SANDAG Pershing Bikeway project is scheduled only to begin construction by 2022. The City of San Diego should immediately reduce the marked speed limit of Pershing Drive to 25mph to reduce the likelihood of future serious injuries or deaths in the event of a collision, reduce the number of general-purpose lanes north of the intersection with Florida Drive/26th Street from four to two, and consider the installation of

¹ Park Blvd is not only an important bike route unto itself, but can serve as a detour for Pershing Dr. during its construction. Restriping and installation of delineators or bollards for a class IV protected bike lane facility should occur immediately after completion of the Balboa Park Pipeline Replacement project from President's Way to Upas St.

flex posts to delineate the bike lane, until the SANDAG Pershing Bikeway project is complete. The City must also work in coordination with Caltrans toward safety improvements at the I-5 highway interchanges on Pershing Drive.

- ii) Genesee Ave lacks even a class II bikeway facility from Sauk Ave to Lehrer Drive, a brief gap that prioritizes on-street parking instead. A bike rider was killed on Friday, July 23rd, while attempting to ride in this section of road without a marked bike lane. The city must immediately re-stripe this gap to include a bike lane and reduce the marked speed limit to 25mph until a class IV facility can be constructed.
 - iii) North Torrey Pines Road transitions from a well-buffered class II/partially class IV facility to a very narrow class II facility with virtually no special treatment at the intersection with La Jolla Village Drive, where a bike rider and mother of an infant was killed. The city must continue the installation of the well-buffered class II or class IV facility throughout North Torrey Pines Road as it merges into La Jolla Village Drive, and, at the very least, into the entrance and exit ramps to Gilman Drive.
 - d) Implement Vision Zero Strategic Solutions for Safety on all newly resurfaced streets.
- 2) Improve internal processes to expedite bike project delivery:
- a) Streamline the permitting and environmental review and design for SANDAG projects down to 4-6 months.
 - b) Work closely with Caltrans to identify funding and implement fixes for at least two gaps of dangerous sections of road per annum (i.e., crossings that intersect with Caltrans District 11 right-of-way).
 - c) Adopt a City Council Ordinance that establishes a modal priority framework that prioritizes people as they walk, bicycle, and take transit over people when they drive. Such an ordinance would establish standards such as those developed by NACTO as a matter of city policy, rather than being optional implementation by traffic engineers. For strong examples, see Minneapolis' [Complete Streets Policy](#) and Seattle's [Complete Streets Ordinance](#).
 - i) The Complete Streets Ordinance must direct city staff to identify and convert streets with speed limits of 35 mph or over with sharrows to Class I or Class IV bikeways.
- 3) Fully fund and finish the Mobility Action Plan² in 1 year.
- a) The City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan set an ambitious mode shift target for the percentage of trips taken by bike in Transit Priority Areas (18% by 2035), but we have made little progress towards this target. The City must fully fund the Mobility Action Plan through a mid-year budget amendment to secure a roadmap towards achieving the targets in the transportation strategy of the CAP.
- 4) If determined to remove ghost bikes, the City must not do so until that street, corridor, or intersection is made safer for micromobility users.

² About the MAP: A completed MAP should include modeling that shows the infrastructure investments and land use density needed to shift mode share to the target levels.

With lives on the line, we cannot afford anything less than bold, immediate action to address traffic violence. We hope the City will prioritize building 25 miles of protected bike lanes annually by completing a quick build network, expediting planned SANDAG bike projects, and fully funding and finishing the mobility action plan. We stand ready to partner with you to protect the health and safety of countless community members who go by bike or know someone who does.

Sincerely,

Kyle Heiskala
Board President
BikeSD

Colin Parent
Circulate San Diego

Maleeka Marsden
Chair
San Diego Green New Deal Alliance

Karina Gonzalez
Climate Justice Policy Advisor
Hammond Climate Solutions

Andy Hanshaw
Executive Director
San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

Noah Harris & Ariana Criste
Climate Action Campaign

Steven Gelb & Bee Mittermiller
Volunteer
San Diego 350

David Grubb
Transportation Chair
Sierra Club San Diego