



May 21, 2024

Mayor Todd Gloria
202 C Street, 11th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Restore defunded Climate Equity and Energy Independence, and fund the Fatal 15 in the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget

Dear Mayor Gloria and San Diego City Councilmembers,

Climate Action Campaign (CAC) is a non-profit organization based in San Diego and Orange County, CA, with a simple mission: to create a zero-carbon future through effective and equitable policy action. It is in pursuit of this mission that we write to you with great concern regarding the defunding of equity in the current Mayor's May Revise of the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 budget. The Climate Equity Fund has been slashed to a paltry and inappropriate amount. The Energy Independence Fund has been reduced to zero, denying residents the promise of greater sustainability and better energy practices. Additionally, the Fatal 15 intersections remain unaddressed and unfunded, leaving residents vulnerable to dangerous, autocentric road designs.

San Diegans are living in extraordinary times, where once-in-a-hundred-year floods occur at a much more rapid pace; the climate crisis has come to fruition in a tragic and vicious manner. Mayor, only you and the Council can make true strides to rectify the generations of injustice illustrated by who is and who is not affected by the climate crisis and its origins in increased greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change presents itself through extremely hot days, extreme flooding, and higher rates of asthma, and is propelled most by a transportation system that consistently encourages and rewards polluting car use. Pedestrians and cyclists are forced to encounter death as they walk and bike through dangerous and purposefully disinvested infrastructure, primarily and most inequitably found in Communities of Concern.

Climate Equity Fund

Now is most definitely the wrong time to slash the Climate Equity Fund. The full amount of \$8.5 million in annual budget appropriation must be immediately restored.

Defunding equity is dangerous and unjustifiable, especially in the wake of the most devastating flooding the city has seen. Too many people lost everything due to generations of purposeful disinvestment and neglected maintenance of critical stormwater infrastructure. This tragic event happened just months ago. How many more must lose their homes before these inequities are addressed? The Climate Equity Fund is intended for Communities of Concern that need climate investments to stay safe in the wake of climate change. This funding needs to be restored and deployed equitably for its intended purpose.

Energy Independence Fund

By denying the appropriate allocation of SDG&E's payments to the Energy Independence Fund, the current revised budget breaks the 2021 commitment to climate justice, transparency, accountability, and researching alternatives to SDG&E made by the Mayor and the Council.

The public deserves to save a portion of the \$80 million that SDG&E paid to set the current 20-year contract with the city. The Energy Independence Fund was set up to do just that and to ensure equitable, community-focused pathways for power provision would be explored. Without funding, the city will not be able to complete Phase 2 of the Municipal Utility Entity Study, which it committed to completing to gauge next steps in transitioning fully to public power. Without these funds, the City will not be on track to potentially exit the grasp of SDG&E's 20-year contract early and provide residents with more affordable energy options.

Keep the promise made to residents in 2021 and fully fund the Energy Independence Fund.

Fatal 15

Sadly, the data clearly illustrate the most fatal intersections for pedestrians and cyclists in the city; yet there is no dedicated funding in the current revised budget to address this critical issue.

Through the diligent work of Circulate San Diego and coalition partners, the cost of addressing these Fatal 15 intersections using low-cost improvements such as striping intersections, signal countdowns, and audible safe crossing prompts amounts to \$1.5 million. The approximate cost per intersection is estimated at \$100,000. Please revise the budget. The ability to shift some of the budget priorities in the Transportation Department to fund safer streets already exists. This will save lives and will also serve to advance the current Climate Action Plan 2035 goals for 50% of all trips to be made via walking/rolling, cycling, and public transit.

Fatal 15 Intersections

| <i>Intersection</i> | <i>District</i> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Clairemont Mesa Blvd & Doliva Dr. | 2 |
| Rosecrans St & Moore St | 2 |
| University Ave & Alabama St | 3 |
| Federal Blvd & Euclid Ave | 4 |
| Mira Mesa Blvd & Black Mountain Rd | 6 |
| Westview Pkwy & Mira Mesa Blvd | 6 |
| Palm Ave & 16th St | 8 |
| Imperial Ave & 26th | 8 |
| Market St & 19th St | 8 |
| University Ave & 44th St | 9 |
| University Ave & College Ave | 9 |
| El Cajon Blvd & 46th St | 9 |
| El Cajon Blvd & Altadena Ave | 9 |
| El Cajon Blvd & 60th St | 9 |

Conclusion

The dramatic increase in greenhouse gas emissions has brought San Diego to a tipping point. Mayor, you and the Council have a serious decision to make to ensure that all San Diegans are safe from harm. We know that the devastating flooding that happened just as this year began will not be the last and that in fact, the next flood has a high probability of being worse. Fully restore the funding for the Climate Equity Fund and the Energy Independence Fund and finally allocate money and address the city's most dangerous and Fatal 15 intersections. A budget that does not address these three issues is not making the necessary progress all San Diegans demand and deserve.

Sincerely,

Corinna Contreras
Policy Advocate
Climate Action Campaign