



November 9, 2020

Dear Mayor Steinberg and Members of the Sacramento City Council,

Re: November 10, 2020 Agenda Discussion Item 23 – Update on Mayors’ Commission on Climate Change Recommendations

On behalf of the SMART and SacMoves coalition, we write to express our unequivocal and continued support for the recommendations of the Mayors’ Commission on Climate Change (MCCC). We commend the Council for the early actions taken at its August 25, 2020 meeting, and urge you to build on this momentum by (1) embracing the active transportation policy recommended by the MCCC, (2) moving quickly to implement a Slow Streets Program, and (3) implementing the MCCC’s specific Year One transportation recommendations. These actions would demonstrate the City Council’s continued resolve to address the climate crisis in the short term as it develops its longer term Climate Action Plan and General Plan, while also providing much-needed relief during the COVID-19 crisis.

SMART and SacMoves represent a broad-based coalition of business, labor, and community groups that are united behind a common vision of a Sacramento that has an innovative, seamless, and diversified transportation network. As envisioned, this network would offer a wide range of accessible, affordable, and efficient mobility options, which would improve air quality, support safer neighborhoods and healthy lifestyles, and provide a backbone for a more equitable economy. Our goal is to ensure that the City of Sacramento, as well as other jurisdictions and organizations throughout the region, adopt projects and policies that support this vision.

Sacramento’s largest source of greenhouse gas emissions – over 50 percent – is a result of fossil fuel based transportation. Accordingly, the MCCC recommended a set of high level bold and transformative strategies to achieve widespread adoption of clean mobility options. The MCCC recommended adoption of a policy that would prioritize active transportation as the healthiest and most efficient option, followed by public transit and shared mobility for longer trips, and finally zero-emission vehicles for trips where transit or active transportation is not viable. In addition to reducing emissions, these strategies would reduce vehicle use, traffic congestion, and air pollution. Other benefits include improved health, transportation cost savings for residents, and a more vibrant and sustainable community.

We applaud the steps that the Council took on August 25 to show its commitment to moving forward in the right direction. We are pleased that action was swiftly taken to extend for another year the program that provides free transit passes for youth, and that the City Manager has appointed an interim senior level position to oversee the city's climate efforts. Likewise, we are encouraged that a proposed building electrification ordinance, including electric vehicle infrastructure, is moving forward.

While encouraged by these early steps, we hope that the Council will continue to move swiftly and boldly to adopt and implement the remaining MCCC recommendations.

Prioritize Active Transportation

As recommended by the MCCC, the Council should adopt a policy to prioritize bicycle and pedestrian travel at the top of the transportation hierarchy. Funding should be proportionally allocated to support the shift to active transportation, which is the healthiest and most efficient option, and is especially needed during the COVID pandemic. This strategy is focused on making active transportation a viable and attractive option by creating a seamless network of active transportation corridors and providing basic amenities at the neighborhood level so that shorter trips can be taken by walking or rolling to meet daily needs. Through pedestrian-centric design and improvements to walking and biking infrastructure, Sacramento can create a safe, attractive environment that promotes active transportation and reduces vehicle use, traffic congestion and air pollution.

Slow Streets

We urge the city to accelerate implementation of the Slow Streets program it committed to in August. A Slow Streets program is designed to limit through traffic on low volume residential streets and allow them to be used as a shared space of people traveling by foot or bicycle. It would also provide more space for socially distant essential travel and exercise during the COVID-19 pandemic, all the more reason to expedite implementation. A number of cities, including San Francisco and Oakland, have already put successful and relatively inexpensive programs in place and can serve as models for Sacramento.

Year-One Priorities

Finally, we urge the city to take action on additional MCCC Year One transportation-specific recommendations, which were designed to be cost-effective, deliver greenhouse gas reductions, and address the multiple crises the city is facing.

- **Equity.** Identify deficient active transportation Infrastructure through a comprehensive neighborhood level audit and prioritize 2021 investments in high-injury portions of the network.
- **Sustain car-light lifestyles and air quality improvements seen during shelter-in-place.** Reassess travel patterns in light of COVID-19 with an eye toward revising transit/shared mobility routes and schedules.
- **ZEV CarShare.** Expand free or affordable ZEV car share programs, such as Our Community CarShare.

- **Car-Free Districts.** Establish car-free districts on weekend nights in areas that offer local commerce, recreation, and arts and culture.

There is no time to waste in moving these policies and programs forward. We urge the City Council to express its commitment now to implementing these recommendations.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely on behalf of the SMART/SacMoves Coalition,

Matthew Baker

Deb Banks, SABA Executive Director

Corey Brown

Steve Cohn, Pres of Breathe CA Sac Region Board and former Sac City Councilmember

Roger Dickinson, Former State Assembly member and Sac County Supervisor

Chris Flores

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