THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET ANALYST REPORT

Date Issued: October 29, 2026 **IBA Report Number:** 26-21REV

City Council Date: TBD

Item Number: TBD

Proposed Response to Grand Jury Report

"Shifting Gears: San Diego Peddles Bicycle Mobility Through A City Dominated By Cars"

On June 1, 2026, the San Diego County Grand Jury filed a report titled "Shifting Gears: San Diego Peddles Bicycle Mobility Through A City Dominated By Cars". The Grand Jury investigated whether San Diego has established an environment that fosters motorist-cyclist harmony and promotes equity, as the City strives to achieve Climate Action Plan-related bicycle mobility goals. The Grand Jury reviewed various City plans, including the City's Climate Action Plan, Vision Zero Plan, and Bicycle Master Plan Update; and focused on four areas: 1) the current state of bicycle infrastructure, 2) network connectivity, 3) remediation and path improvements, and 4) enforcement.

The report includes eight findings and eight recommendations, which are directed at the Mayor and City Council. The proposed joint response from the Mayor and Council is provided as Attachment 1, and was prepared with input from various departments, including Transportation, Stormwater, City Planning, City Attorney's Office, and the Mayor's Office. The Grand Jury report is included as Attachment 2 to this report.

Per the Grand Jury report, the Mayor and Council are required to provide comments to the Presiding Judge of the San Diego Superior Court on the applicable findings and recommendations within 90 days. However, the Mayor and Council President's Office requested and received an extension for the response to November 27, 2026.

In responding to each Grand Jury finding, the City is required to either (1) agree with the finding or (2) disagree wholly or partially with the finding. Responses to Grand Jury recommendations must indicate that the recommendation (1) has been implemented; (2) has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future; (3) requires further analysis; or (4) will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Explanations for responses are requested when applicable.

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The Active Transportation & Infrastructure Committee reviewed the proposed response at its meeting on October 22, 2026. Committee members voted 2-1 to approve the proposed grand jury response and forward it to the full City Council for review and approval, with the request that the proposed responses to findings #1, #4, and #8 be reviewed for the opportunity to update the responses to agree, and to better acknowledge the concerns raised by the Committee. It was also requested that recommendation #5 be updated to "requires further analysis." As a result of the Committee's action, the IBA's Office worked with the Mayor's Office, City Attorney's Office, Transportation, Stormwater, and City Planning to revise the proposed responses to findings #1, #4, and #8, and recommendation #5. Although we continue to recommend the use of "disagrees in part" for findings #1, #4, and #8, recommendation #5 has been updated to "requires further analysis". Additionally, the responses to findings #1, #4, and #8, and recommendation #5 have been substantially rewritten to provide additional context and better address concerns raised at committee (see Attachment 2 for the tracked changes).

We request that the City Council provide feedback and approve the proposed response. Although this is a joint Mayoral-Council proposed response, the Council may choose to amend or change this response. If the final response that the Council approves is agreeable to the Mayor, then the joint response will be sent to the Presiding Judge. Otherwise, the Council and Mayor may send separate responses.

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Attachments:

1. Proposed City Response to San Diego County Grand Jury Report titled "Shifting Gears: San Diego Peddles Bicycle Mobility Through A City Dominated By Cars"
2. Strike-out, underline version of changes to the Proposed Response (post ATI Committee)
3. San Diego County Grand Jury Report titled "Shifting Gears: San Diego Peddles Bicycle Mobility Through A City Dominated By Cars"

City of San Diego Response to
San Diego County Grand Jury Report Titled
"*Shifting Gears: San Diego Peddles Bicycle Mobility Through A City Dominated By Cars*"

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933(c), the City of San Diego provides the following response from the Mayor and City Council.

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS:

Finding 1: *The lack of a connected, well-maintained bike infrastructure discourages many people from bicycling as a viable commuting option.*

Response: The City disagrees in part with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that if there are gaps in bike infrastructure, people may be discouraged from bicycling as a viable commuting option. The City also agrees that continued investment in connected, well-maintained bike infrastructure is important for encouraging bicycling as a commuting option, which is why the City is conducting a comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan update. The Draft Bicycle Master Plan includes an updated planned bikeway network including over 600 miles of proposed separated bikeways, also known as cycle-tracks. The update is intended to identify network gaps and establish a prioritization framework incorporating network connectivity. The City is continuing to expand and improve the existing bicycle network through resurfacing projects, capital improvement projects, and other multimodal improvements as funding and resources allow. The City has also identified other mobility programs, related to bicycle parking, shared bicycle programs, and wayfinding to further encourage people to choose biking for commuting and other trips.

However, the City disagrees with the generalized finding that the City's bike infrastructure is not well maintained. The City's Transportation Department removes vegetation encroachments, addresses pavement deficiencies, and maintains delineators for separated bikeways on a request basis. Additionally, bike lane pavement is resurfaced or repaved as part of slurry seal and asphalt overlay projects. Several areas of the City are already served by a network of connected bicycle infrastructure; however, the City recognizes that ongoing improvements and expansions of the network will encourage more commuters to see bicycling as a viable option as they weigh numerous factors which can fall outside of City's jurisdiction and control, including trip distance, topography, travel time, access to other transportation options, and individual transportation needs and circumstances.

Finding 2: *More cyclists using buses means more people will be waiting longer to access buses with available bike racks.*

Response: The City disagrees with the Grand Jury's finding because this finding applies to matters under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Transit System.

While the City supports the integration of bicycling and public transit, the operation of the regional bus system, including bike rack capacity and related service decisions, is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). The City does not own or

operate the regional bus system and therefore does not have the information necessary to agree to this finding.

Finding 3: *The absence of a mobile bike locker app forces riders to use workarounds like less secure, open bike racks or to roll their bikes onto the trolley, undermining one of CAP's Supporting Actions for safe bicycle storage.*

Response: The City disagrees in part with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that secure bicycle storage supports bicycle mobility and is identified as one of several supporting actions in the Climate Action Plan, which calls for the Bicycle Master Plan Update to include policies and programs to increase bicycle storage near new bikeways. However, the City disagrees that the absence of a mobile application, by itself, undermines this objective. The City does not have jurisdiction to make decisions about the existing regional bicycle locker program, because the program, including user access and administration, is managed by SANDAG rather than the City. The City continues to install bike racks strategically in the public right of way and maintains a map and online location request form for business owners interested in bike racks. Additionally, the forthcoming Bicycle Master Plan Update includes a new section on Bicycle Parking and discusses specific opportunities in this area given that people are more likely to bike to a destination if they know there will be convenient, secure parking available. Furthermore, the City of San Diego's General Plan Mobility Element includes specific policies recognizing the importance of bicycle parking.

Finding 4: *The City's poor pavement conditions increase risk to bicyclists.*

Response: The City disagrees in part with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that the facts cited in the Grand Jury Report supporting this finding are consistent with the City's 2024 Pavement Management Plan. In particular, the City's overall street network was assessed to have a weighted average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 63, which is classified as "Fair" under industry standards, and that 34% of the City's street network has been identified as "Poor", "Very Poor", "Serious" and "Failed" condition. However, the City disagrees that these facts support the generalized conclusion that current pavement conditions increase risk to bicyclists, as risk depends on the unique circumstances of each instance. The City also disagrees with the broad characterization that the City's pavement conditions are poor since, as noted in the Grand Jury's fact, the City's overall street network has a weighted average which is "Fair" under industry standards. The City maintains a data-driven Pavement Management Program that evaluates roadway conditions and prioritizes pavement maintenance and rehabilitation based on specific roadway conditions, available funding, and citywide needs.

Finding 5: *The lack of a bike infrastructure maintenance schedule means residents must file bike route maintenance requests through the Get It Done app.*

Response: The City agrees with the Grand Jury's finding.

Finding 6: *An updated, interactive map would help new and seasoned riders navigate San Diego's bike network.*

Response: The City agrees with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that an updated, interactive map can be a useful resource to help bicyclists plan trips and navigate the bicycle network. As reflected in Recommendation 6, the Grand Jury's proposed mapping improvements pertain to the regional bicycle map maintained by SANDAG. The City does not maintain or control the regional bicycle map.

Finding 7: *Despite having road segments with High Connectivity/ Low LTS, too many Communities of Concern have limited bicycle mobility options.*

Response: The City agrees with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that improving bicycle infrastructure in Communities of Concern is an important objective and acknowledges that existing disparities limit residents' ability to benefit from the transportation network. To mitigate these impacts, the City currently considers and prioritizes Communities of Concern through its existing transportation planning and investment processes, and these improvements seek to improve connectivity with low traffic stress modifications. For example, Council Policy 800-14 established a capital planning prioritization process to optimize the use of available resources for projects and guide an objective methodology aimed at supporting the efficient and equitable delivery of City infrastructure. This council policy provides additional consideration for Capital Improvement Program projects located in Communities of Concern. Similarly, the City's Pavement Management Program incorporates Communities of Concern into its street selection methodology, and roadway resurfacing projects frequently provide opportunities to implement bicycle infrastructure improvements, such as new or upgraded bikeways through pavement striping modifications. Finally, in recent years new infrastructure funding streams have been created with a focus on increasing investments in Communities of Concern. In 2022, the City updated its development impact fee (DIF) structure including adopting a new Mobility DIF where investments in transportation projects, including bike lanes, may be prioritized for eligible projects in Communities of Concern. Further a separate Active Transportation In Lieu Fee was created which can be used for bicycling and transit related infrastructure projects in Communities of Concern. These are examples of the City's broader approach to prioritizing transportation investments that improve safety, connectivity, and bicycle mobility in historically underserved communities.

Finding 8: *Many parents feel the only safe option is to personally drive their children to school.*

Response: The City disagrees in part with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that providing safe walking and bicycling routes to schools is an important objective and supports programs that encourage children to walk, roll, bike or take transit to school. The City includes projects identified by the school districts to enhance safe walking and biking in its updated Community Plans as part of a Complete Streets approach to mobility planning, and continues to coordinate with school districts

to identify opportunities to increase safety. The City also acknowledges that traffic safety concerns (e.g., proximity to moving vehicles and vehicle speed) were the most frequently cited barriers to bicycling among respondents to the City's Bicycle Master Plan Update long form survey.

However, the City disagrees with the finding in part because the Grand Jury report does not include or cite the metrics or data used to support the assertion that *many* parents' decisions to drive their children to school are based solely or primarily on perceptions of roadway safety, and therefore it cannot validate this finding. Those decisions may be influenced by many factors beyond the City's transportation infrastructure, and the City cannot presume the feelings of the broader population of parents without additional research.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation 1: *Prioritize building continuous bike infrastructure now, particularly on routes with gaps, instead of waiting years for larger infrastructure projects to move forward.*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

The City already prioritizes ongoing, immediate improvements to bicycle network connectivity by incorporating bicycle improvements into roadway resurfacing projects and other transportation capital improvements whenever feasible. This approach aligns with the City's Complete Streets Policy and allows the City to implement bicycle infrastructure more quickly and efficiently by leveraging planned construction activities, reducing costs, and minimizing disruptions to the public. The City also continues to prioritize projects that improve bicycle connectivity through its transportation planning and capital improvement programs, consistent with available funding and resources. Many bicycle improvements, including pavement striping modifications and bikeway upgrades, are implemented as part of the City's resurfacing program, allowing network improvements to be delivered more quickly and cost-effectively than through standalone capital projects. Additionally, the forthcoming Bicycle Master Plan Update will include project prioritization criteria which inform the timing of future project implementation.

Recommendation 2: *With the new fleet of City e-buses, explore installation of bus-mounted racks that do not require cyclists to lift a bike several feet off the ground. Provide a one-size-fits-all bus rack that holds more than two bikes.*

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

The recommendation pertains to the operation and equipment of the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), including the design and capacity of bike racks installed on transit buses. The City does not own or operate the regional bus system and therefore does not have the authority to implement or direct these operational changes.

Recommendation 3: *Connect existing and future installation of bike lockers to a bike locker app that allows immediate access to lockers without users having to mail payment.*

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

As it relates to the administration and operation of the regional bicycle locker program, which is managed by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), the City does not own or operate the bicycle locker system or control user access to those facilities, and therefore does not have the authority to implement the recommended mobile application. The City continues to install bike racks strategically in the public right of way and maintains a map and online location request form for business owners interested in bike racks.

Recommendation 4: *Require the Department of Transportation to explore opportunities to achieve a 70 percent Pavement Condition Index.*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

The City published its Pavement Management Plan in 2024, which contained a plan to reach a Pavement Condition Index of 70 after ten years if sufficient funding is available, and updates the Plan annually to evaluate current pavement conditions, funding needs, and long-term investment strategies. These annual updates analyze multiple investment scenarios and projected Pavement Condition Index outcomes to support data-driven pavement management decisions. The Plan serves as the City's framework for prioritizing pavement preservation and rehabilitation based on roadway condition, available funding, and other established program objectives. Implementation of the Plan and the pace of pavement improvements ultimately depend on annual budget decisions, available funding, and competing citywide priorities.

Recommendation 5: *Acquire another sweeper that can service Class IV bike lanes and implement a routine sweeping schedule instead of relying on Get It Done requests.*

Response: The recommendation requires further analysis.

In 2026, the Stormwater Department acquired a new diesel-powered motor sweeper that is small enough to service Class IV bike lanes. This sweeper supplements the Department's one existing electric-powered mini-sweeper that has experienced significant recent down time due to recurring mechanical failure and battery charging issues. The Department uses its small sweepers to service bike lanes as feasible in response to priority service notifications based on the severity of reported conditions. The operation to sweep bike lanes is complex, requiring the small sweeper to be towed to the location (the sweeper is not able to travel on freeways). It also requires trucking and supplemental debris removal support to haul off the collected material to the landfill.

The City's existing revenues and ongoing structural budget deficit mean that the addition of another sweeper and more routine sweeping schedule would require offsetting cuts or reduced service levels elsewhere (e.g., implementing a routine sweeping schedule for Class IV bike lanes would significantly impact the Department's

ability to meet designated sweeping frequencies on other streets throughout the City). Alternatively, the Stormwater Department could develop a budget request for FY 2028 that includes the full cost of implementing routine sweeping for the existing inventory of 83 miles of Class IV bike lanes. Based on the existing inventory, routine sweeping (approximately quarterly) could require a minimum of four new staff, additional vehicles and equipment including a utility truck, low 1.5 cubic-yard (cy) dump truck, 12 cy dump truck, and a backup sweeper, and other associated costs. The approximate annual cost of these additions is $1.4 million for one-time items, and $600,000 on an ongoing basis, although this could change with further analysis. Adding another reliable backup mini-sweeper to the fleet would also help avoid future service disruption in the event of mechanical issues and repairs. The benefits of a budget request will need to be weighed against other department needs and priorities, and the impacts of the inevitable offsetting cuts that will be required to fund this activity, whether in the Stormwater Department or elsewhere in the General Fund.

Recommendation 6: *Require SANDAG to survey the existing bicycle network and include both digital and a hard-copy (printed) map, at least yearly, that reflects the latest changes to the network. Invite users to submit suggestions where the map may vary from actual network.*

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

The recommendation pertains to the regional bicycle map maintained by SANDAG. The City does not maintain or control the regional bicycle map and therefore cannot implement or direct the recommended updates. SANDAG is the appropriate agency to evaluate and determine the content, format, and maintenance of the regional bicycle map. The City does not have authority to require SANDAG to take this action.

Recommendation 7: *Prioritize Communities of Concern designated with a "High Connectivity/Low Level Traffic Stress" (LTS) for bike infrastructure installment so that residents of these underserved parts of town can safely take advantage of bicycling without waiting years to be paired with other infrastructure projects.*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

The City already prioritizes Communities of Concern in its transportation planning and investment decisions through multiple programs and policies as outlined in the response to Finding 7. The City uses data-driven assessments, community engagement, and equity-focused prioritization to identify where bicycle mobility investments can most effectively support Communities of Concern. The City is committed to a transportation system that enables everyone to travel safely, regardless of how they get around, while advancing the goal of zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

Recommendation 8: *Increase outreach to school administrators and parent-teacher organizations to promote the benefits of participating in the Safe Routes to School program.*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

The City supports safe walking and bicycling to schools through a combination of engineering improvements, coordination with school districts, and targeted

transportation safety programs. These efforts include the San Diego Police Department's School Safety Patrol Program; California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) funded bicycle and pedestrian safety education and enforcement; and Safe Routes to School activities delivered in partnership with organizations such as Circulate San Diego. These activities include Walk & Roll to School events, bicycle rodeos, pedestrian audits, and school safety presentations. The City also prioritizes safety improvements near schools, including infrastructure improvements and, most recently, through prioritized implementation of its Speed Management Program. These ongoing efforts support the City's broader objective of improving safe and convenient access to schools for students and families who walk and bicycle. The City continually coordinates with school administrators and stakeholders to seek additional Safe Routes to School resources and program opportunities.

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RESPONSE TO FINDINGS:

Finding 1: *The lack of a connected, well-maintained bike infrastructure discourages many people from bicycling as a viable commuting option.*

Response: The City disagrees in part with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City ~~disagrees in part with the characterization that it lacks connected, well-maintained bicycle infrastructure. As reflected in the City's Bicycle Master Plan, substantial portions of the City are served by an existing bicycle network which continues to be expanded and improved~~agrees that if there are gaps in bike infrastructure, people may be discouraged from bicycling as a viable commuting option. The City also agrees that continued investment in connected, well-maintained bike infrastructure is important for encouraging bicycling as a commuting option, which is why the City is conducting a comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan update. The Draft Bicycle Master Plan includes an updated planned bikeway network including over 600 miles of proposed separated bikeways, also known as cycle-tracks. The update is intended to identify network gaps and establish a prioritization framework incorporating network connectivity. The City is continuing to expand and improve the existing bicycle network through resurfacing projects, capital improvement projects, and other multimodal improvements as funding and resources allow. ~~However, the City recognizes that continued investment in connected and well maintained bicycle infrastructure is important to supporting bicycling as a transportation option. The City also disagrees that its bike infrastructure discourages bicycling as a commuting option. Commuting decisions may be influenced by numerous factors beyond the City's jurisdiction and control, including trip distance, topography, travel time, access to other transportation options, and individual transportation needs and circumstances.~~ The City has also identified other mobility programs, related to bicycle parking, shared bicycle programs, and wayfinding to further encourage people to choose biking for commuting and other trips.

However, the City disagrees with the generalized finding that the City's bike infrastructure is not well maintained. The City's Transportation Department removes vegetation encroachments, addresses pavement deficiencies, and maintains delineators for separated bikeways on a request basis. Additionally, bike lane pavement is resurfaced or repaved as part of slurry seal and asphalt overlay projects. Several areas of the City are already served by a network of connected bicycle infrastructure; however, the City recognizes that ongoing improvements and expansions of the network will encourage more commuters to see bicycling as a viable option as they weigh numerous factors which can fall outside of City's jurisdiction and control, including trip distance, topography, travel time, access to other transportation options, and individual transportation needs and circumstances.

Finding 2: *More cyclists using buses means more people will be waiting longer to access buses with available bike racks.*

Response: The City disagrees with the Grand Jury's finding because this finding applies to matters under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Transit System.

While the City supports the integration of bicycling and public transit, the operation of the regional bus system, including bike rack capacity and related service decisions, is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). The City does not own or operate the regional bus system and therefore does not have the information necessary to agree to this finding.

Finding 3: *The absence of a mobile bike locker app forces riders to use workarounds like less secure, open bike racks or to roll their bikes onto the trolley, undermining one of CAP's Supporting Actions for safe bicycle storage.*

Response: The City disagrees in part with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that secure bicycle storage supports bicycle mobility and is identified as one of several supporting actions in the Climate Action Plan, which calls for the Bicycle Master Plan Update to include policies and programs to increase bicycle storage near new bikeways. However, the City disagrees that the absence of a mobile application, by itself, undermines this objective. The City does not have jurisdiction to make decisions about the existing regional bicycle locker program, because the program, including user access and administration, is managed by SANDAG rather than the City. The City continues to install bike racks strategically in the public right of way and maintains a map and online location request form for business owners interested in bike racks. Additionally, the forthcoming Bicycle Master Plan Update includes a new section on Bicycle Parking and discusses specific opportunities in this area given that people are more likely to bike to a destination if they know there will be convenient, secure parking available. Furthermore, the City of San Diego's General Plan Mobility Element includes specific policies recognizing the importance of bicycle parking.

Finding 4: *The City's poor pavement conditions increase risk to bicyclists.*

Response: The City disagrees in part with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City ~~disagrees with~~ agrees that the ~~broad characterization of~~facts cited in the ~~City's pavement conditions as poor and~~Grand Jury Report supporting this finding are consistent with the ~~generalized conclusion that pavement conditions increase risk to bicyclists. Consistent with the~~ City's 2024 ~~Pavement Management Plan,~~City's 2024 Pavement Management Plan. In particular, the City's overall street network ~~has~~was assessed to have a weighted average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 63, which is classified as "Fair" under industry standards~~.~~, and that 34% of the City's street network has been identified as "Poor", "Very Poor", "Serious" and "Failed" condition. However, the City disagrees that these facts support the generalized conclusion that current pavement conditions increase risk to bicyclists, as risk depends on the unique circumstances of each instance. The City also disagrees with the broad characterization that the City's pavement conditions are poor since, as noted in the Grand Jury's fact,

the City's overall street network has a weighted average which is "Fair" under industry standards. The City maintains a data-driven Pavement Management Program that evaluates roadway conditions and prioritizes pavement maintenance and rehabilitation based on specific roadway conditions, available funding, and citywide needs. ~~Pavement conditions vary throughout the City, and the Grand Jury's report does not establish a direct relationship between pavement conditions and bicyclist safety outcomes. Bicyclist safety outcomes are influenced by many factors, and the circumstances contributing to any particular collision or injury depend on the specific conditions involved.~~

Finding 5: *The lack of a bike infrastructure maintenance schedule means residents must file bike route maintenance requests through the Get It Done app.*

Response: The City agrees with the Grand Jury's finding.

Finding 6: *An updated, interactive map would help new and seasoned riders navigate San Diego's bike network.*

Response: The City agrees with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that an updated, interactive map can be a useful resource to help bicyclists plan trips and navigate the bicycle network. As reflected in Recommendation 6, the Grand Jury's proposed mapping improvements pertain to the regional bicycle map maintained by SANDAG. The City does not maintain or control the regional bicycle map.

Finding 7: *Despite having road segments with High Connectivity/ Low LTS, too many Communities of Concern have limited bicycle mobility options.*

Response: The City agrees with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that improving bicycle infrastructure in Communities of Concern is an important objective and acknowledges that existing disparities limit residents' ability to benefit from the transportation network. To mitigate these impacts, the City currently considers and prioritizes Communities of Concern through its existing transportation planning and investment processes, and these improvements seek to improve connectivity with low traffic stress modifications. For example, Council Policy 800-14 established a capital planning prioritization process to optimize the use of available resources for projects and guide an objective methodology aimed at supporting the efficient and equitable delivery of City infrastructure. This council policy provides additional consideration for Capital Improvement Program projects located in Communities of Concern. Similarly, the City's Pavement Management Program incorporates Communities of Concern into its street selection methodology, and roadway resurfacing projects frequently provide opportunities to implement bicycle infrastructure improvements, such as new or upgraded bikeways through pavement striping modifications. Finally, in recent years new infrastructure funding streams have been created with a focus on increasing investments in Communities of Concern. In 2022, the City updated its development impact fee (DIF) structure including adopting a new Mobility DIF where investments in transportation projects, including bike lanes,

may be prioritized for eligible projects in Communities of Concern. Further a separate Active Transportation In Lieu Fee was created which can be used for bicycling and transit related infrastructure projects in Communities of Concern. These are examples of the City's broader approach to prioritizing transportation investments that improve safety, connectivity, and bicycle mobility in historically underserved communities.

Finding 8: *Many parents feel the only safe option is to personally drive their children to school.*

Response: The City disagrees in part with the Grand Jury's finding.

The City agrees that providing safe walking and bicycling routes to schools is an important objective and supports programs that encourage children to walk, roll, bike or take transit to school. The City includes projects identified by the school districts to enhance safe walking and biking in its updated Community Plans as part of a Complete Streets approach to mobility planning, and continues to coordinate with school districts to identify opportunities to increase safety. The City also acknowledges that traffic safety concerns (e.g., proximity to moving vehicles and vehicle speed) were the most frequently cited barriers to bicycling among respondents to the City's Bicycle Master Plan Update long form survey.

However, the City disagrees ~~that~~with the finding in part because the Grand Jury report does not include or cite the metrics or data used to support the assertion that *many* parents' decisions to drive their children to school are based solely or primarily on perceptions of roadway safety, ~~as those~~and therefore it cannot validate this finding. Those decisions ~~are~~may be influenced by many factors beyond the City's transportation infrastructure, and the City cannot presume the feelings of ~~parents without additional research. Many students walk, bike, ride the bus, take public transit and use other means besides driving to get to school. The City also includes projects identified by the school districts to enhance safe walking and biking in its updated Community Plans as part of a Complete Streets approach to mobility planning, and continues to coordinate with school districts to identify opportunities to increase safety.~~the broader population of parents without additional research.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation 1: *Prioritize building continuous bike infrastructure now, particularly on routes with gaps, instead of waiting years for larger infrastructure projects to move forward.*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

The City already prioritizes ongoing, immediate improvements to bicycle network connectivity by incorporating bicycle improvements into roadway resurfacing projects and other transportation capital improvements whenever feasible. This approach aligns with the City's Complete Streets Policy and allows the City to implement bicycle infrastructure more quickly and efficiently by leveraging planned construction activities, reducing costs, and minimizing disruptions to the public. The City also continues to prioritize projects that improve bicycle connectivity through its

transportation planning and capital improvement programs, consistent with available funding and resources. Many bicycle improvements, including pavement striping modifications and bikeway upgrades, are implemented as part of the City's resurfacing program, allowing network improvements to be delivered more quickly and cost-effectively than through standalone capital projects. Additionally, the forthcoming Bicycle Master Plan Update will include project prioritization criteria which inform the timing of future project implementation.

Recommendation 2: *With the new fleet of City e-buses, explore installation of bus-mounted racks that do not require cyclists to lift a bike several feet off the ground. Provide a one-size-fits-all bus rack that holds more than two bikes.*

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

The recommendation pertains to the operation and equipment of the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), including the design and capacity of bike racks installed on transit buses. The City does not own or operate the regional bus system and therefore does not have the authority to implement or direct these operational changes.

Recommendation 3: *Connect existing and future installation of bike lockers to a bike locker app that allows immediate access to lockers without users having to mail payment.*

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

As it relates to the administration and operation of the regional bicycle locker program, which is managed by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), the City does not own or operate the bicycle locker system or control user access to those facilities, and therefore does not have the authority to implement the recommended mobile application. The City continues to install bike racks strategically in the public right of way and maintains a map and online location request form for business owners interested in bike racks.

Recommendation 4: *Require the Department of Transportation to explore opportunities to achieve a 70 percent Pavement Condition Index.*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

The City published its Pavement Management Plan in 2024, which contained a plan to reach a Pavement Condition Index of 70 after ten years if sufficient funding is available, and updates the Plan annually to evaluate current pavement conditions, funding needs, and long-term investment strategies. These annual updates analyze multiple investment scenarios and projected Pavement Condition Index outcomes to support data-driven pavement management decisions. The Plan serves as the City's framework for prioritizing pavement preservation and rehabilitation based on roadway condition, available funding, and other established program objectives. Implementation of the Plan and the pace of pavement improvements ultimately depend on annual budget decisions, available funding, and competing citywide priorities.

Recommendation 5: *Acquire another sweeper that can service Class IV bike lanes and implement a routine sweeping schedule instead of relying on Get It Done requests.*

Response: The recommendation ~~will not be implemented because it is not reasonable~~requires further analysis.

In 2026, the Stormwater Department acquired a new diesel-powered motor sweeper that is small enough to service Class IV bike lanes. This sweeper supplements the Department's one existing electric-powered mini-sweeper that has experienced significant recent down time due to recurring mechanical failure and battery charging issues. The Department uses its small sweepers to service bike lanes as feasible in response to priority service notifications based on the severity of reported conditions. The operation to sweep bike lanes is complex, requiring the small sweeper to be towed to the location (the sweeper is not able to travel on freeways). It also requires trucking and supplemental debris removal support to haul off the collected material to the landfill. ~~Given current staffing levels, limited resources, and the~~

The City's existing revenues and ongoing structural budget deficit~~, it is not feasible to acquire an additional~~ mean that the addition of another sweeper~~,~~ and more routine sweeping schedule would require offsetting cuts or reduced service levels elsewhere (e.g., implementing a routine sweeping schedule for Class IV bike lanes would significantly impact the Department's ability to meet designated sweeping frequencies on other streets throughout the City~~.~~). Alternatively, the Stormwater Department could develop a budget request for FY 2028 that includes the full cost of implementing routine sweeping for the existing inventory of 83 miles of Class IV bike lanes. Based on the existing inventory, routine sweeping (approximately quarterly) could require a minimum of four new staff, additional vehicles and equipment including a utility truck, low 1.5 cubic-yard (cy) dump truck, 12 cy dump truck, and a backup sweeper, and other associated costs. The approximate annual cost of these additions is $1.4 million for one-time items, and $600,000 on an ongoing basis, although this could change with further analysis. Adding another reliable backup mini-sweeper to the fleet would also help avoid future service disruption in the event of mechanical issues and repairs. The benefits of a budget request will need to be weighed against other department needs and priorities, and the impacts of the inevitable offsetting cuts that will be required to fund this activity, whether in the Stormwater Department or elsewhere in the General Fund.

Recommendation 6: *Require SANDAG to survey the existing bicycle network and include both digital and a hard-copy (printed) map, at least yearly, that reflects the latest changes to the network. Invite users to submit suggestions where the map may vary from actual network.*

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

The recommendation pertains to the regional bicycle map maintained by SANDAG. The City does not maintain or control the regional bicycle map and therefore cannot implement or direct the recommended updates. SANDAG is the appropriate agency to evaluate and determine the content, format, and maintenance of the regional bicycle map. The City does not have authority to require SANDAG to take this action.

Recommendation 7: *Prioritize Communities of Concern designated with a "High Connectivity/Low Level Traffic Stress" (LTS) for bike infrastructure installment so that residents of these underserved*

parts of town can safely take advantage of bicycling without waiting years to be paired with other infrastructure projects.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

The City already prioritizes Communities of Concern in its transportation planning and investment decisions through multiple programs and policies as outlined in the response to Finding 7. The City uses data-driven assessments, community engagement, and equity-focused prioritization to identify where bicycle mobility investments can most effectively support Communities of Concern. The City is committed to a transportation system that enables everyone to travel safely, regardless of how they get around, while advancing the goal of zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

Recommendation 8: *Increase outreach to school administrators and parent-teacher organizations to promote the benefits of participating in the Safe Routes to School program.*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

The City supports safe walking and bicycling to schools through a combination of engineering improvements, coordination with school districts, and targeted transportation safety programs. These efforts include the San Diego Police Department's School Safety Patrol Program; California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) funded bicycle and pedestrian safety education and enforcement; and Safe Routes to School activities delivered in partnership with organizations such as Circulate San Diego. These activities include Walk & Roll to School events, bicycle rodeos, pedestrian audits, and school safety presentations. The City also prioritizes safety improvements near schools, including infrastructure improvements and, most recently, through prioritized implementation of its Speed Management Program. These ongoing efforts support the City's broader objective of improving safe and convenient access to schools for students and families who walk and bicycle. The City continually coordinates with school administrators and stakeholders to seek additional Safe Routes to School resources and program opportunities.

SHIFTING GEARS

San Diego Peddles Bicycle Mobility Through A City Dominated By Cars

A 2025-26 Civil Grand Jury Special Report
February 5, 2026

SUMMARY

On Wednesday evening at 5:35 p.m. December 10, 2025, tragedy struck along Salmon River Road in Rancho Peñasquitos when a 60-year-old bicyclist was hit by a vehicle from behind and killed. The driver, a 51-year-old woman, later told authorities she did not see the rider.[1]

On July 20, 2021, at 7:30 a.m., a 57-year-old San Diego State University administrator was killed while riding her bike in the bike lane along Pershing Drive. News accounts reported that following impact, the driver ran across the street and dumped two bags over a fence. Later recovered by San Diego ("City") Police, the bags appeared to be methamphetamine. The driver pleaded guilty to gross vehicular manslaughter while driving under the influence.[2]

According to the California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS), five bicyclists were killed on City roadways in 2024, placing the City fifth among California's 50 major metropolitan areas for average number of bicycle deaths over the last five years—ahead of San Francisco, Long Beach, and San Jose.[3]

While troubling, these numbers become even more concerning when viewed against the City's August 2022 Climate Action Plan (CAP), which calls for 10 percent of all daily trips in the city to be made by bicycle by 2035.[4]

And there's good reason for the CAP 10 percent bicycle mobility goal ("CAP 10 Percent"). A U.S. National Household Transportation Survey found that car trips under a mile add up to about 10 billion miles a year.[5] Even half those trips by bike would save about two million metric tons of CO_2 emissions a year—tantamount to taking 400,000 cars off the road at a savings of almost $900,000 million.[6]

Advancing the CAP 10 percent bicycle mobility goal seems increasingly feasible, aided by the recent popularity of electric bikes that mitigate previous long-standing challenges of rider fitness, distance, and time. But e-bikes alone will not level the playing field when it comes to the City's topography of mesas, canyons, and elevations ranging from sea level to 600 feet.[7] The mere suggestion to the average

citizen of flying unfettered down one of San Diego's high-profile grades like Texas Street or Pacific Coast Highway, wind battered, with menacing drop-offs, and the message is clear—San Diego's hills matter!

By any measure, getting everyday residents out of their cars and onto two wheels is ambitious, to say nothing of reaching CAP 10 percent. Traffic volume, speed, lack of both protected lanes, and driver awareness have all been cited as reasons people feel unsafe riding bicycles in urban areas. The simple fact is that California drivers are not used to sharing roadways with cyclists, and more people taking to bikes means an increasing number of driver-cyclist conflicts; drivers still see cyclists as obstacles rather than legitimate vehicles.[8]

The Grand Jury investigated whether San Diego has established an environment that fosters motorist-cyclist harmony and equity, as the City strives to achieve CAP 10 percent bicycle mobility. We hereby offer brief analyses of the City's Climate Action Plan, Vision Zero, Bicycle Master Plan Update and their governances across the City's four bicycle infrastructure types.

Foundational to our study are four *Grand Jury Focus Areas*: I) Bicycle Infrastructure's Current State, II) Network Connectivity, III) Remediation and Path Enhancement, and IV) Enforcement.

METHODOLOGY:

The Grand Jury gratefully acknowledges those individuals who generously shared their time and expertise.

The Grand Jury interviewed bicyclist enthusiasts, members of the City's Mobility Board, and staff within different divisions of the City of San Diego Transportation Department. The Grand Jury made site visits to study existing bike facilities at the following streets and neighborhoods: Bacon Street, Balboa Avenue, Bay Park, Chelsea Street, Clairemont Drive, Diamond Street, Downtown, East Village, Friars Road, Genesee Avenue, Gilman Drive, Imperial Avenue, Jutland Drive, Kearny Mesa, Knoxville Street, La Jolla Boulevard, Linda Vista Road, Martin Luther King Jr. Street, Miramar, Mission Bay, Mission Gorge/Mission Gorge Trails, Mission Valley,

Ocean View Boulevard, Pacific Highway (from Washington to Ash Street), Point Loma, Pomerado Road, Rose Creek Bikeway/North Coast Trail, Serra Mesa, and Skyline.

In addition, the Grand Jury reviewed the following documents and online sites:

- Bicycle Master Plan
- Bicycle Master Plan Update 2024
- CA AB645
- CA SB720
- City of San Diego 2024 General Plan
- City of San Diego Bicycle Master Plan Update: Summary of Best Practices in Bike Facility Network Design
- Climate Equity Index Report, 2019
- Life After Cars: Freeing Ourselves from the Tyranny of the Automobile by Sarah Goodyear, Doug Gordon, and Aaron Naparstek
- Mobility Board Meetings viewed online (September, October, November, December 2025)
- Mobility Master Plan
- Mobility Section of the Clairemont Community Plan Update
- Pavement Management Plan Update, April 2025
- SANDAG Active Transportation Project Evaluation Manual, June 2020
- San Diego Climate Action Plan
- San Diego Street Design Manual
- San Diego.gov
- There are No Accidents: The Deadly Rise of Injury and Disaster--Who Profits and Who Pays the Price by Jessie Singer 2022
- California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS)
- Vision Zero
- YouTube channel: Riding Bikes in San Diego – videos taken on bike rides with commentary
- YouTube podcast: Bike Rebellion – interviews with activists who ride bikes.

BACKGROUND

San Diego's efforts to improve its bicycle facilities take root at the national level. The *2010 U.S Department of Transportation (DOT) Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendation* states that every transportation agency, including the U.S. DOT, "Has the responsibility to improve conditions and opportunities for walking and bicycling and to integrate walking and bicycling into their transportation systems."[9] The Federal Highway Administration also explains that, "While new construction or reconstruction may offer more possibilities, routine improvements to existing intersections can benefit pedestrians and bicyclists."[10]

This idea of walking, rolling, and bicycling is included in the City's General Plan, first presented in 2008 and amended in 2024.

> As these priority modes have historically encountered underinvestment, rebalancing the City's transportation network to better allocate roadway space, amenities, and connections for these modes will address the needs of their users and make them a more convenient choice for how people move around the City.[11]

During its review, the Grand Jury examined all of the City's multi-modal plans and identified three that stand out in its findings: Climate Action Plan, Vision Zero, and the Bicycle Master Plan/Plan Update.

DISCUSSION

Climate Action Plan Targets 10 Percent Mode Share By 2035

San Diego's 2022 Climate Action Plan recognizes that the climate crisis disproportionately affects underserved and underinvested "Communities of Concern"—defined as areas with low or very low access to opportunity.[12] CAP employs a first-of-its-kind Climate Equity Index (CEI), which sorts census tracts throughout the city into five tiers of access to opportunity, ranging from "Very Low" to

"Very High."[13] CAP commits to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2035.[14]

As part of its zero-GHG strategy, CAP plans to boost cycling mode share to seven percent by 2030 and 10 percent by 2035.[15] The zeitgeist of CAP reflects a commitment to lowering carbon emissions through reduced dependence on cars. "Supporting Actions" to achieve these seven and-10 percent targets include, examining proposed bike projects and use of quick-build pathways, increase bicycle storage, education campaigns to improve motorist behavior in a safer right-of-way for bicyclists, and addressing gaps in the bicycle network. Another supporting action is "Updating street planning and design process with a focus on community input from 'Communities of Concern' to prioritize pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit."[16]

Established in 2015—Vision Zero Promotes Streets Designed for Safe, Multimodal Travel

The City's "Vision Zero" took its inspiration from Sweden in 1995 when newly appointed Director of Traffic Safety, Claes Tingvall, was asked what he considered the acceptable number of traffic-related fatalities. He gave the idealistic, but fiscally impractical answer, "Zero." Swedish traffic engineers and politicians design roads, "to balance safety, efficiency, and cost—it was important that no one die, but it was equally important that no one was late to work and that none of it cost too much."[17] In the thirty years since Vision Zero was instituted in Sweden with redesigned roads, lowered traffic speeds, traffic cameras, roundabouts, and safer cars, traffic fatalities dropped by half. Deaths per 100,000 on the road in Sweden are one-third fewer than in the United States.[18]

Similarly, San Diego's own Vision Zero has set a goal of "Zero traffic related fatalities and severe injuries,"[19] including strategies such as enhanced pedestrian crossings and an annual completion of forty miles of improved bikeways.[20]

Bicycle Master Plan Update Amid Alarming Safety Trends

Leveraging the Caltrans' Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant, the 24-26 Bicycle Master Plan Update (BMPU) is a Citywide effort to update the 2013 Bicycle

Master Plan.[21] The purpose of the BMPU is to achieve the CAP 10 percent daily trips by bicycle by 2035.[22] BMPU itself contains five project goals: 1) safety, 2) equity, 3) best practices, 4) innovation and mode shift and 5) connectivity."[23]

A recent stakeholder survey of more than 2,000 San Diego bicycle riders, representing four different rider types, revealed that "Traffic safety concerns," and "Gaps in the bike network" were the first and second most frequently cited barriers to bicycling, respectively.[24] The Grand Jury finds that riders are right to hold safety and connectivity (gaps) as valid barriers in light of recent alarming developments:

- On December 10, 2025, at approximately 5:30 p.m., a 60-year-old cyclist riding on a bike route on Salmon River Road in Rancho Peñasquitos was fatally struck from behind by a 51-year-old motorist.[25]
- On July 20, 2021, a beloved San Diego State University administrator was killed while riding in the bike lane along Pershing Drive. Her death hastened the City's commitment to improving and creating a Class I bike path along Pershing.[26]
- Five bicyclists were killed in 2024 on San Diego roadways, giving San Diego the ignominious ranking of 5th in California's 50 major metropolitan areas for bicycle fatalities, ahead of other metropolitan areas like San Francisco and San Jose.[27]

Across the City's network, vehicle traffic traveling 40-55 mph runs adjacent to bike infrastructure (e.g., Jackson Drive, Miramar Road, Mission Gorge Road). Automobiles and trucks traveling at these speeds means all but cyclists self-identified as "strong and fearless" are so undeterred.[28]

The Bicycle Network Is Connected (sort of) by Four Different Bike Facilities

According to SANDAG, the City has close to 1,900 miles of bikeways[29] for the adventurous, peripatetic cyclist, compared to 6,600 miles of automobile roadways.[30] Before addressing the Grand Jury focus areas—infrastructure, connectivity, remediation and enforcement—this report reviews the City's four bicycle facilities.

Class I Multi-Use "Paths" are paths that are completely separated from vehicle traffic. In a March BMPU 2025 Engagement Survey of 2,807 San Diego cyclists of

varying comfort on bike paths, 45 percent ranked Class I as their most preferred.[31] There are 203.4 miles of Class I bike paths.[32] The Grand Jury observed during its rides that Class I Paths are world-class and are multi-use for cyclists, pedestrians, joggers, and walkers. The pavement is smooth and clean with almost no overgrowth. The Riverwalk Path, Rose Creek Bikeway, and the path around Mission Bay represent the City well and are safe from the hazards of other bike infrastructure.



The Class I Rose Creek Bikeway runs parallel to I-5 from Mission Bay Park to Gilman Drive.

Class II Bike "Lanes" are defined by painted lines on the street next to vehicle traffic and make up the largest share of bicycle infrastructure (64.5 percent with 1,224.2 miles of lane).[33] While most bike lanes are 50" wide with a buffer zone (e.g., Genesee Avenue), measurements taken by the Grand Jury found that width varies from 30 to 50 inches. Ideally, bike lanes are accompanied by signage, although some bike lanes are only painted shoulders on the side of the road. Older, forgotten bike lanes are cracked and pockmarked with potholes (e.g., Pacific Highway by San Diego's Lindbergh Field).

Admittedly, it takes a skilled bike rider to navigate a Class II Lane, keeping one eye on traffic and the other on the lane condition. This dual task is made more difficult by the unpredictable nature of bike lanes, which often suddenly narrow or disappear without warning, especially where bike lanes meet freeway on-and-off ramps.



Clairemont Drive Class II Bike Lane with buffer zone and conflict striping across the intersection.

A bike route marked by sharrows (the portmanteau for "shared arrows") painted on 20.8 percent of City roadways--395.2 miles--and accompanied by signage on the side of the road, is a Class III "Route."[34] To wit, sharrows prepare drivers to share the entire roadway with cyclists. Routes are limited to city roadways with posted vehicle speed limits of 35mph or lower.[35] When Class III facilities are enhanced with traffic calming features they are then considered "Bike Boulevards" (11.5 miles).[36]





Left: Class III Bike Routes on Jutland Avenue and, Right: Landis Street, both with sharrows.

Class IV Cycle "Tracks" are bike lanes that have a vertical separation like flex-posts, raised curbs, planters, or Jersey barriers. Covering 59 miles[37] on City streets, cyclists on a Class IV Track should remember that flex posts bend, or "flex," when hit by cars but won't prevent a vehicle from entering a bike lane.





Left: Morena Blvd Class IV Cycle Track is overgrown with tumbleweeds and dirty with gravel, trash, and broken bollards. Right: The Friars Road Cycle Track seems to be undergoing renovations.

GRAND JURY FOCUS AREA I:
Bicycle Infrastructure's Current State Is Adversely Affected by Deteriorating Lane Conditions and Dangerous Freeway Ingress/Egress

The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is the most widely used method by civil engineers and transportation agencies for assessing and reporting street pavement conditions.[38] PCI is an objective and repeatable assessment of the structural integrity and operational condition of street pavements. PCI scoring ranges from 0 (worst) to 100 (best) and provides a common language for pavement practitioners to describe and communicate pavement conditions.[39] San Diego's 2023 Pavement Condition Index (PCI) score is 63, putting City roadways in the "Fair" category — below the desired target of 70 used by many metropolitan Public Works Departments. However, 34 percent of the City's streets, avenues, roads, etc. have been rated "Poor," "Very Poor," "Serious," and "Failed."[40]

In fact, the condition of San Diego streets has declined by eight PCI points since 2016.[41] During walk-throughs of bicycle infrastructure, the Grand Jury observed that street paint and asphalt show stress from car use and weather. Although the City averages only ten inches of rain per year,[42] it is enough to create potholes requiring vigilant maintenance—a daunting task for a city with 6,600+ lane miles of streets, alleys, and unimproved* streets.[43]



Over one-third of City streets have a PCI sub-"fair" rating.

The Pavement Management Plan Update, published by the San Diego Transportation Department in April 2025, referenced a previous estimate by the City of $1.9 billion in funding needed—on top of a $1.2 billion gap—to improve and maintain a PCI of 70.[44] One bright spot is that in 2024, "The City exceeded its paving mileage goals and completed 479 lane miles (252 repair miles) of pavement maintenance and 138 lane miles (75 repair miles) of rehabilitation."[45]

The Grand Jury learned in interviews that bike infrastructure improvements are bundled with other projects like "Pure Water San Diego," (the City's multi-year,

*Unimproved street are street segments that are part of the City's street network but were not originally built to City Construction Standards. In 2021, City Council Policy 200-01 was updated to allow City funds to be used to improve unimproved streets and alleys.[46]

micro-filtration enterprise) and other ongoing pavement projects for efficiency and cost savings.

However, many of the City's most harrowing stretches of bike paths won't be fixed by project bundling or re-paving. Wherever cars and bikes share the same stretch of road with one or more approaching freeway entrances/exits, the vestiges of an auto-centric infrastructure lead to what many have described as some of the most inhospitable stretches for bike riders. Examples of these kinds of hazards can be found at eastbound University Avenue at I-805, Genesee at SR-52, and Mesa College Drive, which, in the span of little more than one overpass, crosses two north-southbound freeways, four freeway entrances/exits, and a major hospital access point. The Grand Jury notes that at least one of these roadways, Genesee at SR-52, is slated for redesign, but plans don't explicitly mention accommodating bike infrastructure:

> Convert Genesee Ave from I-5 NB Ramp to the SR-52 WB Ramp into a SMART Corridor with a flex lane in each direction that could be used for transit or HOV. The corridor may include transit signal priority, LPI, curb extensions, and protected intersections.[47]

Getting It Done Through "Get It Done"

The risk to bikers is not limited to freeway entrances and poor pavement. Nearly every San Diego bicyclist can recall a ride along roadways like 30th St., where overgrown, low-hanging tree branches smack helmets, loose gravel slicks the pavement beneath a shadowy freeway overpass, and traffic squeezes so tightly that cyclists can practically read a passing car's VIN number. These conditions are a failure by the City to properly maintain and keep clean bike infrastructure.

The Grand Jury met with engineers and staff from the City's Transportation Department and learned that Class IV cycle tracks—those separated by bollards and curbs—are too narrow for standard street sweepers. The City currently has only one operable, appropriately sized sweeper to maintain 63.7 miles of protected bike lanes, and the sweeper is not deployed on a regular schedule. Likewise, there is no consistent schedule or patrol for weed abatement. Rather, the maintenance of bike

facilities depends on residents reporting conditions through “Get It Done,” the City’s online platform/mobile app for reporting non-emergency problems.

According to SanDiego.gov, in 2025 the City received, processed, or closed 296,487 Get It Done reports, of which the following are most likely to include bicycle infrastructure:[48]

Type	**Numbers of**
Bike Related	383
Pavement Maintenance	1,394
Pothole	17,760
Street sweeping	2,221
Vegetation Encroachment	3,500
Parking Violation	27,085
Weed Cleanup	801
Tree Maintenance	6180
Total Bicycle Impact Reports:	**59,324**

Even if only a portion of the more than 59,000 requests directly impact cyclists, the Grand Jury finds that with just one Class IV City sweeper, residents must exercise patience…or grab a broom and some garden gloves.

In a Burst of Pulchritudinous Flair, Clairemont Drive Winds Itself Toward a Future Freshly Reimagined

In a curious twist that reflects the confusion expressed by many motorists, Clairemont Drive’s varied bike infrastructure has led some bike enthusiasts to declare, “I Heart Clairemont Drive.” Even to the casual rider, Clairemont Drive’s improvements create a safer riding experience.

The width of a bike lane is key to decreasing rider stress levels. A driver parked along Clairemont Drive can open the car door leaving enough room for a rider to still safely pass. This added width was created when the City removed a vehicle lane in each direction. Parts of the bike lane have bollards or abut "floating parking." Floating parking forms a barrier between moving traffic and the bike lane.[49] Additionally, there are countdown timers at the drive's two key intersections. "Your Speed" signs—a visual for speeding drivers to check themselves—appear on both sides of the drive.

While improving safety, Clairemont Drive's bicycle face-lift is enhanced by its connectivity. Sans gaps, the cycle track allows residents to get safely to the Clairemont trolley station.

For these reasons, the Grand Jury finds that the Clairemont Drive bicycle infrastructure serves as a model for effective Class IV cycle tracks; it is the kind of bike infrastructure that every San Diego community deserves, reflecting the efforts needed for the City to achieve CAP 10 percent.

GRAND JURY FOCUS AREA II:
Network Connectivity Requires Continuous, Destination-Focused Infrastructure, Especially for Our Communities of Concern

For those predisposed to trade automobile for bike, routes must be safe and connected to where people want to go. The Grand Jury found riding in most neighborhoods is usually safe and comfortable if traffic volume is light. But getting from one neighborhood to another can challenge the most seasoned rider:

- Bike lanes start and disappear.
- Navigating major traffic arteries connecting neighborhoods with multi-lanes like El Cajon Blvd., Mira Mesa Blvd., and Martin Luther King St., exceeds many people's tolerance for traffic stress.
- Bike infrastructure disappears, especially where it's needed most: freeway on-and-off-ramps, giving riders the uneasy feeling, "You're on your own!"
- SANDAG's free bike map contains errors and lacks detail for a novice or City visitors to navigate unfamiliar parts of town.

Central to the argument for greater connectivity is the question "Why?" Why is a connected bike network essential to any effort to shift drivers to bike riders? Two national sources help clarify this point.

1) According to a Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization September 19, 2024, Memorandum, bike lane obstruction discourages people from choosing bikes for transportation. Most people find cycling as a means of transportation dangerous without significant, critically connected infrastructure. An obstructed bike lane disrupts connectivity and forces the cyclist to merge into the travel lane, creating a dangerous situation.[50]

2) In its report, “Low Stress Bicycling and Network Connectivity,” the Mineta Transportation Institute found:

> For a bicycling network to attract the widest possible segment of the population, its most fundamental attribute should be low stress connectivity, that is, providing routes between people’s origins and destinations that do not require cyclists to use links that exceed their tolerance for traffic stress, and that do not involve an undue level of detour.[51]

There are communities in the City that could benefit greatly from a connected bicycle network, yet they have not always had the same opportunities in infrastructure investment:

> Historically, not all communities in San Diego have had access to the same breadth or quality of mobility choices. Due to past investment practices, some communities have not received the multimodal infrastructure and resources that their community members need to access opportunities.[52]

San Diego’s Climate Equity Index Report of 2019, identifies these and other areas around town as “Communities of Concern,” due to having low or very low, “access to opportunity to improve mobility options and accessibility for the non-driving elderly, disabled, low-income, and other members of the population.”[53]

The City relies on two independent scoring systems for evaluating bicycle rider stress and comfort on its roadways:

1. SANDAG evaluates roadways using a "Level of Traffic Stress" (LTS) scale from one to four. A low traffic stress rating of "1" indicates minimal traffic stress, suitable for nearly all ages and abilities.[54]

2. The BMPU uses an equal weight scoring system to evaluate "Connectivity." BMPU defines connectivity as the extent to which a roadway segment serves six everyday places: schools, parks, libraries, transit stops, shopping, and jobs. Since there are six (6) destination types, connectivity scores range between zero to six.[55] A high connectivity score (e.g. "6") means there are many destinations near the segment.[56]

Conjoined, these two San Diego roadway rating systems mean that roads identified as, "High Connectivity/High LTS or High Connectivity/Low LTS demonstrate the greatest opportunities to connect people to everyday destinations."[57]

Many streets in "Communities of Concern," such as corridors east of 28th Street, Martin Luther King Jr. St, Imperial Ave, and Ocean View Blvd have a rating High Connectivity/Low LTS. Yet, Grand Jury's visits to these streets revealed a dearth of bike infrastructure, forcing residents to walk, drive, or use public transit (bus). These segments are ripe for bicycle infrastructure improvements and should be given the highest priority based on the BMPU's stated project goals of infrastructure equity:

> "Identify project opportunities in structurally excluded communities and to accommodate users of all ages and abilities."[58]

Even as communities gain greater access to opportunities, the Grand Jury learned that bike lanes on three stretches of City roadways were removed for improvements and have not been restored for several years:

- Camino Santa Fe—between Carrol Rd. and Miramar Rd.
- East Gate Mall—as riders approach Genesee Ave.
- Governor Drive—east of I-805

Public Transit Backfills Start and End Points in Network Gaps

The Bike Master Plan promotes using public transit in conjunction with bike travel. "Linking bicycles with mass transit (bus, trolley, commuter rail, and ferry) overcomes such barriers as lengthy trips, personal security concerns, and riding at night, in poor weather, or up hills."[59]

MTS buses have bike racks with room for two bikes. If more residents are expected to use bike AND transit per trip, the issue of two bikes per bus is a limitation. Additionally, because of their height, MTS racks require cyclists to have enough upper-body strength to lift their bikes about shoulder height. Lifting an unwieldy 50-pound e-bike shoulder height is challenging even for the fittest City residents. A model that allows riders to roll their bikes up to the rack would allow a wider cohort of riders to use bus and biking in one trip.



MTS bike rack in the folding position requires grip and upper body strength.

As mentioned earlier in this report, one of CAP's "Supporting Actions" is bike storage. In addition to bus racks, San Diego MTS Trolley offers free-standing bike lockers at many stations. The lockers are enclosed boxes that prevent others from pilfering mirrors, baskets, tires, wheels, or the entire bike. Access to the lockers first requires completing the online "Terms of Service Agreement" and receiving approval. Users are required to mail a $25 refundable deposit to SANDAG to get a bike locker card. Cyclists can make an appointment to pick up the bike card. It took

members of the Grand Jury five days to obtain a bike card. After the $25 deposit, bike lockers are free to use.

Lockers and MTS racks play an important role in supporting the 37 percent of the 2025-26 Grand Jurors who commute daily via trolley and bus.

GRAND JURY FOCUS AREA III:
Facility Remediation & Path Enhancement Includes Roundabouts and the Three E's

According to data provided in the April 2019, "City of San Diego, Systemic Safety Report, The Data-Driven Path To Vision Zero," 75 percent of fatal/severe crashes happen at or near intersections.[60] Bicyclists hit by motor vehicles make up 10 percent of all injury accidents. Severe injuries and fatalities happen disproportionally among pedestrians on foot (39 percent), followed by motorcyclists (21 percent) and then bicyclists (11 percent):[61]

> "The number of interactions between bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists is one measure of "exposure" that has been correlated with the likelihood of collisions. It has also been correlated with perceived safety and the level of traffic stress that a bicyclist feels when using a roadway."[62]

Roundabouts Hold the Promise of Increased Safety and Utilization

The Grand Jury spoke with a senior traffic engineer in the Engineering and Asset Management and Parking Division of the City's Transportation Department and learned that pedestrian crashes make up the largest percentage of roadway fatalities. Installing modern roundabouts in intersections is the safest solution to anticipating and preventing fatal crashes—reducing them by 90 percent in some states.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), between 2013 and 2023, there were 4,577 cyclists killed in intersections across the country.[63] During that same 10-year period, six cyclists died[64] in all of the estimated 8,800 roundabouts,[65] and between 2014 and 2020, there were zero roundabout bicycle fatalities:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Motor Vehicle Crash Data Querying and Reporting

Pedalcyclists Involved in Fatal Crashes
Filter Selected: Type of Intersection (since 2010): *Roundabout*; Person Type: *Pedalcyclist*
Years: *2013-2023*

Pedalcyclists Involved in Fatal Crashes[1]

Note: Click the link within a table cell to view those records on a web map

Crash Date (Year)	Crash Date (Month)				
	March	April	May	October	Total
2013	0	0	1	0	1
2021	1	1	0	0	2
2023	0	0	1	2	3
Total	1	1	2	2	6

The City has identified between 400 and 500 intersections with the highest risk for a fatal crash. “Highest risk” is defined as intersections with metro-transit routes and three or more injury crashes in the last ten years. As the City shifts to roundabouts, one concern, in addition to increased safety, is cost. According to one engineer at the City’s DOT, the last roundabout the City installed cost about $600,000, but the prices are coming down significantly due to “quick builds.” A quick build roundabout can be completed without excavation or pouring concrete. Quick builds are made of plastic materials and are rated for 50 years. An example of a quick build roundabout is in Balboa Park at Florida Street and Morley Field.

At many City roundabouts, approaching bicyclists can either merge into vehicle traffic—where speeds are reduced by design as drivers near the entry point—or use the sidewalk and crosswalk path like a pedestrian. When a bike lane exists or is planned at a location where a roundabout will be installed, the City accommodates bicyclists with both options.

The Grand Jury learned that, due to changing traffic patterns and newer infrastructure, many San Diego streets have more lanes than traffic warrants—swapping intersections with roundabouts may further reduce the lanes needed on some streets. These “road diets” will allow more bike infrastructure where automobiles formerly traveled.



Roundabout in Bird Rock

Can the Much-Espoused Engineering, Education, & Enforcement Ever Eliminate Egregious Error?

While driver error can never be eliminated, its impact can be mitigated through the three E's espoused in the City's report, "The Data Driven Path to Vision Zero:" engineering, education, and enforcement.[66]

Engineering: Sharrows Point the Way

In addition to sharrows and roundabouts, the use of other engineering interventions is primarily based on data to decrease injuries and deaths, including:

- Bike Boxes—green rectangles painted on the street at an intersection. Bike boxes allow a cyclist to position herself in front of vehicles at a red light to increase visibility.
- Conflict Striping—thick green horizontal painted zebra stripes that start before an intersection and continue through where cars and cyclists may conflict.



Left: Conflict striping that leads to a bike box on (I Heart) Clairemont Drive. Right: Bike box provides enhanced visibility.

- Green paint—a safety measure that alerts drivers to the potential presence of bike riders.
- Road diets—reduced vehicle traffic lanes to make room for bike lanes. In speaking with a San Diego Transportation Senior Engineer, the Grand Jury learned that narrowing lanes forces drivers to slow down and pay closer attention and potentially allows room for bike infrastructure.[67]

Education: "Safe Routes to School" Should Be Advanced with Alacrity

The Bicycle Master Plan contains a program called "Safe Routes to School." Per the Plan, the City is advised to work with schools and community groups to seek funds for safe routes to school programs. The Bicycle Master Plan also calls for schools to promote "Walking School Bus" efforts where parents or other responsible adults share the responsibility of escorting children to and from school by foot or bicycle.[68]

Searching twenty websites in the San Diego Unified School District for Elementary and Middle schools to gather information on their active Safe Routes to School programs, including participating parents who might serve as program contacts, was telling. The Grand Jury notes that schools often list rules for school bus transportation, pick-up and drop-off of students by vehicle, and a log of completed disaster drills. One school has a website section devoted to safe gun storage. Every

school has information on bullying and how to report a bullying incident. But only one school had an active safe routes to school program with parent contacts. In terms of the Bicycle Master Plan Update, this is a lost opportunity and inconsistent with the provided guidance. Sitting in Mom or Dad's SUV creates gridlock and pollution and accounts for 10-14 percent of morning rush hour traffic.[69]

BMPU also calls for increased bicycle education throughout City communities. CicloSDias are popular semi-annual community events that promote cycling and micromobility. CicloSDiases are held by Caltrans Active Transportation Program and the San Diego County Bike Coalition. Streets close to automobile traffic so that people of all ages can have the experience cycling, scooting, skating, rolling, and walking without the fear of vehicle encroachment.

GRAND JURY FOCUS AREA IV:
Enforcement—California Vehicle Code Provides Stronger Protections

California Vehicle Code (CVC) §21211 states that, "No person may stop, stand, sit, or loiter upon any class I bikeway, as defined in subdivision (a) of Section 890.4 of the Streets and Highways Code, or any other public or private bicycle path or trail, if the stopping, standing, sitting, or loitering impedes or blocks the normal and reasonable movement of any bicyclist."[70]

Additionally, San Diego Municipal Code §86.0112 prohibits standing or parking in specified places.[71]

The Grand Jury commends the City and the San Diego Police Department for their judicious enforcement of bike lane obstruction. A Grand Jury review of San Diego bike lane citations for the period December 1, 2024, through December 20, 2025, revealed that the City issued 2,740 citations totaling $216,457 in fines for bicycle impediments, including "Obstructing Bike Lane," "Bike Lane Hazard" and "No Stopping, Standing, Parking Anytime. Bike Lane."[72] While there appears to be enforcement in all parts of the City, more citations were issued near schools and hospitals.

There's good reason for the City to prevent bike facility obstruction. According to data from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, a pedestrian or bicyclist struck by a vehicle moving at 20 mph has a 90 percent chance of survival. At 30 mph or higher, the likelihood of surviving a crash drops below 50 percent.[73]

Vision Zero's call to use traffic-enforcement cameras, along with two recently enacted California statutes aimed at automobile red-light and speed violators, may provide meaningful relief to bicyclists.

Senate Bill 720 is a re-engineered version of an earlier law that authorizes red-light cameras at intersections. The revised law, championed by safe streets advocates, stipulates that red-light violation fines are issued to the vehicle rather than the driver. The camera takes photos of the automobile license plate. Violations under this law do not affect one's driving record or insurance rates:

> Notwithstanding any other law, a violation of a traffic control signal law pursuant to this chapter that is recorded by an automated traffic enforcement system authorized pursuant to this section shall be subject only to a civil penalty, as provided in paragraph (3), and shall not result in the department suspending or revoking the privilege of a violator to drive a motor vehicle or in a violation point being assessed against the violator.[74]

While SB720 is directed at automobiles and red-light compliance, Assembly Bill 645, passed in 2023, allows five California cities, Los Angeles, San Jose, Oakland, Glendale/Long Beach, and the City and County of San Francisco, to test speed cameras. Recognizing that speed cameras are objective and make enforcement of speed laws more predictable, the bill requires signage to advise drivers that their speed is being recorded. Like other speeding violations, penalties under AB645 increase with the driver's speed. "Warning notices shall be issued for first-time violators going 11-15 miles over the posted speed limit."[75] Although San Diego is not a test city, several corridors, such as Morena Boulevard, which often functions as a de facto fifth lane for I-5, and Miramar Road, which bears a strong resemblance

to the TV show “The Amazing Race,” are viable candidates for speed-camera deployment.



Speed signal along Gilman Drive

The Grand Jury Applauds the City for Its Commitment to CAP 10 Percent

On balance, the Grand Jury finds that the City is advancing bicycle infrastructure in a meaningful way and remains stalwart in achieving its CAP 10 percent bicycle mobility goal. These efforts encompass ongoing improvements to safety and network connectivity, even in the face of fiscal limitations and public resistance.

And there is still much to do.

City plans and initiatives describe coming attractions to the City’s bicycle infrastructure, like bicycle boulevards, traffic circles, curb extensions, high-visibility crosswalks, and upgrades to Class II and Class III facilities. The Grand Jury finds that increased maintenance, a more connected bicycle network—particularly in Communities of Concern—and continued rigorous enforcement of illegal bike-lane encroachments, will improve safety, boost rider confidence, and hasten CAP 10 percent bicycle mobility goal as other projects are deployed across the City.

FACTS & FINDINGS

Fact: The Climate Action Plan outlines San Diego's objective to shift 10 percent of all trips to bicycling by 2035.
Fact: A recent survey of 1,869 bicycle riders in San Diego, safety and connectivity are the most important factors residents consider when deciding whether to travel by bicycle.
Fact: Much of San Diego's bicycle infrastructure is disconnected and inadequately maintained.
Finding 1: The lack of a connected, well-maintained bike infrastructure discourages many people from bicycling as a viable commuting option.

Fact: San Diego's buses have racks for only two bikes, which require cyclists to lift their bikes about shoulder height.
Fact: The City expects cyclists to use buses to close gaps on their bike commutes.
Finding 2: More cyclists using buses means more people will be waiting longer to access buses with available bike racks.

Fact: Increasing bicycle storage is one of the "Supporting Actions" in the City's CAP.
Fact: City lockers allow cyclists to safely store bikes.
Fact: Gaining access to a City-provided bike locker requires cyclists to first send a deposit check by mail to SANDAG.
Fact: Cyclists lack a mobile app to gain immediate bike locker access.
Finding 3: The absence of a mobile bike locker app forces riders to use work-arounds like less secure, open bike racks or to roll their bikes onto the trolley, undermining one of CAP's Supporting Actions for safe bicycle storage.

Fact: City streets have an overall Pavement Condition Index (PCI) score of 63, which equates to a "fair" rating.
Fact: Thirty-four percent of City streets have a rating of poor, very poor, serious or failed rating.
Finding 4: The City's poor pavement conditions increase risk to bicyclists.

Fact: Bicycle Class IV Tracks are too narrow for standard city streets sweepers.

Fact: The City has only one operable street sweeper configured for Class IV Bicycle Tracks.
Fact: The City does not set a schedule for bike infrastructure maintenance.
Finding 5: The lack of a bike infrastructure maintenance schedule means residents must file bike route maintenance requests through the Get It Done app.

Fact: Maps help riders navigate San Diego's bikeways.
Fact: SANDAG's printed map of the City's bike network lacks interactive features, including a "Trip Planner" available in other City apps such as Pronto.
Fact: The printed bike network map is out of date.
Finding 6: An updated, interactive map would help new and seasoned riders navigate San Diego's bike network.

Fact: CAP defines San Diego's "Communities of Concern" as communities that historically have had very low access to opportunity.
Fact: Many Communities of Concern lack complete bicycle infrastructure.
Fact: The Bike Master Plan Update rates many roadways in "Communities of Concern" as "High Connectivity" and "Low Level of Traffic Stress (LTS)"
Fact: High connectivity is a road segment containing destinations like schools, parks, transit stops, libraries, shopping areas, or places of employment.
Fact: Low LTS is a road segment where riders feel "safe and comfortable."
Finding 7: Despite having road segments with High Connectivity/ Low LTS, too many Communities of Concern have limited bicycle mobility options.

Fact: The Bicycle Master Plan Update includes Safe Routes to School—a program that encourages parents to lead students to school safely by foot or bike.
Fact: One in 20 schools surveyed in the San Diego Unified School District have an active Safe Routes to School Program.
Fact: Driving children to school accounts for 10–14 percent of morning rush-hour traffic.
Finding 8: Many parents feel the only safe option is to personally drive their children to school.

REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

The California Penal Code §933(c) requires any public agency which the Grand Jury has reviewed, and about which it has issued a final report, to comment to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the agency. Such comment shall be made *no later than 90 days* after the Grand Jury publishes its report (filed with the Clerk of the Court); except that in the case of a report containing findings and recommendations pertaining to a department or agency headed by an elected County official (e.g. District Attorney, Sheriff, etc.), such comment shall be made *within 60 days* to the Presiding Judge with an information copy sent to the Board of Supervisors. Furthermore, California Penal Code §933.05(a), (b), (c), details, as follows, the manner in which such comment(s) are to be made:

(a) As to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:
    (1) The respondent agrees with the finding
    (2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefor.

(b) As to each grand jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:
    (1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
    (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation.
    (3) The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a time frame for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This time frame shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.
    (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor. (c) If a finding or recommendation of the grand jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a county agency or department headed by an elected officer, both the agency or department head and the Board of Supervisors shall respond if requested by the grand jury, but the response of the Board of Supervisors shall address only those budgetary or personnel matters over which it has some decision-making authority. The response of the elected agency or department head shall address all aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her agency or department.

Comments to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court in compliance with the Penal Code §933.05 are required from the:

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Grand Jury respectfully recommends the following actions to the Mayor and City Council to boost bicycle ridership and to help San Diego reach its 2035 CAP goal of 10 percent bicycle mobility:

RECOMMENDATION 1: Prioritize building continuous bike infrastructure now, particularly on routes with gaps, instead of waiting years for larger infrastructure projects to move forward.

RECOMMENDATION 2: With the new fleet of City e-buses, explore installation of bus-mounted racks that do not require cyclists to lift a bike several feet off the ground. Provide a one-size-fits-all bus rack that holds more than two bikes.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Connect existing and future installation of bike lockers to a bike locker app that allows immediate access to lockers without users having to mail payment.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Require the Department of Transportation to explore opportunities to achieve a 70 percent Pavement Condition Index.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Acquire another sweeper that can service Class IV bike lanes and implement a routine sweeping schedule instead of relying on Get It Done requests.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Require SANDAG to survey the existing bicycle network and include both digital and a hard-copy (printed) map, at least yearly, that reflects the latest changes to the network. Invite users to submit suggestions where the map may vary from actual network.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Prioritize Communities of Concern designated with a “High Connectivity/Low Level Traffic Stress” (LTS) for bike infrastructure installment so

that residents of these underserved parts of town can safely take advantage of bicycling without waiting years to be paired with other infrastructure projects.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Increase outreach to school administrators and parent-teacher organizations to promote the benefits of participating in the Safe Routes to School program.

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