Mayor Blakespear, Deputy Mayor Hinze, and Council
City of Encinitas
505 South Vulcan Avenue
Encinitas, CA 92024

Re: Recommendations for Encinitas Climate Action Plan (CAP)

Dear Mayor Blakespear, Deputy Mayor Hinze, and Council,

Climate Action Campaign is a local nonprofit organization with a simple mission: stop the climate crisis.

The Surfrider Foundation is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world’s ocean, waves and beaches through a powerful activist network. We fight for clean water, coastal preservation, ocean protection, beach access and to reduce plastic pollution.

SanDiego350 is an inclusive volunteer organization devoted to inspiring a movement to prevent the worst impacts of climate change and climate injustice. We strive to create a future that supports a livable planet and just society through education and outreach, public policy advocacy, and mobilizing people to take action. We represent approximately 10,000 local volunteers and supporters in the San Diego area.

With the adoption of its gold-standard Climate Action Plan in 2018, Encinitas has led the region in climate action, demonstrating how a comprehensive climate strategy leads to clean air, safe streets, affordable clean energy, and economic benefits to families and businesses.

Now, as Encinitas looks to update its CAP, we urge the City to further its leadership and commitment to bold climate action by adopting the recommendations outlined below.

These recommendations are in response to the increasing urgency of fighting the climate crisis as stated in recent climate science reports including the UN IPCC Report *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C*, the State of California’s new Executive Order, B-55-18, and new emerging best practices around the region and the state.

**Plan for Carbon Neutrality by 2045 in Line With State Targets**
As a long-range planning document, we recommend that Encinitas’s CAP planning horizon extend until at least 2045, and the target for that year should align with Executive Order B-55-18 to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. The UN IPCC *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C* and other recent climate science findings show that, at every level of government, we must plan for and fully execute a total transition
away from fossil fuels. To achieve that transition, we need all of our cities to establish the roadmap and begin deep decarbonization today. In recognition of the importance of planning for deep carbonization, over 77 countries, 10 regions, and over 100 cities have committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 or sooner. For strong examples of plans to achieve net zero emissions, we recommend referring to the City of Santa Monica, the City of Los Angeles, and the County of Los Angeles sustainability plans.

Eliminate Building Emissions by 2045 Through Building Electrification

Even as our cities achieve 100% clean electricity, natural gas remains the third most significant source of emissions in our cities, so to fully transition away from fossil fuels, we must identify strategies to reduce and ultimately eliminate natural gas consumption. Cities in California are leading the transition from gas to clean-energy buildings, with San José, Santa Monica, Carlsbad, Berkeley, Windsor, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, and Menlo Park passing building electrification ordinances.

We urge Encinitas to update its CAP to include targets and associated strategies to electrify municipal, commercial, and residential buildings. These targets and strategies should include:

- Require all newly constructed or renovated buildings to be all-electric. For reference, the City of San José, Menlo Park, and Berkeley have all passed ordinances requiring all new residential and commercial construction to be all-electric effective January 2020. Windsor has also passed an ordinance requiring all newly constructed low-rise residential buildings to be all-electric. Most recently, Lemon Grove adopted a CAP with the measure “Adopt an ordinance requiring all new residential developments to be all-electric and install PV systems.”
- Adopt a plan to electrify municipal buildings. For example, the City of San José intends to adopt a plan to electrify municipal buildings.
- Streamline permitting to make electrifying existing buildings easier.
- Develop financial incentives to lower purchase and installation costs for electric appliances. For reference, San Luis Obispo currently adds a small fee for new mixed-fuel buildings based on expected gas consumption and plans to use the revenue to help people retrofit their homes with all electric appliances in the future.

In addition to reducing emissions, building electrification provides numerous co-benefits including lower energy bills and lower costs for new construction, improved indoor and outdoor air quality, safer energy infrastructure, and the creation of good-paying green jobs.

Include Strategies Encouraging Telecommuting

We encourage Encinitas to work with employers and other stakeholders to identify opportunities to expand work-from-home policies, which can be an effective strategy in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the City’s highest emissions sector, transportation. Telecommuting can reduce vehicle miles traveled by minimizing the number of daily commutes in the city, and is also an opportunity to advance equity, possibly broadening employment opportunities for those without access to a car or driver’s license.

We recommend including a measure in the CAP Update that promotes participation by employers in telecommuting efforts, with a target tailored to the City’s local context, and steps to meet this target. As an example, Solana Beach’s CAP includes a measure that reads “Promote telecommuting to achieve 10%
participation,” with a goal of achieving participation from 10 percent of the eligible labor force to telecommute two days per week.

According to Global Workplace Analytics, 56% of employees in the country have a job that could be done remotely at least some of the time, but less than 4% of employees actually work from home at least half-time or more. Although data is still being gathered regarding our region’s current telework rates, the current public health crisis has shown more employees adapting to work-from-home policies than ever before. As we learn more, we encourage cities to adopt ambitious telecommuting targets, with strategies identified to meet those targets.

**Commit to Ambitious Mode Share Targets for Biking, Walking, and Transit**

In order to hit the state climate targets, Encinitas will need to continue shifting people away from driving and towards biking, walking, and transit. We understand that the City plans to include mode share targets, and we applaud this effort. Accordingly, we strongly recommend setting overall targets for pedestrian, bicycle, and mass transit mode shares.

For example, the City of San Diego states its goal as, “Achieve mass transit mode share of 12% by 2020 and 25% by 2035 in Transit Priority Areas,” “Achieve walking commuter mode share of 4% by 2020 and 7% by 2035 in Transit Priority Areas,” and, “Achieve 6% bicycle commuter mode share by 2020 and 18% mode share by 2035 in Transit Priority Areas.” Encinitas’s CAP should set aggressive mode share targets for biking, walking, and transit, tailored to the City’s local context, and include strategies to meet them.

**Walking:** To increase pedestrian mode share targets and improve safety, the CAP should commit not only to developing a complete pedestrian network with comfortable, safe sidewalks, but also to innovative strategies to make walking as safe and convenient as possible. We applaud the City’s recently approved Leucadia Streetscape project, and urge for continued efforts to enhance mobility for pedestrians. Examples of strategies to increase pedestrian mode share include piloting left-turn traffic calming to reduce turn speeds, restricting right turns at red lights, updating walk signals to transition automatically and extending time for pedestrians to cross the street, introducing leading pedestrian intervals, and adding new diagonal pedestrian crossings at busy intersections. We recommend referring to the Mayor of San Francisco, London Breed’s Vision Zero announcement, August 2019.

**Biking:** Research and experience have shown that Class II bike facilities, which are striped bike lanes without a physical barrier, do not increase ridership as much as physically protected bike lanes. We thank Encinitas for demonstrating your commitment to cyclists’ safety with the South Coast Highway 101 protected bike lanes. As identified in the City’s Active Transportation Plan, Class II lanes are potentially dangerous for riders exposed to car traffic. We urge Encinitas to commit to implementing physically protected bike facilities for increased bike ridership and safer streets, instead of Class II painted bike lanes. Encinitas can also increase bicycle mode share by committing to painting Bicycle Detector Pavement Markings at intersections to ensure traffic signals consistently change for cyclists.

**Transit:** To support transit ridership, we recommend adding an action that reads, “Support planning and policy decisions at SANDAG to reduce GHG emissions and VMT and increase transit ridership.”
addition, Encinitas can increase transit ridership through implementation of land use policies that support the development of dense affordable housing near transit, and can reallocate public space to support bus-only lanes on key transit corridors.

**Include Smart Land Use Policies with Affordable Housing Near Transit**

We understand that the City and state Department of Housing and Community Development are in conversation concerning the recently adopted Housing Element and its compliance with state law. We recommend that the CAP include the following measures to increase the supply of affordable housing near transit:

- Pursue State grants such as the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities grants to support affordable housing projects near transit.
- Pursue other opportunities to utilize existing properties adjacent to transit and employment centers to develop housing affordable to very low-income and low-income families.
- Present to Council for consideration an inclusionary housing ordinance that would require a portion of all multi-family housing to be set aside for families earning less than 80% of the Area Median Income. Inclusionary housing ordinances help boost affordable housing production and support racial and economic integration.

The CAP should also add a measure specifying where smart growth and density should be targeted and what transportation mode share, VMT, and land use goals should be set for specific communities throughout the city so there is clarity for the public and City Staff. The City of San Diego’s ongoing struggle to ensure that community plan updates in urban, transit-priority communities are aligned with CAP targets, and to agree upon what goals each community is responsible for meeting, highlights the importance of including both a neighborhood-level specificity and a jurisdiction-wide approach in the CAP.

**Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on the development of this critically important document. Encinitas’s CAP presents an opportunity to help protect the health and safety of current and future generations from the worst impacts of climate change. We urge you to direct staff to incorporate the recommendations above to maximize emissions reductions, and deliver economic, safety, and health benefits to families and businesses.

Sincerely,

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Climate Action Campaign
JP Bruner  
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Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter

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CC: Crystal Najera, CAP Program Administrator