



Want To Weigh In On San Diego's Budget? Play The KPBS Budget Game

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By [Brooke Ruth](#), [Claire Trageser](#)

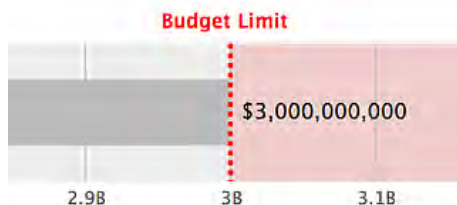


Photo by Megan Burks

A car drives past a buffered bike lane on Collwood Boulevard in the College Area, Feb. 12, 2016.

San Diegans would like to see more money for roads and stormwater system repairs, water supply projects, bike lanes and street lights in Mayor Kevin Faulconer's \$3.3 billion fiscal 2017 budget.

Environmental leaders in the city are also paying close attention to this year's budget because it doles out funding for implementing the city's [Climate Action Plan](#).



Nicole Capretz, head of the nonprofit environmental watchdog [Climate Action Campaign](#), said she's looking for "a serious commitment" to the plan.

"So that we are actually seeing protected bike lanes, we are actually seeing sidewalks that are safe for people so they can walk to work, we are actually seeing community plan updates that allow for compact mixed use development," Capretz said.

She said she's also looking for money for energy upgrades in buildings, investment in clean energy and public transit.

"Unless and until we see that the mayor and City Council are actually committed to the goals in the Climate Action Plan, we're going to continue to fight for more in the budget," Capretz said.

Special Feature [Play the Budget Game](#)

What would you change about the city budget? Click [here](#) to play.

infrastructure in high-collision and high-pedestrian corridors, including Euclid Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, Market Street, University Avenue and Imperial Avenue.

Monique López, a senior planner and policy advocate at the nonprofit [Environmental Health Coalition](#), said she thinks low-income communities need more money for engineering and

"The city must strategically invest in infrastructure to make streets safer," López said. "That includes traffic calming infrastructure, better street lights, safe crossings at intersections, crosswalks and more. The budget needs to put money into prioritizing high-traffic and high-pedestrian corridors so everyone can walk, bike and get around their neighborhoods safely."

Matt O'Malley, a lawyer at the environmental nonprofit [San Diego Coastkeeper](#), said he wants to see the city boost funding to improve stormwater infrastructure "allowing for city compliance with the Clean Water Act."

"Further, substantial expenditures aimed at multi-benefit water quality and supply projects, including stormwater capture and use as well as potable reuse," he said.

Andy Hanshaw, the head of the [San Diego County Bike Coalition](#), said investing in the city's Bicycle Master Plan will help reach the Climate Action Plan goals.

"We appreciate the commitment the city has made to increase bicycle commuting mode share, but it's going to take the needed funds to provide safe bicycling infrastructure that will allow citizens the choice to ride more often," Hanshaw said. "Accelerating the implementation of needed protected bike lanes like those called for in the Downtown Mobility Plan will result in the increased ridership that the city is calling for."

Others in the city asked for funds for providing more housing for the homeless and for economic development.

"The city should continue to allocate its resources in a way that fosters economic growth, but that also invests in additional housing and supportive services that address homelessness in our community, said Bill Bolstad, the chief development officer at [Father Joe's Villages](#).

Omar Passons, a North Park resident, said he would like to see money for infrastructure, economic development and leadership development for city staff.

"That said, balancing the budget is important for the long-term health of our city, and I'm not sure what could be responsibly cut," he said. "Maybe there are greater efficiencies in some of the internal departments that could be found, but in reality there's probably a long-term need to increase revenue."

San Diegans can also weigh in on the city budget by playing the [KPBS Budget Game](#). This marks the fourth year the game has been released. It allows players to pick items to add to the city budget, but then they also have to find things to cut to keep the budget balanced.

Residents can also contact the mayor and City Council with their budget priorities [here](#).

The mayor released his [draft of the budget this month](#). The City Council will examine it [in a series of hearings](#) on May 4, 5, 9 and 10.

A public budget hearing will also be held in the evening on May 16, although members of the public can comment at any of the budget meetings.

Then a revised budget will go to the City Council for a vote this June. The budget takes effect July 1.

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Billy Wild · 25 days ago

The water company cant even read the meters correctly. San Diego is getting worse. Where are the council members and the mayor? We could probably be better off without them. Just let the good people vote on the issues at hand. It could be all done online.

1 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share >