



For the right of people to walk in safety

For immediate release

LAUNCH OF PETITION TO GET SCOOTERS OFF SIDEWALKS

From its arrival in San Diego in February 2018 the motorized scooter rental industry has created obstacles and hazards for pedestrians as well as liabilities for property owners. Under Mayor Faulconer's administration all these were initially ignored. After a year and a half, worried about being sued if there was a serious accident and facing scathing condemnation for inaction by a County Grand Jury report, the City passed the ordinance the Mayor's Press Secretary designed, an ordinance that did virtually nothing to solve the public safety problems the rental industry and its users were creating. The public was promised that the ordinance would be updated to restore public safety. It wasn't. Under Mayor Faulconer **nothing** effective was done.

The election of a new Mayor and Council seemed to offer an opportunity to finally solve those problems. *Safe Walkways*, a group dedicated to restoring safety for pedestrians on walkways,, presented both the Mayor and Council effective proposals for solving the problems and restoring public safety at low to no cost. The *Safe Walkways* proposals are endorsed by **Disability Rights California** and the **Downtown Community Planning Council**. Nonetheless, neither the Council nor the Mayor have acted to restore the safety of pedestrians.

Instead the Council just passed the Mayor's budget with zero funding for targeted police enforcement against moving violations by scooter drivers and reduced funding for impounding which is so constrained as to be ineffectual. Without targeted enforcement the SDPD issued just five citations for moving violations in the first three months of 2021. In fact, there is no effective enforcement in San Diego against either moving or parking violations committed by users of rented motorized scooters and pedestrians lives are put at risk and the vulnerable are traumatized by scooters driven on sidewalks.

In May the City's AT&I committee called for the Director of the new multi-million dollar Mobility department, Alyssa Muto, to provide proposals to get scooters off sidewalks and provide an accounting of the City's costs to fully enforce against the problems its users create. A month later no proposals were made. It appears Ms. Muto, the Council and the Mayor are simply letting the opportunity pass. Unlike other cities where pilot programs were established with clear criteria for selecting operators, San Diego continues to ignore the underlying safety issues and in the meantime, the public faces the onslaught of the Summer tourist season with no protection from the abuses the scooter rental companies and their users perpetrate.

To demonstrate the extent of public support to get scooters off sidewalks we have created a petition for people affected by the industry to submit to the Mayor and Council. It is available on our website at safewalkwaysusa.com and it goes live today.

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