



CITY OF PALM DESERT

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Kome Ajise, Executive Director
Southern California Association of Governments
900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1700
Los Angeles, CA 90017

March 7, 2024

RE: ACCESS Indian Canyon Drive – Support

Dear Mr. Ajise:

On behalf of the City of Palm Desert, I write in strong support of the Coachella Valley Association of Government's Addressing Climate Change, Emergencies and Sand Storms (ACCESS) Indian Canyon Drive project nomination for SCAG's Surface Transportation Block Grant, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, and Carbon Reduction Program funding. This project will significantly contribute to alleviating congestion, enhancing air quality, and improving mobility for residents and visitors in the Coachella Valley.

Located in the north part of the City of Palm Springs, Indian Canyon Drive is a critical arterial road that directly connects to Interstate 10 and connects communities on both sides of the freeway. In 2023, it was closed for a total of 87 days. Frequent road closures on Indian Canyon Drive congest local roads, increasing idling times, vehicle miles traveled, and poor air quality. With the support of SCAG's Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program, Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), CVAG will implement measures to keep the road open and reduce congestion. Ultimately, this will not only enhance the efficiency of our road network but also improve the overall quality of life for Coachella Valley residents and visitors alike.

When this road closes, people lose direct access to job centers, schools, childcare, essential goods, and medical services, including the region's only Level 1 Trauma Center, Desert Regional Medical Center. For medical emergencies, this can be a matter of life or death due to detours that increase travel time. CVAG's ACCESS Indian Canyon Drive project will enhance accessibility to key destinations, integrate active transportation and provide a connection to Amtrak's Palm Springs Station. This will improve connectivity and mobility options for individuals of all ages and abilities, especially those from disadvantaged communities. This inclusivity is fundamental in promoting equity and social cohesion in our diverse community.

We look forward to your favorable consideration of CVAG's request. By investing in sustainable transportation infrastructure, we can create a more vibrant, resilient, and livable community for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Karina Quintanilla
Mayor, City of Palm Desert