October 14, 2014

Chairman and Members
Pima County Bond Advisory Committee
c/o Pima County Administrator's Office
130 W. Congress Street
Tucson, AZ 85701
CC: Chuck Huckelberry, Pima County Administrator

Subject: Pedestrian Safety and Comfort Bond Proposal

Dear Chairman and Members:

On behalf of Carondelet St Mary's Hospital, I would like to express our support for the Pedestrian Safety and Comfort Bond Proposal put forward by the Living Streets Alliance. As Tucson's west-side healthcare provider, we are keenly interested in the health, well-being, and economic stability of our community and know that walkability is closely connected to a healthy, thriving population.

Our society is faced with some disconcerting health statistics. More than two thirds of American adults are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity has more than doubled and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years. Data specific to Pima County communities demonstrates unacceptable rates of chronic disease. Lack of physical activity has become an epidemic with dire consequences.

Encouraging people to walk and creating safer places that support walking can play a critical part in reversing these trends. Some health experts refer to walking as a "wonder drug" as it is known to help prevent or treat obesity and diabetes; reduce the risk of some cancers, coronary heart disease, and osteoporosis; and enhance mental well-being.

We are aware that many cities across the United States are building infrastructures that support walking and help people discover being on their feet again. We would like to see similar initiatives in Pima County to increase the likelihood of walking as a part of people's daily lives. Therefore, we fully support LSA’s Pedestrian Safety and Comfort Bond Proposal as a strong initiative to create a walkable and healthier region and request your recommendation for its inclusion in the upcoming Pima County bond election.

Sincerely,

Amy Beiter, MD
President and CEO, Carondelet St. Mary’s Hospital