May 14, 2014

Pima County Bond Advisory Committee
Chairman and Members
c/o Pima County Administrator’s Office
130 W. Congress
Tucson, AZ 85701

Re: Pedestrian Safety and Comfort Bond Proposal

Dear Chairman and Members,

We are writing to you today in support of a major pedestrian funding initiative proposed by Living Streets Alliance in the next Pima County Bond. The Pima County Council on Aging advocates for the well-being and independence in the lives of older adults in Pima County, and accessibility to a safe and comfortable walking environment is central to this mission. Older adults are major stakeholders in the pedestrian environment, given that they comprise a substantial proportion of citizens who do not drive. As the share of the Pima County population that is over 65 increases to over 20% by 2030, a growing number of residents will experience mobility limitations and other disabilities that affect their transportation choices. Tragically, while more are likely to be a pedestrian, older adults are also often killed or incapacitated in a pedestrian crash. The Pedestrian Safety and Comfort Bond Program thus addresses both the concerns and priorities of our older population.

There are several aspects of this Bond proposal that merit support. One of these is the availability to fund projects across all Pima County jurisdictions, as well as the flexibility of the projects based on the needs of the community. A safe, shady and accessible pedestrian network allows seniors to engage in the community and engage in an enjoyable form of exercise, which contributes to a higher quality of life among our older population. We also are pleased by the emphasis of this bond proposal on connecting neighborhoods to community destinations and particularly among low-income residents. Community facilities are often located in and around neighborhoods and attractive and safe routes would increase access and use of these resources. The incorporation of transit and bus stops as a pedestrian destination is also an important feature. We also support the idea of using pedestrian infrastructure to support local business. Seniors are also consumers and better able to participate in the local economy when they can arrive to a business on foot.

We are pleased to express our support for the $25 million Pedestrian Safety and Comfort Bond and look forward to these opportunities for pedestrian improvements across our region being awarded and funded.

Sincerely,

W. Mark Clark
President & CEO