



For Immediate Release:
June 4, 2020

STATEMENT FROM PRESIDENT & CEO BETSY BRENNAN

The devastating death of George Floyd, and the outrage and protests that have followed, has left us all struggling – desperately – to find a way to ensure the world is the place we want it to be, the place we know it can be, and not the place that it is. While we are far from having all the answers, the DSDP is sharing this public statement:

We at the Downtown San Diego Partnership believe strongly that we have a duty to ensure our efforts are promoting equality and addressing systemic injustice and racial discrimination wherever they exist. We acknowledge the inequities in our country that disproportionately affect communities of color and the movement to change the course of unnecessary violence levied against Black communities. We make decisions and mobilize our efforts in our Downtown and beyond with our core values front of mind, including “striving for inclusiveness and diversity.”

The Downtown Partnership stands in solidarity with our Black community, including our staff, downtown residents, business owners, elected officials, members and our Board. We know Black lives matter. Our hearts are with the families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and too many others who are victims of racism and violence. We must unite as a community to speak and act against racism and prejudice in any form.

It would be imprudent to think the answers to address the deep societal issues that have brought about these tragedies will be easy, but each of us has our own strength to add to the solution. Whether it's how we educate people to mend and heal the roots of racism, how we encourage people to see the lived experience of others—especially those in vulnerable communities, or how we create art and placemaking to illuminate historically disadvantaged cultural institutions and artists and other vibrant segments of San Diego.

Those strengths will help us as we come together to make necessary changes, like the one recently implemented by the San Diego Police Department to ban carotid restraint, and continue dialogues on how we can improve community policing.

As an organization, we commit to:

1. Continuing to reach out to historically underrepresented communities when recruiting for positions within the Downtown Partnership to nurture a strong team of diverse perspectives.
2. Investing in our staff team to support growth as individuals and as a collective voice for supporting inclusivity and diversity.
3. Cultivating a culturally diverse Board of Directors and membership base.
4. Fostering a greater sense of cultural vibrancy through placemaking and special projects particularly those that highlight historically disadvantaged cultural institutions and artists.

5. Assisting DSDP employees, where we can, and supporting them with greater opportunity to participate in calls for social justice safely and peacefully (i.e. allot time to attend walks/demonstrations, assist interested employees in applying for Boards/Commissions that focus on the pertinent issues of today and into the future).

As we all work to create actionable change as individuals, and as an organization, I hope we draw upon our collective experiences, our personal truths, and the power of community collaboration for the strength we will need to be successful.

As a Downtown, we stand with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Bronnan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President & CEO

Downtown San Diego Partnership