



AIA Austin

October 27, 2020

Dear AIA Austin Members, Allied Members, and Friends:

If 20 years ago, Austin had invested in active mobility and mass transit systems, how would our lives be different? Would we have less traffic congestion, fewer freeways built, more affordably priced homes?

AIA Austin's mission is to be the voice for our city and our region's architecture community. We advocate for our members, the profession, career development, and design excellence. We influence public opinion and policies that shape our built and natural environment. The two propositions on this year's ballot do exactly that—shape our built and natural environment.

Austin prides itself on our beautiful landscapes, active communities, and a deeply held belief in protecting nature. The two Propositions on this year's ballot, Props A and B, embody these values and will ensure we can manage the transportation needs of our growing city while protecting the natural landscapes we love. AIA Austin encourages its members, and the citizens of Austin, to vote yes on both Proposition A and Proposition B.

Proposition B is a straightforward bond package. If passed by voters, Proposition B will invest \$460M in safe mobility infrastructure, funding the construction of sidewalks, bike lanes, safe routes to schools, pedestrian bridges, and urban trails. These are critical pieces of infrastructure that directly enhance opportunities to safely be outdoors and active as we live, work, and play in Austin.

Proposition A is a property tax increase dedicating funds to help pay for the construction and maintenance of a mass transit system, Project Connect, while also protecting the affordability of homes and updating infrastructure in the adjacent areas. Approximately 45% of the funding is projected to come from federal grants. The resulting annual impact to the average homeowner is \$360. That \$30 a month means more to us now than it did before the Covid-19 pandemic challenged our health, relationships, and economy; yet we know that in the span of our lives this is a relatively short period of time. Economic activity has adapted to the safety measures in place and is on the rise. Traffic has rebounded to 80% of pre-pandemic levels. And while some of us are still working from home, many others do not have that luxury. A well-developed mass transit system will be transformative in the lives of our workforce; those we rely on daily for a variety of goods and services.

It is time to make this crucial investment. If infrastructure is put into place now, we, as a city, can ensure a more vibrant, healthy, and active Austin for the future.

Let your opinion be heard. Exercise your right to vote; early voting continues through Friday October 30th and election day is November 3rd.

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