



American Planning Association
Texas Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

Chapter Officers

Doug McDonald, AICP
President
214.801.7792
doug.mcdonald@cor.gov

Chance Sparks, AICP
President-Elect
512.312.0084
Chance.Sparks@freese.com

Angela M. Martinez
Treasurer
409.739.2147
ang.martinez18@gmail.com

Christina Sebastian, AICP
Secretary
972.941.7473
christinas@plano.gov

Kimberley Mickelson, JD, AICP
Past President
281.703.5148
Kim.Mickelson@houstontx.gov

Christopher J. Looney, AICP
TML Affiliate
830.221.4055
Clooney@nbtexas.org

Executive Administrator

Mike McAnelly, FAICP
9629 Fallbrook Drive
Dallas, Texas 75243
214.850.9046
administrator@apatexas.org

APA Texas Chapter
www.txplanning.org

August 4, 2019

Dear Representative Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Committee:

On behalf of the American Planning Association (APA), Texas Chapter thank you for your leadership on the on-going work related to surface transportation reauthorization. APA appreciates your efforts to prioritize transportation and infrastructure as critical components of creating great communities. APA Texas represents 2,600 planners, planning officials and engaged citizens who work to ensure prosperity, opportunity and mobility for all Texans. An important part of our work is ensuring that planners have the tools to address the evolving nature of transportation policy.

Last month, important steps were made toward surface transportation reauthorization in 2020 with the bipartisan vote to approve the America's Transportation Infrastructure Act. As critical work moves forward on transportation and infrastructure, APA identifies four critical components of reauthorization and funding:

- 1) **States and communities need increased, sustainable, and predictable funding.** This means advancing increases in vital discretionary programs through THUD appropriations legislation. It means increasing the gas tax to support smart and forward-looking plans and projects while seriously moving toward a new user-fee revenue model. Congress should also advance new finance tools like private activity bonds and advanced refunding of municipal bonds that support critical investment. The Rebuild America Act of 2019 (H.R. 2864), Building United States Infrastructure and Leveraging Development Act (H.R. 2541) and Investing in Our Communities Act (H.R. 2772) are examples of bills that work toward accomplishing these needs.
- 2) **Federal transportation programs must do more to promote transit, biking and walking. These options make places safer and healthier and provide more options for mobility.** This means expanding and improving the TAP program, increasing and better targeting funding for the BUILD (formerly TIGER) program and transit grants, significantly

increasing transit funding, expanding bikeshare, and supporting critical planning and design for a better network. The Transportation Alternatives Enhancement Act (S. 1098) is one way that Congress can promote more options for mobility.

- 3) **Our transportation policies have to make communities more resilient and address the challenge of climate change.** This will require new approaches that require greater resiliency in infrastructure and more planning for resilience and hazards. It also means supporting expanding planning that incorporates climate measurement and mitigation. And, it requires investment in infrastructure that supports reduced emissions through bills like the Green Transportation Act (H.R. 3822).
- 4) **Transportation legislation must be forward-looking and help communities prepare for the future.** Advancing understanding of the implications and new practices related to incorporating technology into planning, decision-making, public engagement and the infrastructure itself is critical. Special attention needs to be paid to the emergence of autonomous vehicles and connected infrastructure through research and standards related to local impacts. Congress should invest in helping communities plan for a new future of transportation and not simply pile investment into past approaches through legislation such as the Preparing Localities for an Autonomous and Connected Environment Act (H.R. 2542).

Communities face critical challenges that can be addressed through federal funding and legislation regarding surface transportation. APA Texas thanks you for your leadership and support and looks forward to working with you as we continue to move toward surface transportation reauthorization in 2020.

Sincerely,



M. Douglas McDonald, AICP
President, American Planning Association Texas Chapter