

Proposed comments to Project Connect DEIS (S. Congress)

SRCC reviewed and discussed in committee the light rail project plans for the intersection of South Congress Avenue and Riverside Drive (“Plans”), which Austin Transit Partnership (“ATP”) presented in their Project Connect Draft Environmental Impact Statement. SRCC voted by resolution to oppose the Plans because their implementation would negatively impact our local culture, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and locally funded sidewalk construction projects.

To implement the Plans, the City would need to remove parking on South Congress Avenue and narrow the pedestrian and bicycle lanes. This would result in (i) a dearth of parking options for visitors, locals, and businesses, and (ii) compromised safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Some of the secondary impacts would include (i) gridlocked traffic, (ii) lower revenues for businesses, (iii) overcrowding and traffic spillover in the charming local neighborhoods, (iv) more car accidents and serious injuries to pedestrians, bicyclists, and commuters, and (v) less parking for locals.

On February 18, 2025, SRCC resolved that the City should prevent ATP from using Austin’s voter-approved tax for Project Connect to destroy the world famous and eclectic nature of South Congress Avenue. Accordingly, SRCC requests that the City seek and implement alternative mobility plans for South Congress Avenue that comport with the goals of Project Connect, including safer mobility options that enhance the historic corridors of our City.