



October 7, 2020

## **SOS ALLIANCE ENDORSES PROPOSITION B OFFICIAL BOARD STATEMENT**

This November, Austin voters will be asked to approve Proposition B, a \$460 million bond dedicated to enhancing active transportation infrastructure, which includes significant funding for new sidewalks, bike lanes, urban trails, and other safety-related improvements. After careful consideration of the projects included within the bond proposition and the potential benefits for active transportation, the Save Our Springs Alliance has decided to formally endorse Proposition B and encourages its members to vote “YES” on Proposition B.

For many years, the SOS Alliance has advocated for better regional transportation planning that puts more focus and emphasis on moving people—not cars. Although we have a long path ahead to achieve this vision, Proposition B’s prioritization of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is an important first step.

Making biking and walking safer and more accessible reduces the number of cars on the road, which in turn reduces air and water pollution, as well as traffic congestion. It also ultimately slows the increase of impervious cover, thus reducing the flooding and water quality degradation associated with roads.

We also welcome Proposition B’s focus on more equitable solutions, by enhancing mobility for people who can’t afford a car or can’t physically drive. Proposition B’s investment of \$50 million in new sidewalks and \$30 million in sidewalk repairs will help fill the gaps in the city’s sidewalk network that makes getting around a needlessly exhausting struggle for persons with disabilities. And, Proposition B’s emphasis on safety will mean fewer fatalities and greater mobility for our most vulnerable citizens, while promoting healthy, non-polluting modes of travel for those lucky enough to have a choice among modes.

This endorsement of Proposition B is made in acknowledgement of the current economic climate. The SOS Alliance recognizes that these are difficult times for many families, and it is not an ideal time to ask voters for a tax increase. However, we are comforted that the bond for Proposition B would be phased-in over time, and it will not impact the 2020-21 tax rate. According to the City’s website, the 2-cent tax increase associated with Proposition B would not be fully realized until 2026, resulting in an average property tax increase of \$65 (based on a home valued at \$325,000). We believe this marginal investment is worth it, to help save lives and move our city towards a more sustainable future.

### **Proposition B includes:**

- \$50 million for approximately 78 miles of new sidewalks, located near schools, bus stops, and parks, as well as along arterials and residential streets;
- \$30 million for sidewalk repairs to improve the functionality of the city’s sidewalk network;
- \$80 million for urban trails along our urban creeks and greenspaces;
- \$65 million for safety improvements at intersections and pedestrian crossings to reduce collisions and keep pedestrians safe;
- \$20 million for “Safe Routes to School” to improve the safety of elementary and middle school students walking or biking to/from school;
- \$19 million for infrastructure improvements to improve safety around bus and transit locations;
- \$1 million for the “Neighborhood Partnering Program” to support community-matched projects within our neighborhoods;
- \$53 million to improve the safety, mobility and drainage of certain streets that have been designated as substandard and unsafe; and
- \$102 million for various capital improvements on roads heavily trafficked by pedestrians and bicyclists, including Congress Avenue, Barton Springs Road, S Pleasant Valley, MLK, Guadalupe, and Riverside.

For more information about Proposition B, please visit the City’s website at <https://austintexas.gov/2020PropB>.