

**CONGRESS FOR THE NEW URBANISM
CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER**

5819 Mount Bonnell Rd.
Austin, Texas 78731
Tel: 512-633-7209
info@centraltexascnu.org
www.centraltexascnu.org

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NATIONAL OFFICE

140 S. Dearborn St.
Suite 404
Chicago, IL 60603
Tel: 312-551-7300
Fax: 312-346-3323
cnuinfo@cnu.org
www.cnu.org

February 9, 2010

Members of the City of Austin Planning Commission

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City Hall Council Chambers
301 W. 2nd Street,
Austin, TX 78701

RE: February 9, 2010 Agenda Item – East Riverside Corridor Master Plan

Dear Planning Commission Members,

Please accept this letter of support for the East Riverside Corridor (ERC) Master Plan from the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) Central Texas Chapter. The concepts and vision expressed in this plan are consistent with many of CNU's charter principles – including advocating for well-planned transit corridors and compact, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use districts. Further, we applaud the plan's recommendations for a streetcar or rail line along East Riverside Drive, the establishment of a gridded street network, the addition of dedicated bicycle lanes, and numerous pedestrian enhancements to improve mobility and transportation options for all those who live and work in and visit this corridor.

CNU encourages the Planning Commission to recommend the ERC Master Plan for approval to the Austin City Council. We also ask the City to commit the necessary resources to retain an outside consultant with the expertise to craft the subsequent regulating plan. During this next phase of the planning process, important details will need to be addressed, including the balance between density and transit service, the design of the Pleasant Valley transit plaza, coordination with the Strategic Mobility Plan, and an enhanced process for neighborhood and community engagement and support. Finally, we advocate for the portion of East Riverside Dr. between Pleasant Valley Blvd. and Hwy. 71 to be designated a Core Transit Corridor as an interim step while the next phase of this process is underway.

We stand ready to help and appreciate the opportunity to comment on the ERC Master Plan.

Sincerely,

The CNU Central Texas Chapter Board of Directors