



**AIA**  
Austin

July 26, 2016

Cameron Walker, AICP  
APA Awards Committee Chairman  
Permian Basin MPO, P.O. Box 60916  
Midland, TX 79711

RE: South Central Waterfront Letter of support for APA Central Texas

Dear Cameron and APA Central Texas Awards Committee,

This letter is to express AIA Austin's strong support for the South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan to win an APA Central Texas Award.

In 2012, AIA Austin was pleased to partner with the City of Austin to secure an AIA program that assembled a national team of designers, planners, and economists to assess the challenges and opportunities of pending redevelopment on the South Shore of Lady Bird Lake. Working together with two hundred Austinites, over the course of several days, the AIA team identified a clear choice ahead. The 2012 team emphasized that "a code is not a vision," and warned that the status quo of parcel-by-parcel, piecemeal redevelopment of the South Shore would not deliver the needed connectivity to make for a walkable district, would yield very little open space, and would not likely produce any affordable housing. The 2012 team also set out the alternative, that Austin could create a master plan to leverage the approaching redevelopment to create a compact and connected new district. That district could introduce a well-designed and coherent node reflecting highest standards in urban and architectural design while providing hundreds of units of affordable housing to the South Shore.

The South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan (SCW Plan) provides a detailed and realistic roadmap for Austin to make good on the potential that the AIA team laid out four years ago. The SCW Plan envisions adding 20 acres of new open spaces, plazas, and trails to create a quality public realm. The SCW Plan envisions new walkable blocks and streetscapes to provide for walkability and set the framework for harmonious development. The SCW Plan provides for

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increasing tax revenues six-fold, which more than covers the new infrastructure needs within the Plan's structure while offering millions of dollars annually for citywide services. The SCW Plan also sets a bold path for providing hundreds of new affordable housing units in the heart of Austin. The SCW Plan integrates green infrastructure technologies on a district-wide basis to integrate nature into the city, providing environmental, social, and aesthetic benefits. And, the SCW Plan does all this while promoting the highest standards of urban, architectural, and landscape design.

Austin is at a crossroads with the South Central Waterfront. Doing nothing and hoping for the best will bring certain disappointment. In stark contrast, the SCW Plan sets a course to realize the historic opportunity to transform our South Shore into a great new district that models how Austin can partner with the private sector interests to make places in our growing city more beautiful, environmentally responsible, financially sustainable, and welcoming to all. We encourage you to recognize this wonderful plan with an APA Central Texas Award.

Sincerely,



Jim Susman  
AIA Austin 2016 Board President