NAR Issue Summaries

Environment â€“ Transportation

NAR Committee:

State and Local Issues Policy Committee

What is the fundamental issue?

NAR supports investments in transportation, energy, water and communications systems.Updating and modernizing these systems will repair our crumbling roads, bridges and transit and water management systems, propel public and private efforts to make these systems environmentally sound, and close the digital divide by expanding broadband and internet access. This effort also provides an opportunity to ensure the benefits and jobs from infrastructure investments are shared and continue to enhance property values and increase community resilience.

Roads, bridges and other types of infrastructure are critical investments in every community. This type of infrastructure provides the basic fabric of economic competitiveness cities and states throughout America rely on; particularly roads that transfer goods and services across state lines. Additionally, traffic congestion and safety measures contribute to the quality of life residents have in their communities.

I am a real estate professional. What does this mean for my business?

Improvements to transportation and infrastructure systems enhance property values. Further constraints on funding for transportation projects of all types, particularly those that contribute to walkable, stable, and vibrant neighborhoods, may negatively affect property values and inhibit development.

NAR Policy:

The timely provision of safe, convenient and efficient transportation infrastructure enhances the quality of communities, supports property values, and mitigates the effects of traffic congestion that accompany growth. REALTORS® support improving mobility in communities so that all citizens have access to transportation means best suited to their needs. Changing travel patterns, shrinking petroleum supplies, and continuing technological innovation will challenge traditional means of transportation planning, construction and funding.

NAR's General Transportation and Infrastructure Principles:

1. Infrastructure priorities should be rooted in coordinated efforts between the region, state and local governments.
2. Maintenance and/or improvements of existing infrastructure funding should take precedence over development of new infrastructure.
3. Policies should incorporate market-based solutions for cost effectiveness.
4. Environmental stewardship should be balanced with economic development.

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5. An expedited permitting process to reduce redundant regulations should be prioritized without compromising the environment.
6. Communities should incorporate mitigation efforts to prepare for natural disasters (flooding, sea level rise, wildfires, etc.).
7. Maintaining housing affordability should be considered for all infrastructure projects.

NAR believes more needs to be done to level the playing field with respect to funding highways versus transit and other modes. Transportation plans should reflect a broad community vision, considering the needs of all transportation users, and should emphasize repair and maintenance over development of new capacity. In addition, NAR supports a modest increase in the federal motor fuel tax and annual adjustments for inflation.

Opposition Arguments:

Opponents of NAR policy claim that an increase in fuel tax will unduly burden drivers in areas without additional public transportation options. Further, opponents will claim that a fuel tax will not generate enough revenue to sustain the Highway Trust Fund because new vehicles are being produced to be more fuel efficient; therefore, the fuel tax will be inadequate funding for transportation programs throughout the U.S.

Legislative/Regulatory Status/Outlook

In November 2021, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The $1.2 trillion package reauthorized current spending on roads and bridges and included $550 billion in new funding that invests in our roads and bridges, rail, transit, ports, airports, electric grid, water systems, and broadband infrastructure.

NAR will continue to urge Congress to fund transportation and infrastructure programs that meet the needs of the community, spur economic grown, and foster resilience and sustainability in a community.

Current Legislation/Regulation (bill number or regulation)

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law No. 117-58)

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