



# Late Backup

8/21/08

ADAPT of Texas Comments on the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2008- 2009.

ADAPT wants the City Council to increase funding for curb cuts and sidewalks to at least \$5 million for fiscal year 2008-2009.

ADAPT wants Council to continue to support the completion of a transition plan to ensure that The City of Austin has a network of sidewalks that is compliant with the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA required that a transition plan be completed in 1992.

ADAPT fully supports the Public Works Department's proposal to fund sidewalk accessibility projects every year for the next 20 years (with adjustments for inflation) by a minimum of \$5 million per year to reach compliance with the ADA.

ADAPT members understand that this is a tough budget year. ADAPT has suggested several funding sources to reach the \$5 million mark. These include the rebate the City has received from TxDOT, the interest from the 2006 bonds, redirecting money from parking space management and the transfers and other line items in the proposed budget. In addition, some funds that remain unused from a bond election held in the '80s could be used (this last source was suggested by Council Member Morrison).

ADAPT is concerned about the recommendation that ADA compliance projects be funded in a future bond election. ADAPT members believe that it is very risky and just plain dumb to fund ADA compliance with a single source of funds. First, the City will not be able to put together a bond package for another 5 to 7 years. Secondly, a bond election is not a guarantee of funding, as it may not be supported by the voters. What's more, by not continuing to make sidewalks and curb cuts a priority, the City has remained in violation of ADA compliance requirements for well over a decade. The civil rights of people with disabilities should not continue to be relegated to some bond election pipe dream. They must be funded now. The City Council needs to demand the City Manager redirect funding to ensure that there is \$5 million in FY08-09 budget for sidewalks and curbcuts.