Dear Friends:

Each year is different from the one before, but 2020 stands out as the year all of us—globally—faced a challenge the likes of which we have never seen. Even if many of us remain healthy and employed, we cannot understate the impact of the global pandemic on our daily lives. In early March, it was unthinkable that virus fears would dictate the cancellation of South by Southwest. The cancellations and disruptions have now become too many to count, but of course pale in comparison to the pain of sickness and lives lost.

And yet, Austin entered the year in the best possible economic shape to weather the storm. Huge hits to the leisure and hospitality sector have roiled the economy, perhaps forever changing the city’s live music and restaurant landscape. Offices remain virtually empty, as many work from home. Yet other sectors felt a jolt, then rebounded. On a monthly basis since May, the residential real estate market is hitting records. It’s a very different picture than one year ago—or even 7 months ago—but the Austin economy remains resilient. The ULI 2021 Emerging Trends Report ranked Austin as the number 2 market in the country for overall real estate investment. And we see proof of confidence in our economy in big investments such as the new Tesla gigafactory, which will open in 2021.

We are blessed to be in this city, where so many continue to prosper. And yet, there are challenges to be met. The unrest in our country has prompted ULI to have deep discussions about racial inequity, in our membership and in our city. While we cannot begin to erase over 400 years of racial injustice, ULI Austin is tackling the issue head-on. We’ve begun learning about our own biases, the history of segregation of Austin, and the impact of race on real estate. Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts are gearing up, along with opportunities for our Austin members to participate in the discussion and in the needed change. ULI Austin is in a unique position to improve the built environment for everyone in Austin.

Membership engagement continues to be strong, thanks to compelling programs and innovative opportunities to network virtually. We are grateful to our sponsors and to our members, who have remained supportive and engaged as we deal with this pandemic and its implications. We will continue to find ways to add value to your commitment.

As we endure the uncertainty of this challenge, we wish you good health and prosperity as we enter 2021. And we thank you for all you do to support ULI Austin.

Warmly,

Vaike O’Grady
Regional Director, Zonda
District Council Chair – ULI Austin
2020 was an unusual year for the entire world. The pandemic changed how people worked and interacted with others. With global resources, ULI pivoted quickly to virtual programming and actively shared information amongst members across the world. ULI Austin continued to engage members locally with opportunities to learn and interact virtually.

MONTHLY BREAKFASTS
ULI Austin continues to provide engaging and timely monthly breakfasts. The Programs Committee shifted this year’s topics to provide COVID related information as the pandemic started to affect Austin. As ULI Austin looks at returning to in-person programming, we will continue to offer virtual options to further engage members not able to join us in person. In 2020, we provided 11 breakfasts.

FEBRUARY BREAKFAST: NEW CONCEPTS TO SERVE AUSTIN’S HOMELESS

APRIL VIRTUAL BREAKFAST: PERSPECTIVES FROM COVID FRONTLINES

Breakfast Topics
Members can click on underlined titles to access the program recording.

Creative Culture in Development*
New Concepts to Serve Austin’s Homeless*
Perspectives from COVID Frontlines
Economic Relief
Capital Markets
The Trail Foundation/PARD Partnership
Transit-Oriented Development
Gentrification Fishbowl*
Aging Infrastructure
I-35 Cap and Stitch
Austin Over the Years

* This breakfast was not recorded.

“ULI is all about building new relationships with people who have unique perspectives to the issues that the greater Austin area faces as we continue to evolve as a city in the national spotlight. This committee brings together top leaders in our industry who care about the greater Austin area. It has afforded me the opportunity to gain knowledge of current issues; build my professional network; explore areas of growth and participate in analyzing issues that have shaped our past and that are shaping our future.”

Heidi Cisneros, Structures
Programs Committee Chair, Management Committee
Member Since 2015

REGIONAL LUNCHEONS
ULI Austin first introduced the Greater Austin Regional Lunches in 2018 to better engage with surrounding cities, featuring topics that are regionally focused. In 2020, we provided 4 luncheons.

Luncheon Topics
Members can click on underlined titles to access the program recording.

Innovations in Housing—What’s Next?*
Economic Resiliency
Regional Transportation Planning
Emerging Trends

* This luncheon was not recorded.

JULY VIRTUAL LUNCHEON: ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMING
Introduced Virtual Happy Hours during city shutdown for member networking

NEW SERIES ULInsight - Interactive info sessions on Facebook Live focused on timely policy and economic development topics:

Project Connect
Austin Economic Development Corporation

VIRTUAL CITY CHAT
In place of Marketplace, we hosted a virtual extended version of the City Chat portion of Marketplace. Officials from nine cities within the Austin region provided information on what projects are still planned, what projects have been suspended, any new projects they could announce and any long term goals and initiatives.
ULI Austin’s affinity groups continued their monthly meetings virtually throughout the pandemic. Member participation and record applications indicate members find value in these smaller group discussions.

WLI COCKTAIL SOCIAL SERIES – 6 SOCIALS
ULI Austin’s first re-entry to in-person events.

2 WLI VIRTUAL LUNCHEONS
Members can click on underlined titles to access the program recording.

Economic Environment
Virtual Visiting Leader – Jodie McLean

CAREY GUNN VENDITTI WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE (WLI)
Carey Gunn Venditti Women’s Leadership Initiative (WLI) Austin hosted WLI Washington DC during their trip in February with a welcome reception and an evening of Curated Conversations.

“As a public sector administrator, the opportunity to better understand the real estate and development community and learn about major trends and influences within this sector has been invaluable. I’d also like to think that the private sector has gained from the ULI public sector members as well—any opportunity for dialogue between the two results in better projects.”

Katherine Woerner Caffrey, Assistant City Manager, City of Cedar Park
Regional Growth Local Member Council Co-Chair, Advisory Board Member
Member Since 2018

YOUNG LEADERS
In 2020, the Young Leaders provided 6 Cheer & Chats.

Cheers & Chat Topics
Members can click on underlined titles to access the program recording.

2020 Market Update*
HEB Favor Tech Hub Tour*
Innovations in Construction Tech
Virtual Tour Indeed Tower
Workplace Re-Entry Panel
Homelessness

* This Cheers & Chat was not recorded.

MENTORSHIP FORUM

LOCAL MEMBER COUNCILS
In 2020, ULI Austin’s Local Member Councils grew to eight councils and 167 participants. June 2020 had record applications and we anticipate adding more councils in 2021.

COMMERCIAL HOUSING
MIXED-USE
REGIONS
MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING
PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (P3)*
REGIONAL GROWTH
SMALL SCALE DEVELOPMENT*
URBAN

* NEW IN 2020

ULI NEXT
Self-directed small groups for members age 35–45.
ULI is committed to be a catalyst for local change in the real estate industry and in our diverse communities. To start this work, ULI Austin produced a 21-Day Challenge. The goal is to spend time both personally reflecting and in group discussions to identify real actions we can take individually, at our company/organization, and as a community to address the inequities in the real estate industry.

The Challenge ended with What Do We Do Next? – a forum discussion to identify next steps and what role ULI can play in supporting actions to bring about Change.
2020 ANNUAL SPONSORS

VISION

PLATINUM

GOLD

SILVER

2020 LEADERSHIP

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SEASON SPONSORS

WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

SEASON SPONSORS

YOUNG LEADERS