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Published: September 22, 2020, 1:37 pm
Updated: September 23, 2020, 10:42 am

Transportation linked to push for equity in San Antonio

Options, reliable transit connected to job opportunities, access to resources



On its surface, the connection between transportation and equity throughout the city might not seem obvious.

But we looked closer.

"Most other major cities use a one-cent sales tax to supplement the money that they get from federal and state sources as well. So ours is currently is a fraction of that," said Greg Griffin, assistant professor of Urban and Regional Planning at UTSA.

Griffin argues VIA Metropolitan Transit needs more diverse funding resources to be able to provide the transportation options he believes San Antonians not only need but deserve.

"I say deserves- that's an ethical stance," he said. "It's about individuals and whether they should have opportunities to be able to seek out jobs in and go to school regardless of where they live."

Griffin points to the example of affordable housing. If affordable housing options exist in one part of town, but job opportunities are in another, people need a way to get there.

The non-profit SA 2020 has been keeping tab on local transportation for years now.

"So for an entire decade, as we've been monitoring it, we've seen all of our transportation indicators of success are moving in the wrong direction, said SA 2020 President and CEO, Molly Cox. "Then we seem confused when our education numbers don't change or our economic development numbers don't change or health care numbers don't change as though these things are not interrelated."

When those numbers improve, an entire city can see the benefits. "If COVID-19 has taught us nothing, it's that our health and our success and our well-being is just as intrinsically linked to our neighbors as theirs is to ours," Cox said.