

Addressing Inequities in Infrastructure

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Structural racism is deeply embedded in the history of our infrastructure. For decades, communities of color have borne the brunt of racist urban planning and systemic discrimination. Today, inequities in transportation remain glaring, as low-income communities, communities of color, and rural communities disproportionately lack access to safe, affordable transit. Predominantly low-income communities of color have access to fewer transportation options compared to affluent white areas and are often subject to a significantly higher volume of pollution from the transportation sector.

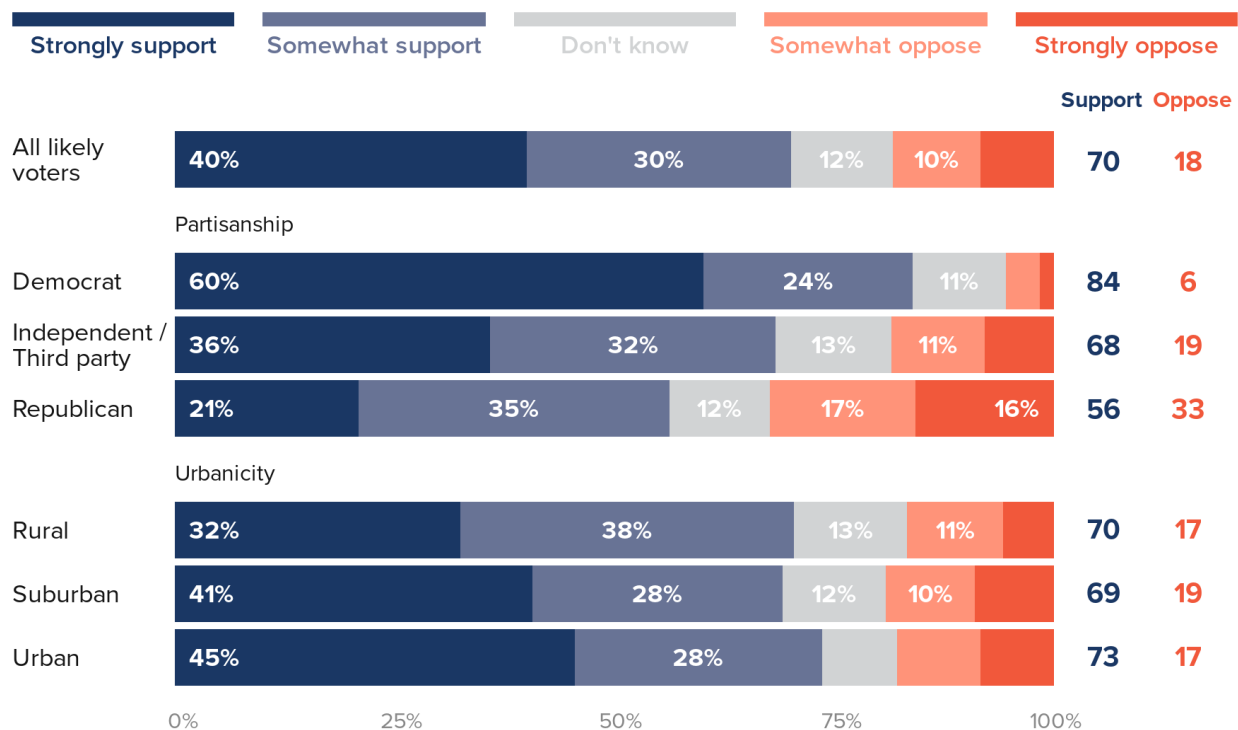
In the 20th century, Black communities were often torn apart and devastated by the construction of highways, while primarily-white suburbs were left intact. The American Jobs Plan (AJP) would begin to rectify these inequities by allocating \$20 billion towards reconnecting communities adversely impacted

by highway construction. The Biden Administration should look to a proposal by Representative Williams (D-GA) that seeks to create a grant program for reconnecting communities divided by highway construction. The proposed Restoring Neighborhoods and Strengthening Communities Act would also serve to create a series of community land trusts to improve the economic conditions of these communities. Removing exclusionary highway infrastructure and repairing communities devastated by these highway projects would be a solid first step towards improving the welfare of these communities.

Likely voters also broadly support federal measures to address transit inequities exacerbated by highway construction. By a 52-percentage-point margin, voters support the AJP’s proposal to expand public transportation infrastructure to reach communities that do not have access to public transportation (70 percent support, 18 percent oppose). Support is bipartisan: A majority of Democrats (84 percent), Independents (68 percent), and Republicans (56 percent) all support this proposal. Moreover, while public transportation is often branded as an issue that only urban voters care about, rural and suburban voters back the AJP’s proposal to expand public transportation infrastructure by 53-point and 50-point margins, respectively. Urban voters are unsurprisingly enthusiastic about this investment, supporting it by a 66-point margin (73 percent support, 17 percent oppose).

Voters Support Expanding Transit Access to Improve Equity

Do you support or oppose the following proposal in the American Jobs Plan: Expanding public transportation infrastructure to reach communities that do not have access to affordable public transportation



May 5–6, 2021 survey of 1,328 likely voters

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