

TPC MOU Workgroup-Public Comments August 20, 2020

Dear TPC Workgroup Members;

I wanted to give a little different perspective to the North Houston Highway Improvement Program from a point of view as “boots on the ground” every day since the beginning of the program originally called Safeclear and now called Tow and Go. I was privileged to be in a place to work out the towing of vehicles to a safe location many years ago. I saw it as a benefit to save folks lives and to keep traffic moving to reduce secondary accidents and emissions. Having been involved in incident management projects for a long time and representing the towing and recovery industry both at the local, state and national level, I have watched I45 as a major freeway for decades. It has always been at the top of the list of the most dangerous roadway being in the top 10 in the state and nationally. I think all would agree that it is well past the time to reconstruct this dangerous roadway. I was, also, privileged to be on the Houston Galveston Area Emissions Reduction Organization Board so I do understand the importance of emissions to our economic wellbeing. This Board has purchased many school buses for school districts during the time I have been on the Board to try to reduce polluting buses for schools within the HGAC region.

I want to say that I appreciate the commitment made for Segment 2. Actually, due to the rapidly changing vehicles on the roadway, many of the emissions issues will be addressed by the market place with new vehicle technology in both passenger vehicles and heavy trucks. Thousands of heavy trucks have been purchased for delivery of products on the roadway already as the trucking industry triples up the loads they are carrying. I firmly believe that a dedicated lane for heavy trucks is important especially given that we have the Port of Houston to deliver to. I think Autonomous Vehicle lanes need to be considered and encouraged. As a primary incident responder, I know that technology is the only way we will see the reduction of fatalities for first responders and my towing community. Just as is the case for distracted driving, technology will do a lot toward the goals stated in the commitments made for emissions zones. It will be a positive for the whole construction project and the future for Houston.

As to flooding concerns, I would hope that attention be given to flooding and retention of flood waters during the construction so that if a decision is made that would help with flooding conditions, due consideration would be given as everyone and everything is impacted by flooding. In order to be the 21st Century City we need to be, this freeway project must be done. The Crashes that occur now are not just those driving through. The injuries and fatalities are everyone that uses that roadway and are both local residents and those going to different places. This is truly a community project that will be good for everyone.

Sincerely,
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