



## Memorandum

**Date:** July 1, 2008

**To:** Alan Clark, Director of Transportation Planning, H-GAC

**CC:** Mayor Bill White, City of Houston  
Council Member Anne Clutterbuck, Houston City Council District C  
Council Member Sue Lovell, Houston City Council At-large 2  
County Judge Ed Emmett, Harris County  
Commissioner El Franco Lee, Harris County Pct. 1  
Commissioner Sylvia R. Garcia, Harris County Pct. 2  
Commissioner Steve Radack, Harris County Pct. 3  
Commissioner Jerry Eversole, Harris County Pct. 4  
Frank Wilson, President and CEO, METRO  
David Wolff, Chairman, METRO Board of Directors  
Jeff Taebel, Director of Community and Economic Development Planning, H-GAC

**Subject:** **Public Comment on Commuter Rail Connectivity Study**

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Dear Mr. Clark,

With a greater sense of urgency, the City, County and region must move forward, expeditiously, with the planning, design and construction of our commuter rail lines. We are woefully behind Dallas, Denver, Atlanta and most every U.S. city in rail transit. METRO's new north-south/east-west lines are an ideal urban network for commuter rail expansion.

With gas headed for \$6 to even \$10 a gallon with the next decade, and Houston having the highest transportation costs per household in the U.S. (and the highest per capita energy consumption) it is time for our elected officials and business leadership to reassess how we travel, how the region grows and to act in an environmentally responsible manner.

As chair of the City's "Sustainable Growth" Committee, under the leadership of Mayor Bill White, we are taking action to turn the City "green." Sustainable growth means a major expansion of rail transit, promoting concentration of jobs and residences in compact urban and suburban centers, more parks and open space, recycling, and enforceable clean air and water standards. As well, H-GAC should focus on the interrelated planning issues of an out-moded, and often unsafe, freight rail layout, and the incredible opportunity to move forward with the "Texas T-Bone," the "bullet train" connecting Houston – Dallas Fort Worth – Austin – San Antonio.

We have talked about these opportunities for years. Now is the time for bold and decisive action.

Peter Brown  
Council Member  
At-Large Position One