City of Houston, alternate voting member.

MR. MILLCAN: Larry Millican, City of League City, voting member.

MR. MANN: Bruce Mann, Port Houston, non-voting member.

MR. BROWN: Craig Brown, city council member Galveston, voting member.

MR. ALLEN: Quincy Allen, TxDOT, voting member.

MS. RYAN: Laura Ryan, Texas Transportation Commission, non-voting.

MR. REID: Tom Reid, Mayor of City of Pearland, voting member.

MR. ROBINSON: David Robinson, Houston City Council, voting member.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: I'm Ken Clark, county commissioner of Galveston, voting member.

What we're going to do now is, without objection, I would like to move Item 8 up and Item 9. We'll take Item 8 first.

We have three color comment cards. We are going to take Approval of Resolution Affirming Funding for Partnership of Segment 2 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Program and Mitigation of Adverse Community Impacts. We'll take that first.
What we're going to do is, we're going to hear the presentation from TxDOT. And then we will open it up to public comment on this issue.

Alan, what color card do they need to fill out if they're going to comment on -- on Item Number 8?

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** The yellow comment card.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** The yellow comment card.

So if you would like to speak on this issue, please fill out a yellow comment card, which will be over here to my left, to your right. Fill one of those out. And we will get you in on public comment. And you'll have three minutes. Please avail yourself of that opportunity if you'd like to do that.

And with that, I will open it up to Quincy Allen with TxDOT to introduce his presentation.

**MR. ALLEN:** Thank you, Chairman Clark.

At this time, I'd like to call on Patrick Gant, one of our engineering leads, to make the presentation.

**MR. GANT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, TPC members.

For the record, my name is Patrick Gant with the TxDOT Houston District. And I'll be presenting the action item for the request for MPO funding commitment on the North Houston Highway Improvement...
Project, Segment 2 within the 2020 Unified Transportation Program.

So what is the Unified Transportation Program or UTP for short? The UTP is similar to planning documents that the MPO prepares, like the recently adopted 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, which is our long-range plan, as well as the short-range TIP.

The UTP is in between those two documents and is the statewide ten-year program. The UTP, through our Transportation Commission, allocates construction funding into 12 funding categories. And this is significant in that this is the first planning document that combines transportation dollars with transportation projects, which authorizes TxDOT to go into detailed engineering design. The draft 2020 UTP is currently out for public comment and will be adopted by the Transportation Commission at the August commission meeting.

So within the draft UTP, the commission is proposing to allocate a significant amount of the commission's discretionary, as well as the special Texas Clear Lanes' funds for the advancement of North Houston Highway Improvement Project Segment 2.

Now, this comes with a specific request
that the MPO participate in the funding for this project. And you can see on the screen that this request is for $100 million to leverage a $1.2 billion project.

Drilling down to the specifics of Segment 2 itself, this is the three-mile segment of I-45 from Loop 610 to I-10 just north of Downtown Houston. It also includes the reconstruction of the 610/45 interchange.

As you may recall, this existing interchange is one of the oldest interchanges on our system in our region. The project would alleviate some of the issues with the current interchange, such as the left-handed entrance and exit ramps and the deficient lengths of merging and sight distance within the interchange.

Moving south from the interchange itself, the proposed plan would reconstruct 45 to upgrade the facility to current design standards. But it also includes the managed lanes. And the managed lanes that you can see on the screen here truly are the transit-oriented component of this project. The managed lanes would replace the existing reversible single-lane HOV lane with four managed lanes in the middle, two in each direction, non-tolled for 24/7 operation. You can
also see with this slide here that within Segment 2 itself, there is the proposal in and around North Main to minimize the right-of-way footprint such that the frontage roads would be on structure above the main lanes.

Now, concerning Segment 2 specifically, I want to share with the TPC some feedback and concerns that TxDOT has received and how TxDOT is addressing these concerns.

So let me begin with safety. Safety is always paramount in what we do. Our current projections show a 30 percent reduction in the amount of crashes along the corridor. And within Segment 2, we're working to provide a safe facility for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles alike.

Turning to bike and ped, TxDOT has worked with the City of Houston to ingrate high-comfort elements into the bike and pedestrian realm within Segment 3 around Downtown Houston. And what we're proposing to do is extend that in to Segment 2 itself.

Concerning flooding, TxDOT is using the latest information from the three major flooding events that impacted our region -- the Tax Day, Memorial Day, and, of course, Harvey -- to calibrate our models and to begin our detailed hydraulic design. And this effort is
using the new rainfall intensity data from the Atlas 1, which is a nationwide initiative.

In addition, TxDOT is partnering with the Harris County Flood Control District and the City of Houston in studying the bayou network. This effort is looking into things like the North Canal along Buffalo Bayou. It could potentially lower the water shelter elevations upstream along White Oak Bayou, as well as Little White Oak Bayou.

Drilling down to Segment 2, we've already identified detention pond locations that are adjacent to 45 and Little White Oak Bayou. And we'll be conducting additional hydraulic studies to size pipes and size culverts within the corridor to mitigate flooding concerns. Without the project, the existing aging infrastructure remains.

Concerning air quality, this is a key component of our region's air conformity determination. The proposed project reduces the time spent idling and works to reduce air emissions. I would like to point out that the transit elements that the managed lanes add to the project would reduce the -- the use of the single-occupancy vehicles in the corridor.

Directly concerning the schools, Houston -- or HISD is working with TxDOT on Jefferson
Elementary School, which is adjacent to the 45 corridor. We're working to consider a mitigation strategy, such as the implementation of HEPA air filters, vegetative screens, and sealing windows at the school itself. TxDOT is also going to work with HISD on the potential for a pilot program for electric buses and/or natural gas buses.

And, again, working with the schools directly will aim to limit the disruptions during the statewide testing at those schools.

Turning to displacements, Segment 2 is showing significantly reduced footprint, but, unfortunately, there are displacements with the project, primarily near the I-610 interchange.

Acquisition of real property and damages would follow federal and state guidelines with the intention to get people whole again. In addition to that, TxDOT has a relocation assistance program for owners, renters, and lessees that pays for relocation costs and reestablishment costs.

Noise. TxDOT is currently out in the community conducting special noise meetings to gather feedback. We're presenting strategies for noise walls, as well as aesthetic walls potentially that could not -- or not necessarily noise walls in general. But TxDOT is
also committing to the use of longitudinal tining on the concrete pavement itself. That's been shown to reduce the noise that emanates from the tire-pavement interaction.

And, finally, turning to access, we've minimized the footprint of Segment 2 so much so that you saw in our -- our slide before that the -- we were not able to put in ramps to the North Main area with the proposed project. But through dialogue with the community, we're seeing that if we can fit those additional access ramps in, then this needs additional study.

So moving forward, TxDOT is committed to community engagement. And over the next several weeks, TxDOT will be conducting more community-focused meetings to increase that dialogue. These comments will be incorporated in the final Environmental Impact Statement. And as we move forward into more detailed engineering design, we'll be better able to address specific issues and make changes.

TPC funding action today would not preclude changes from being incorporated in to Segment 2, but would rather provide the firm foundation for TxDOT to continue that engineering and design.

So with that --
MR. ALAN CLARK: Mr. Chairman, if I may, I'll just briefly summarize the action we've proposed before the policy council. And then we'll invite public comment for the benefit of your discussion.

So today for this item, you have before you Resolution 2019-19. There are several components to this. So I wanted to make -- make sure it was clear what we were asking you to consider.

It begins by recognizing both the importance of this project, but the importance of the concerns that have been raised during the environmental process that you've heard described by Patrick and heard Patrick describe some of the current and ongoing activities to determine better ways to mitigate those.

Patrick also mentioned something that we are -- is one of the bullet points in our resolution, which is, in some cases, to fully identify what can be done, exactly what mitigation is possible, and to what extent the concerns can be addressed.

TxDOT needs the ability to move this project forward into the next phase of work, which often involves -- which involved -- would involve, among other things, being able to develop detailed design plans and -- and drawings.

And then it affirms our interest in
developing a community-based plan in -- within this segment so that we can also, in addition, supplement the work that TxDOT is now doing and have a process working with the City of Houston, Harris County, with METRO, and with those communities to sort of look at it from their side. What are the priorities, steps and measures which could be taken to best mitigate any adverse impact to their communities and pre- -- and -- and try to improve -- preserve and improve the cohesion of them?

Third, we have a recommendation for a reserve of funding for additional mitigation activities. So in short, our resolution would commit $100 million to the Texas Department of Transportation of funds that have been sub-allocated to our area for projects on the state system to advance Segment 2, to authorize one-and-a-half-million dollars in planning activity to continue to support the ongoing dialogue with the communities and identify priorities for additional mitigation, and then if needed, a reserve of $50 million to help to partner with TxDOT to help advance some of those mitigation measures.

Why are we suggesting reserving some funding? Because we are early in the process of identifying the specific mitigation measures. Some of them may not be on system roads. Some of them may be
not necessarily as related to a direct impact to the project, but still very important to that community and a way to help mitigate its impacts on them.

So that is the essence of our recommendation to you in the resolution before you, which was considered by the Technical Advisory Committee this month and passed by them as a recommendation to you.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I believe we are ready to invite those who have signed up to speak to the committee this morning and provide their public comment.

MR. ADRIAN GARCIA: Mr. Chairman, Adrian Garcia. I just want the record to reflect that I'll be the voting alternate member for Harris County.

MR. ALAN CLARK: So, Mr. Chairman, if with the pleasure of the committee, I will invite elected officials to speak first and then those who have signed up in the order they have signed up on our sheet.

MR. MILLCAN: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to go ahead and -- and make a motion to approve the $100 million and -- and move forward with Segment 2 of the project and delay the other activities because of the concern of identifying those projects with all the public comments that's going to be moving forward.
CHAIRMAN CLARK: We have a motion. Is there a second?

MR. BECKENDORFF: Second.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: We have a motion and second.

We're -- we're going -- we're going to go to public comment now. We're not voting on this yet. We've got a motion on the table. So now we'll go to public comment.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you clarify the motion, please?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: The -- the motion -- please, Mr. Millican, go ahead and clarify.

MR. MILLICAN: Yeah. The motion on the floor is to approve the $100 million for Segment 2 and to delay any action on the other items in the recommendation -- that would be Items Number 2, 3, and 4 -- and delay any motion on those until after further discussion and investigation of those.

MS. PATMAN: Point of order --

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Please, please. We're going to -- we're going to start public comment. And then after public comment, we'll have -- we'll have
further discussion on this item.

We have a motion and second on the floor. We'll be able to amend it. We'll be able to change it. So let's go ahead and move forward with public comment.

Yes?

MS. PATMAN: Mr. Chair --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman --

MS. PATMAN: -- is it appropriate for the motion to be made before we've had public comment?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Exactly.

MS. PATMAN: You know, I just wonder if this -- I'm just raising a point of order. And I am not a parliamentarian, so I don't know the answer. But I'm surprised that a motion has been made that's contrary to the way of what I think the public comment is going to be before we've even considered the public comment.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

MR. GARCIA: Mr. Chairman, that would be my -- my concern as well. Typically, we hear public comment before we take any action from the --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Exactly.

MR. GARCIA: -- from the board.

JUDGE HIDALGO: And, Mr. Chairman, I'm here patiently, but I do want to make -- make sure. I would like to offer a substitute motion. So I would
like the opportunity to offer my substitute motion before we vote on this motion. And I would like to wait until public comment is made before I offer my substitute motion. But I just don't want to be railroaded on this or --

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Nobody is going to get railroaded.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Go ahead, Alan.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** First, I'd like to invite council member Dwight Boykins.

**MR. BOYKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Uh-oh.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Members of the board, thank you so much. Under Mayor Annise Parker, I had an opportunity to serve as a voting member on this commission, one of the best experiences I've had serving as a public servant, having an opportunity to talk about regional transportation needs throughout our city and our state. I learned a lot. I also learned it was important that we worked very closely with the areas that will be impacted by the decisions we made.

Chairman Clark, let me tell you, I have known you for a while. You have always, always been a person of reason, a person that care about the community
up in the Galve- -- I mean, the Galveston area. And I
know that you're going to do what's right.

In my district, this Segment 2 will have a
major, major impact on the businesses and the residents
of my community. I know Tomaro Bell will be speaking in
just a few minutes. But there is a -- just an example,
there is a dry cleaners that called me -- that's off of
I-45 and Alemda called me, and the gentleman asked the
question. He said, "Council Member, I have a five-year
two op-- two renewal option lease contract remaining.
Am I obligated to pay the note?" I said, "Man, my
advice is to get with your lawyer and see how you can
work this thing out because I'm certain when you signed
that contract, that wasn't in the deal that they were
going to come in and take the property." My deputy
chief of staff father's church is in the Kennedy Heights
area, 114 years old, being told they have to be removed.

We -- I just think this thing here is -- is -- is being rushed. I mean, the motion on the floor
today pretty much dictated that they're trying to move
this thing without going through the community.

What I ask you to do, Mr. Chairman and
board members, consider this, not delaying it, but let's
withdraw it and start over with the design team and make
certain the design team have an opportunity to -- make
certain that the design team have an opportunity to get on the bus and ride the proposed area so they could physically see and not make a decision in this room, the impact it would have on the communities.

In the Kennedy Heights area, I found it very interesting, the black and brown side of the community is what's being impacted to the other side, Mr. Chairman. And I would encourage you to go and take a look at it. And whoever designed it -- I'm sure one of the best engineering firms in -- in town and I will support the effort once it's done right -- apparently has not had the opportunity to go and look at the impact it's going to have on minority communities.

So I ask you -- and in -- and, again, in my district, it's having a drastic impact. As our city continue to grow, let me be clear about this. We have to address reasonable mobility because our city is growing. Everybody want to come here. It's a great city. But we want to be sensitive to the schools, to the businesses, to the local churches in our community, and just the community as a whole before we make this decision.

So my ask today would be that you withdraw this -- withdraw it, not delay it. Delaying it gives it an opportunity to come back at the same rate it was.
And I know you're talking about offering amendments --
and go and take a look. Then come back with community
input. That's my request, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you-all again for volunteering
your -- I know y'all get paid a lot of money to sit
around this table. But thank you so much for your
volunteerism. And let's do what's right by -- by the
people in this city. Thank you so much for allowing me
to speak.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

Next, we'll have Rhonda Jones with board
of -- member of the Houston Independent School District.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: And just so everybody
knows, we've got a light here that shows green, yellow,
and red for your three minutes. So please be cognizant
of that.

MS. SKILLERN-JONES: Thank you for that.
I'm not often on the -- this side having to be limited
to three -- three minutes. So I'm going to try.

Good morning, members. Thank you for
allowing me to have a bit of your time. Again, I'm
Rhonda Skillern-Jones of the Houston Independent School
District, but more importantly, I am a resident of the
Northside that will be affected by this area. So it's
not just constituency, but it's also my family and
friends and myself who are affected by this.

I am requesting strongly that you delay this vote until such time that TxDOT can pause to conduct reasonable studies to mitigate the disproportionate and adverse impact of this project on communities of color, residents in poverty, and most importantly our children.

The project -- to highlight the disparity and the impact of this environmental -- of the environmental justice of this project on the most vulnerable populations, since there was little to no inclusion on the design phase of the project with the community or the school district, the goal can now only be to mitigate the adverse impacts. The project requires 458 acres of new right-of-way to be taken by eminent domain. It removes 27 acres of open and green space in parks and Bayou Greenway. The project will displace 168 single-family homes, 1,067 multifamily home units, 368 low income in that number, and 60 homeless veteran homes. In addition, 331 businesses employing 24,870 people will be displaced.

A few of these impacted residents and attendees were at the meetings that have been held. And they have not been engaged. The properties have been identified. They have not been notified. Their
landlords have. The current plan is to provide these households with only 90-day notice. Residents of means would be pressed to move in 90 days. Those in poverty cannot.

In particular, the removal of families in Clayton -- Clayton Homes and Kelly Village effect a higher-than-average poverty population, least able to afford housing disruption. The percentage of persons of color is much higher in these neighborhoods than Houston as a whole.

Of the three segments of the project, the affluent segment is what we call it, downtown area, has considerably different strategies in mitigating the effects of the project than the other two. The funding will likely also be inequitable. The result will be negative impacts of highway expansion disproportionately falling on low economic communities of color.

When questioning TxDOT's subcontractors, they could not answer the following questions: Who determines what meets the parameters for safe relocation, decent and sanitary? Does accessible to employment include their current employment or any employment? Will there be consideration for differentials in current market rental rates and what the residents now pay? For residents who have no
current deposits, will that be included in relocation costs? Will moving costs and utility transfer fees be covered? Will residents be able to choose new housing in the same geographic area proximity regardless of cost? They had no answers for that.

There was zero collaboration with the school district during the design phase of the project and little consultation regarding implementation. The project -- this project comes to the property line of two of our schools, the playground of one of them. That is disproportionately putting those children at risk for health, safety, and academics.

In those schools, they already have higher-than-average asthma because of the current traffic that moves through there. They will be disproportionately affected and exposed to higher risk of decreased cognitive function, reduced attendance, lower academic performance, more absentees, and less time outside for physical play. Displacing of children in these affected homes from their local schools will create mobility fallout. Research proves that when a student changes schools --

MR. ALAN CLARK: Ms. Jones?

MS. SKILLERN-JONES: -- we adversely impact -- I'm sorry.
MR. ALAN CLARK: Sorry. Your three minutes was about a minute ago.

MS. SKILLERN-JONES: They are adversely impacted when snatched out of their schools in the middle of the year.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

Next, I'd like to invite Dominic Mazoch.

MR. MAZOCH: I know I have three minutes.

And at the end of the Great Storm of 1900 on the Island of Galveston, they did something very amazing. They raised the island and under the watchful eye of Colonel Roberts, who also wrote Robert's Rules of Order, at the sea wall.

I think there's a lesson that can be learned from this. We've had flooding with Carla and with the three hurricanes we've had in the past three years, much less a rainstorm.

I think the problem is, we're going to have to build our infrastructure up whether we like it or not. I-45 needs to be open, whether we like it or not, for transportation at any time because we don't know when we're going to get hit with a hurricane or with a natural disaster or terrorism. It has to be open. However, who came up with this plan reminds me
of, who came up with this? Wile E. Coyote. I think this whole thing needs to be scratched and start over.

I've been on the high-capacity transit group of this organization. And one of the things I pushed on that -- and that -- that high-capacity -- the management of part of this high-capacity project for METRO, TxDOT, Houston-Galveston Area Council is that high-capacity transit has to be resilient for anything. And that includes the weather, and that includes any -- any human-made disaster that could happen.

And the other thing is, I also have some worries about social justice. I live just north of there between a certain person wearing an Astros uniform and the North Shepherd Park & Ride lot. And so -- and I've watched this freeway being rebuilt. I mean, I saw this freeway being built 60 years ago. So I'm a native Houstonian.

This freeway is at the point it has to be replaced. I understand that. But the thing is, it seems like this group of people have been hit with three things -- three or four things. They're going to be hit with this. They were hit with the extension of the Red Line of METRO. They're now being hit with the Hardy Street extension. And, see, years ago, they widened 69. I mean, how -- how much can a community take?
I just think with all that's going on here and with all the stuff, particularly with flooding, we have to make our freeways bulletproof. Stop this, start over, have a clean sheet of paper, and do it right.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Dominic.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next will be -- and I apologize for misspelling anyone's name. Bakeyah Nelson.

DR. NELSON: Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Dr. Bakeyah Nelson. I am the executive director of Air Alliance Houston. Air Alliance Houston believes everyone has the right to breathe clean air and where you live should not determine your health. I am here today to ask that members of the TPC delay the vote on the Agenda Item Number 8.

Houston now ranks ninth for ozone pollution, and the majority of our emissions are now from mobile sources. We are also leading the country with our greenhouse gas emissions. And this expansion will only facil- -- facilitate the perpetuation on cars as the dominant mode of travel for our region.

Yesterday, the City of Houston unveiled the first draft of its Climate Action Plan, which calls
for a 20 percent reduction in vehicle miles traveled.
Among a variety of other issues, this project undermines
the ability for this city to achieve that goal.

There are multiple reasons why this vote
should not move forward today as planned; however,
today, I would like to focus on just two of those
reasons.

Research studies have shown that children
going to school within 500 feet of a high-traffic
roadway have increased risks of asthma, impaired lung
development, and childhood leukemia, among other
illnesses. The expansion design would widen the highway
width by as much as 70 percent in some areas, bringing
at least 26 existing schools and daycare campuses within
500 feet of the highway. Many of these schools along
the I-45 corridor already have higher asthma rates
compared to other schools in their districts.

We ask that you prioritize the health of
children in this process and delay the vote until 2020
to ensure that if this project moves forward, it can be
resigned in such a way that it does not compromise the
health of children at these campuses.

Second, it is troubling that our leaders
exploit the rich diversity of our city by making
decisions that minimize -- that minimize the humanity of
these same communities. I have heard the tag line used on many occasions that Houston is the most diverse city in the United States. However, these very same leaders turn their backs when it's time to stand up for these very same communities. Likewise, I often hear the phrase that some communities don't have a voice at the decision-making table. I think you all have heard the community loud and clear, but some have selective hearing.

Segments 1 and 2 of the expansion have a higher poverty rate and higher percentage of people of color than Segment 3. Coincidentally, these are the segments that will suffer the greatest cost with the least amount of benefits from the expansion, ranging from the destruction of their social networks to the loss of employment, along with the forced removal from their very own communities.

Today I ask you to consider how you would feel if one day the government came to your door and told you, you have to move from your home and your community. I ask today that you delay the vote to demonstrate that members of the TPC recognize that the diversity of our communities is much more than the selling point when convenient. These are real people with real lives that deserve what any one of you would
expect in the United States of America, the opportunity
for your voice to be heard in the decisions that impact
you and your community.

Again, I ask that you delay the vote.

Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Dr. Nelson.
Next, I would invite Jeff Trevino.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Who?

MR. ALAN CLARK: Jeff Trevino.

MR. TREVINO: Wow, this is scary. My
name is Jeff Trevino. I live in District H.

There's a -- there's a saying, "Anything
that is important should not be rushed, and anything
rushed is not important." Thank you for the opportunity
today to express my thoughts and feelings about this
project.

We have enough concrete already poured and
ready to go running from north to south and then back
again. We have a mostly vacant thoroughfare, the Hardy
Toll Road, that is sitting there underutilized. If you
don't believe me, I invite -- invite all of you to take
a little field trip. Go see for yourself. Check out
the traffic during these peak travel times. Harris
County Toll Road Authority is already expanding Hardy
Toll Road from 610 to the new proposed Segment 3 where
59, I-10, and I-45 will converge.

The way this plan sits now, TxDOT has just
designed a massive traffic funnel. Please reconsider.
Please redesign this project. Again, anything that is
important should not be rushed, and anything rushed is
not important.

We have wonderful colleges and
universities in Hou- -- in Houston. There's Texas
Southern, U of H, Rice University, Houston Baptist
University, and the University of Downtown. Texas A&M
is right down the road.

Let's get input from the generation
capable of finding the solutions to the problems and
challenges that our genera- -- that our generation is
going to leave them. Combine Hardy Toll Road and the
I-45 project. Please delay -- delay the vote. Do not
fund this project today.

Thank you for your time.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Trevino.
Next, I would like to invite Jim
McIngvale.

MR. MCINGVALE: I'd like to thank H-GAC
for allowing me the chance to speak this morning.

Houston has always been, as everybody in
the room knows, a city of innovation, willing to take
bold, new steps to solve problems and move the city,
state, and region forward. Wildcatters like Hugh Roy
Cullen, who discovered the Tom O'Connor Oil Field;
iccredible physicians like Dr. Michael DeBakey and
Dr. Denton Cooley, who pioneered open heart surgery and
helped build the world famous Texas Medical Center.
Barbara Jordan went to Wheatley High School and Texas
Southern University and became one of the leaders of the
Civil Rights Movement. Barbara Jordan was a
game-changer.

Today, we are here to discuss the I-45
project or as I call it the $7 billion boondoggle. The
$7 billion boondoggle, I believe, will do irreparable
harm to the city -- citizens of Houston and the citizens
of Texas; more pollution, more deaths on the highway,
more congestion just like Katy Freeway.

This past week, all of us as Houstonians
and Texans proudly celebrated Neil Armstrong stepping on
the moon July 20th, 1969, one giant leap for mankind,
bold, innovative, game-changing. That's what
Houstonians and Texans do. We do things that are bold,
innovative -- innovative, and game-changing.

Okay. "Houston, we've had a problem,"
said Jack Swigert on Apollo 13. The date was April 13,
1970. Saturday, August 26th, 2017, Hurricane Harvey hit Houston, and the flooding was a problem of biblical proportions. Let's solve the flooding problem with these $7 billion because if another storm like Harvey hits Houston, our very survival as a city will be at stake.

I respectfully ask the H-GAC Transportation Council to not fund the I-45 project and instead seek bold, innovative, game-changing solutions to the flooding and transportation problems in Houston.

To borrow some verbiage from William Jennings Bryan, you shall not press down upon the brow of Houstonians this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify our people on a cross of concrete. Please reject this $7 billion boondoggle.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. McIngvale.

Next, I would like to invite Jeremy Copeland.

MR. COPELAND: Good morning. My name is Jeremy Copeland. I live in District H. I've lived there for --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible). We can't hear you.
MR. COPELAND: Good morning. My name is Jeremy Copeland. I am a resident of District H. Thank you.

I have been blessed to have traveled the world in my life. I was born in Houston, raised pretty much every corner of the United States. Since getting out of college, I've had the blessing to travel extensively throughout the world.

In those travels, I've seen cities as wide as Houston that have embraced public transport. Look at Sydney, Australia, for example; 4.7 million people connected greatly by water ferries, trains, high-speed trains, trams. Just visiting one doesn't even require a vehicle. They can go from the bay to the downtown city harbor to the airport and all around.

When my wife and I decided to put roots down three years ago, we saw progress being made towards a workable city; downtown METRO connections, park revitalizations, bus redistribution. Houston currently is in the making of becoming a true tourist attraction at the beginning of a great Texas road. Houston brings you to the back roads; Austin, Hill Country. The world views Houston as a great port to not only stop at and go on, but to now remain and visit.

So please take a step back as a city, not
as a highway department, withdraw and put our collective thinking caps on to strategize what we as Houstonians truly want this city to be on the world stage.

Thank you for your time.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Copeland.

Next, I will invite Desiree Alejandro.

MS. ALEJANDRO: Hello. My name is Desiree Alejandro, and I live in the Lawndale/Wayside neighborhood. My council member is Robert Gallegos.

I am here to ask the Houston-Galveston Area Council make a motion to delay the vote for funding Segment 2 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project until 2020.

The negative effects of the I-45 expansion far outweigh TxDOT's commitment to moving automobiles a little faster through our city. The NHHIP will wreck Houston's bayou parks, worsen flooding, increase traffic-related fatalities, worsen the quality of air we breathe, eliminate jobs, displace thousands, and tear communities apart. When the expansion is complete, the innovative city of the future that everyone was promised will never have stood a chance in the face of such a fiscally and morally irresponsible project.

Houston proudly wears the badge of being the nation's most diverse city, yet does little to
acknowledge its perpetual residential segregation. For decades, Houston highways have been deliberately divisive, creating barriers and unspoken division between communities. Prioritizing moving cars quickly is at odds with caring for communities because highways divide communities.

331 businesses will be lost, and 24,873 Houston residents will find their jobs in jeopardy as a result of this project. Furthermore, 5,000 Houstonians will be forced from their home in a city that is actively facing an affordable housing crisis.

Mayor Turner says that at its core, this project is about easing congestion, yet we've already witnessed how widening freeways does little to ease congestion.

TxDOT claims that the NHHIP is an innovative and exciting opportunity for Houston. There is nothing innovative about doubling the size of a freeway and bulldozing through impoverished communities.

What would require innovation is figuring out how to solve the existing infrastructure problems without taking additional right-of-way, keep roads within the existing footprint.

Houstonians need leadership that is unafraid to speak truth to power and fight for the best
interest of the city that we all love. Invest in our
city, in our residents rather than a multibillion-dollar
boondoggle that will result in the loss of millions of
dollars in revenue. This project is bad for Houston.
It's bad for business.

Houston will not emerge as a leader in the
nation, but rather a cautionary tale of an urban city
who refused to learn from its past and actively
destroyed the lives of its residents. With all due
respect, TxDOT is not a city planner.

Give Houstonians the voice they deserve
and delay the vote for funding Segment 2 of the North
Houston Highway Improvement Project.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you,
Ms. Alejandro.

Next, I would like to invite Dr. Inge
Ford.

DR. FORD: Good morning. Thank you for
the opportunity to speak to you. My name is Dr. Inge
Ford. I am a resident of District D, as well as the
education director with Bike Houston.

First of all, I'd like to ask this council
to think compassionately and delay the vote for the
Agenda Item Number 8. Be mindful as public safety that
public safety is for everyone. It's not selected for those who can afford to drive vehicles. We actually have to be the innovative city that we claim to be. And at this day and time in the 21st century, one car/one person is not the way to go.

I do recognize, as a native Houstonian, that we are a very car-centric culture. But if we are truly innovative, having this type of transportation mobility as our sole way of getting around besides the ancillary rail, as well as buses, is not progressive. There are a lot of people moving into our community, into our city for obvious reasons, and they are used to coming to cities that -- or coming from cities that have multimodal options.

It is with dignity and equity that we ask you to think about not ripping up the social networks or social fabrics of these communities.

Also, as -- this council has a responsibility to not only think more global than just this one way of getting around, that we have to be progressive in our initiatives and to find more options to move masses safely and efficiently. Houston and surrounding areas, Greater Houston, has the highest crash rates in the state. This has got to change. We can certainly do better. We can certainly do better.
I know that all of these learned, educated people around the table understand that. And you have had the responsibility, because you've chosen to be servants of the community, to do the right thing. Go back to the drawing board, rethink this, have community responses from the beginning, not as an afterthought.

So, again, in the words of Barbara Jordan, if the society today allows wrongs to go unchallenged, the impre- -- the repercussion is created that those wrongs have the approval of the majority. The impression is that we approve this. You are not the majority. You are not representing the majority.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Dr. Ford.

Next, we'll have Greg Broyles.

MR. BROYLES: Hi, my name is Greg Broyles. I'm a voter in District H and Precinct 1. Thank you for listening to my comments.

Everyone knows we need to delay this vote. The Katy Freeway cost more than twice what we were told. Today it is as congested (inaudible) correcting for growth as it was before the project. Whatever this project really costs, we know it will bring more flooding, more (inaudible), and it ultimately fails as a solution for transportation ways.
The (inaudible) would bear the greatest weight. Please delay this boondoggle. Please delay your vote. Please use this historic opportunity to avoid a failed strategy. Let's plan for the future and not the past.

This statement is from a single mom who has to work today rather than be here.

"Dear Transportation Policy Council, my name is Jessica Caprot, and I'm a current resident of District C. I am writing you today to share my concerns about the environmental impact of expanding 45. And I ask you to delay the vote for 180 until 2020 when more complete environmental studies can be done.

"As a Houston resident, mother, and nurse, I am concerned about the impact and increased pollution it will have on communities arising near the freeway. In fact, I am so concerned about the health risks associated with this that I recently pulled out of a USDA contract to buy a house in the Northridge neighborhood east of the Heights. The house on Terrydale Street has everything I need in a home for myself and my six-year-old; just enough room, close to the medical center and my son's school, a great yard, located close to Light Rail.

"I envisioned reducing our drive time and
spending hours outside while my son played. However, the more I looked into the plans to expand 45, the more worried I became.

"As a nurse, I made a living. Within close proximity to busy roads increases the risk of asthma, heart disease, and cancer. 45 is already big enough. I pulled out of the contract because as a mother living next to it, after four lanes are added is terrifying and too big a risk to take with my child. I work with cancer patients every day. I don't want to be one. I don't want my child to become one.

"We lost out on what we could -- what could have been the perfect home due to this. Instead, we will move a bit further out and continue to drive in, sadly adding to the problems facing Houston today.

"Having already completed inspections, I lost some money on this deal. I also forfeited an option fee. Still, I have the ability to make a choice for my son and myself. Many people are already established residents of these neighborhoods and cannot do the same. The children already living in the area or attending any of the 26 schools or day cares that will be within 500 feet of the highway aren't being given this choice. These kids deserve clean air to breathe, too. To do this, Houston should be looking for ways to
take cars off the road by expanding -- expanding transit
and Light Rail, not expanding freeways that will soon
fill up with more cars.

"Thank you, Jessica Caprot, RN,
MD Anderson, in District C Houston."

Thank you for listening.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Broyles.

Next, I will invite Dwight Jefferson. And
he will be followed by Janet Roe.

MR. JEFFERSON: Good morning. First of
all, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity
to come and speak before the council today.

My name is Dwight Jefferson. I am a
former voting member of the Transportation Policy
Council, a former member of the METRO Board of
Directors, a former member and counsel to the Gulf Coast
Rail District, a former State district judge, and a
resident of inner city Houston.

It is in that capacity that I return to
this body to express my opposition to the plan to
relocate Interstate 45. This plan is not a good plan
for the city of Houston. And it represents the past and
not the future of transportation in Houston.

Many inner city neighborhoods have been
sacrificed for the past expansion of interstate highways
through our city. And the time has come to say, no
more. No more communities dissected, no more families
displaced, no more businesses sacrificed.

The money earmark for this project should
be reallocated for more progressive projects, such as
developing rail by using the existing tracks that are
owned by BNSF and Union Pacific Railroad.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. JEFFERSON: They work --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. JEFFERSON: -- with other communities
for -- for commuter rail. They don't work with our
community for commuter rail.

These funds should be used for
contributing to METRO for expanding the Light Rail and
developing bus rapid transit.

The days of ever expanding freeways
cutting through the heart of our cities are over. Other
alternatives exist. And this body must take the lead in
making these changes a reality for the sake of our
communities, for the sake of our air quality, for the
sake of the quality of life for our city.

Thank you very much for the time.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you,

Mr. Jefferson.
Next, I would invite Janet Roe, followed by Michael Blackwell.

**MS. BLACKWELL:** It is Michelle.

Michelle.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Michelle. I'm sorry.

Michelle Blackwell.

**MS. ROE:** My name is -- can you hear me? Can you hear me now?

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes.

**MS. ROE:** My name is Janet Roe.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Wait. You turned it off. You turned your microphone off.

**MS. ROE:** Can you hear me now?

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes.

**MS. ROE:** Okay. My name is Janet Roe. I live in the Near Northside. I ask that you delay the vote until 2020 on TxDOT's $100 million request for the I-45 expansion.

I am a cofounder of the Stop TxDOT I-45 organization. Stop TxDOT I-45 asked time on the agenda to present a formal rebuttal to TxDOT's representative presentation given last month. TxDOT presented many inaccuracies. We were not given the opportunity to respond.

Today TxDOT is given another opportunity
without rebuttal, relegating us to three-minute talks rather than giving us the opportunity to present a formal, prepared presentation. On par with TxDOT cannot sell your conscience. Evidently, this body is willing to proceed only upon TxDOT's word and without formally hearing about the cruel effects of the project and about TxDOT's inaccuracies.

An inordinate amount of time and work has been done. Countless hours have been spent asking TxDOT to fix the many problems with this project. We would be here for days to present all that is wrong and all that has been suggested to TxDOT. TxDOT either makes no promises or walks back with ones that it does make. TxDOT does not offer money to fix the many problems it will create. Who will pay?

The I-45 expansion as currently proposed will cause immense injustice and considerable harm to the people of Houston and Harris County. And TxDOT knows it. It is well-documented.

If you vote for this project in its current form by approving for money for Segment 2, you ignore its cruel effects and all those who have tried so far to work with TxDOT to no avail. If you vote for the project in its current form, you side with the moneyed interests who will benefit from the project to the
detriment of the minority, low-income neighborhoods, businesses, and general population of Houston and Harris County. If you vote for this project in its current form, shame on you. Delay the vote.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Roe.

Next will be Michelle Blackwell, followed by Susan Graham.

MS. BLACKWELL: Okay. Good morning. My name is Ms. Blackwell. And I'm a resident of the Near Northside area. And I'm in District H, council member Karla Cisneros.

I am requesting of this council to delay the vote. The reason why I am requesting for this is because this project is going to cause a disruption in the lives of those that are in the schools, the businesses, the churches, the communities, etcetera. It will create problems such as displacement.

I just feel like in a lot of the neighborhoods where -- it's like it's going to cause us to shrink. And I feel like I love to see the growth. And if -- I feel like the communities are like family. When displacement occurs, it's like -- I feel like family has, you know, gone.

And then when it comes to flooding, that problem will -- it's going to cause more problems.
Well, when another -- when another flood or something comes around, it's like we're not going to have any options to evacuate or try to get out safely, you know, for the whole entire city.

And also for the safety. I had my experience when they were building on the rail and different things downtown where you see the -- you see the construction. You see the -- the machines and stuff. And it's in the way. And it's like you're trying to get hit or it sounds like you're walking in big holes in the ground because they're digging and doing all this construction. I feel like safety would be an issue.

So with this council, I really would -- I am really requesting that you think this through because I don't -- really don't feel like this -- this project is good for Houston.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Thank you, Ms. Blackwell.

Next will be Susan Graham, followed by Vanessa -- I'll have to get Vanessa's last name.

**MS. GRAHAM:** I think Medrano, but anyway.

Hi. I am Susan Graham. And thank you for your time today. I live in the Near Northside in City Council District H, and Karla Cisneros is my council
I'm here today to ask you to delay the vote on the 100 million in funding being requested by TxDOT for Segment 2 for the I-45 expansion until 2020. Both TxDOT and the City of Houston have held the obligatory community outreach meetings. But have we felt heard? No, I don't think so.

In my community, neither TxDOT nor the City of Houston is trusted to have our backs. How can we feel heard when a hundred-year-old church is being displaced in Independence Heights so our freeway can be straightened so cars can go faster? How can we feel heard when all the diligent work done by the Make I-45 Better Coalition, other community groups, and residents hasn't even warranted a written response? How can we feel heard when TxDOT says displaced residents will be rehoused within their community, when we know that affordable housing in the city of Houston is nonexistent? How can we be heard when TxDOT's design is using outdated flood maps? How can we feel heard when TxDOT reports a positive gain in air quality when we know that will not be true in our neighborhoods?

I think it's clear who's being heard. The developers with deep pockets are being heard. I hope you prove me wrong today that the new City of Houston
Community Outreach to begin in March is just another attempt to put lipstick on a pig. I hope you prove me wrong today that primarily low-income people of color don't matter. I hope you prove me wrong today that black and brown history in the city of Houston is not important. I hope you prove me wrong today that the health and safety of residents along the I-45 expansion doesn't need to be protected. I hope you prove me wrong today by voting to delay the funding until 2020.

Thank you for your time.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Thank you, Ms. Graham. Next is Vanessa Medrane, if I'm -- I'm sure I'm mispronouncing that.

**MS. MEDRANO:** It's Medrano.

Good morning. My name is Vanessa Medrano. I live in the Northside community. I am here representing the organization -- organizations such as the Known Accuracy of Community Engineer Leaders, the Millennial's Youth Fest, and a handful of other organizations. I am also here on behalf of the generation that Mr. Jeffrey spoke about. We have a voice too.

I ask that the funding for the I-45 project to be on hold until 2020. The I-45 Segment 2 expansion will impact my home and my area. In my
opinion, there are other projects that can use this funding. The fund could cover potholes repairs in the
Houston area and also upgrade our flooding and drainage system. I just don't want to wake up some day after a
stormy night and find myself waking up next to a fish or a sea creature.

Thank you for listening to my comment.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

Next, we have Sonia Noyola, followed by Oscar Slotboom.

MR. NOYOLA: Hello. My name is Dr. Sonia Adriana Noyola. Thank you for this opportunity.

I am a worker in the Near Northside community and a mother of a student who attends the Houston Independent School Districts. And I am speaking with those voices as an individual today.

Whenever I am speaking before people that I care about, about issues that I care about, the first thing I like to do is make sure that we understand we all are on the same page with a common core. Our common core here today, every single member of the audience and every single person on the board loves the state of Texas, loves Houston, and we want what's best for it.

So today, after listening to the TxDOT transportation, I want to make sure that all of us are on the same page
putting Tex- -- the state of Texas first.

    TxDOT right now is very lucky. The very
beginning of its name is our glorious state, Texas.

TxDOT, Texas Department of Transportation, unfortunately
right now has turned into TxNOT. TxNOT listening to its
citizens. TxNOT carrying about a great deal of
information that has been presented to you today. TxNOT
understanding the voices of the community that are
actually trying to move us forward together in unison as
we truly all want deep down inside.

    So today I would appreciate if the members
of the board would please take some time to make sure
that our beloved TxDOT become something greater. It can
become not just the Texas Department of Transportation.
It can become the Texas Department of Transformation,
making sure that we all move forward together instead of
becoming the Texas department that turns into TxNOT,
Texas Neglecting Others Thoughts. And that's what we've
had here today. You've heard some of the hisses, some
of the boos when people feel like they're not being
listened to.

    So what I am going to do is, I am going to
listen to those members of the community, and I am going
to be asking that you also delay this vote so that TxDOT
is our Texas Department of Transformation and does not
become TxFOR, Texas Neglecting Others Thoughts.

Thank you very much.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Thank you.

Next speaker is Oscar Slatboom, followed by Erin Ericson.

**MR. SLATBOOM:** Thanks for the opportunity to speak. I am here to speak in favor of approval of (inaudible) committing 100 million to Segment 2 of the North Highway Improvement Project.

The overall North Houston Highway Improvement Project is a vital and critical element of transportation improvements in Houston. And approval of this funding will ensure inclusion of tentative funding by TxDOT in the 2020 UTP.

Segment 2, in the middle of the overall project, is crucial to realizing all the project-wide benefits. The main feature of Segment 2 is the addition of four managed lanes. These managed lanes are a crucial part of future bidirectional managed lane networking for Houston which will provide enhanced public transit opportunities and mobility for motorists. In addition, it will be a key link in potential future high-speed service to Bush Airport.

As you know, METRONext has identified airport service as an item of interest by the public.
As you also know, Light Rail is ridiculously slow and expensive with existing METRO routes averaging 14 miles per hour and the most recent extensions costing around 150 million per mile. With a complete managed lane facility on the North Freeway, the airport and transit service can be delivered at a much higher speed, at a much lower cost.

Now, some speakers have talked about the past and the future. Well, the future is going to be automated vehicles. And these are going to need additional highway capacity. The future is not going to be 150 mile -- $150 million mile Light Rail which carries minimal or negligible passenger trips.

Now, speaking specifically to Segment 2, the existing freeway and Loop 610 interchange were opened in July 1962 and have received only minimal improvements since its opening. It does not meet modern standards particularly for bridge clearances, interior shoulders, and interchange design at the Loop 610 interchange. To put the 47-year-old freeway age in perspective, the metro area population of Houston in 1960 was 1.2 million, and the current population is 7 million. We need an improved facility to meet today's needs and safety standards.

Now, what happens if you don't add
capacity? Well, we can go two miles away on the West Loop and see what happens. It is the number one most congested freeway in Texas by a significant margin, we may add. Tens of thousands of people are suffering needlessly in traffic on the West Loop because of a decision made in the early 1990s not to add capacity.

So we have a choice. Is Houston going to be a better place if it turns into the West Loop or if we get managed lanes and an improved facility to meet today's needs?

I urge the RTP to approve the 100 million for Segment 2 to continue progress on the North Houston Highway Improvement Project so Houston can realize the huge benefits this project will provide.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Sir, can you state your name for the record?

MR. SLOTBOOM: Yeah. Oscar Slotboom.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where do you live?

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next will be Erin Ericson, followed by Jessica Holsey.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What's the next --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't think the (inaudible) heard.
MR. ALAN CLARK: I'm sorry. The next speaker, Erin Ericson.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Please don't tap this thing. And please --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- don't talk too fast. Just take it easy.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I'd ask that we have a level of decorum for both sides so that we can respect one another so that we can hear the comments that are being given.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, sir.

MS. ERICSON: Good morning. My name is Erin Ericson. I live in the Heights in District C. My council member is Ellen Cohen, and Rodney Ellis is my county commissioner.

I am a social worker having received my master's from UH, go Coogs. And I am a native Houstonian. I am here today to ask you to delay the vote for funding of Segment 2 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project until 2020.

As a social worker, the displacement of Houstonians is of particular concern to me. In Segment 3 alone, the right-of-way will eradicate a major
corridor for homeless services and the afford housing complex, Clayton Homes, with 296 units. In totality, the proposed right-of-way will displace 168 family homes, 1,067 multifamily homes, including 368 low-income units, and 60 homeless Veterans units. And 331 businesses that employ over 24,000 people will be displaced. This displacement would disproportionately affect people of color and low-income communities.

An assessment of the human costs and consequences of how this project will perpetuate inequality, exacerbate poverty, and erase community identity is needed. Our reason is still strained from the displacement following Harvey. A sustainable plan would holistically look at how this project includes those affected who live and work within the proposed right-of-ways. Our infrastructure is important to Houston's vitality. And people and communities are a part of that infrastructure as well.

What will be the long-term effects of displacement? An innovative solution includes factoring in the social and human costs and making sure that effective communities have a say and a seat at the table. Building over communities should not be the answer.

Again, I ask that the vote be postponed on
funding for Segment 2 until 2020. Thank you for your time.


UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't think she heard you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: I'm sorry. Jessica Holsey, please -- Holsey.

MS. HOLSEY: Good morning. I'm Jessica Holsey, a resident of District H, Second Ward. Thank you for this opportunity.

But I'm here to speak about a very important item. It's about families. It's very sad that -- if that's no consideration about our families. This project will affect a very -- will have a very negative effect in displacing our families. We're already suffering from lack of affordable housing. I -- I just don't understand.

To all members here of -- today, elected officials that represent our neighborhoods, please think about our families. We're struggling. We're enduring already so much in the Second Ward. We just do not have access to affordable homes, affordable housing. So this project will affect -- in a way, will displace, will create homele- -- homeless -- homelessness. It's very
clear that this will create -- displacing this family
will create more people homeless.

So, therefore, I am here to plea with each
and everyone here today, delay the vote. Think about
our children. Think about our families. Instead
utilize all that money to create housing -- affordable
housing, because we cannot afford $400,000, $300,000
town homes. For us, the working families, it's about
affordable housing, single-family homes.

So please, please come with me today to
vote families first. Delay the vote until 2020. If we
cannot stop the vote, if we cannot stop this project,
then delay it until 2020. Give us a seat on the table.
Let's talk because in the Second Ward, nobody knows.
There's no meetings there. There's no meetings
happening. So we need to have a more clear, transparent
conversation. Let's meet. Let's talk.

Thank you-all so very much for your
patience. Thank you.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Thank you.

Next, Jonathan Ross, followed by Stella
Walters.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Mr. Chairman and
the gentleman before he begins with his comments, it is
my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that there's several
folks in the audience that would like to speak; however, they were denied the opportunity because H-GAC does not provide translation services. These folks are principally Spanish-speakers. And so I would like to ask that there's some alt- -- some -- some option for them or simply just to allow them to speak, and maybe I and a couple others will do our best to help communicate the sentiments of their remarks.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well, we'll take that up after we get through the list and see how we'll address that.

MR. ROSS: Good morning, council members. My name is --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

MR. ALAN CLARK: Sorry, sir. You're out of order with public comment.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ask your question (inaudible).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

MR. ALAN CLARK: No, sir. You're not -- we're in public comment.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're violating the civil rights by depriving the people that don't speak (inaudible).

MR. ALAN CLARK: Sir, we're not going to
deprive anybody of their rights. We're -- we're in a process, sir. Please -- please let us get through the process.

Mister -- Mr. Ross.

**MR. ROSS:** Good morning. My name is Jonathan Ross. I am president of the board of Air Alliance Houston. And I appreciate the opportunity to speak to y'all this morning.

Dr. Nelson addressed the substance of our concerns, as have many of the speakers today. I am going to address concerns regarding the process.

We appreciate today's opportunity for the community to be heard, but that is not enough. We want our concerns to be effectively considered by this council, by TxDOT, and by all the decision-makers as we move forward. And that takes time. And that is why we are asking for a delay in signing over $100 million.

Now, in my day job, I'm a lawyer. And in doing my work, we negotiate first. Then we write the check.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's right.

**MR. ROSS:** And we think we have it a little bit backwards here. There hasn't been sufficient time before TxDOT gets the approval of this council, the money in hand that they're seeking so that they will go
forward with this project.

It's only human nature that once TxDOT
has -- effectively has the money that they will no
longer feel the need or the necessity of listening to
this council's concerns or the community's.

Y'all are the stewards of all of our
communities. And I believe you owe your highest duty to
those who are being asked to sacrifice for the benefit
of others. That is what is happening. That is what
needs to be taken into account. I truly believe that a
delay will not jeopardize TxDOT's interest in this
project. But it will allow these voices to be
effectively considered as opposed to just being heard.
And I urge you to grant the delay that will allow that
to happen.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Ross.

Now we'd like to invite Stella Walters,
followed by Peggy Robinson.

MS. WALTERS: Good morning to every
member of the council today. My name is Stella Mireles
Walters. And I am the founder of Safe Walk Home
Northside.

Safe Walk Home Northside is a grassroots
organization that trains members to use their voice in
reporting suspicious activity and safety issues that can harm our students as they walk to and from school. It was organized after a tragic loss that happened in 2016 in this community as a student was walking home from school. So Safe Walk Home is dedicated in the memory of this student.

It is for this reason that I use my voice this morning to bring your attention to safety concerns that will be created with this project.

Did you know, council members, that Jefferson Elementary will be 500 yards away from the completed expansion as planned?

I use my voice also about the concerns that the students will have when they're walking through the construction area in order to get to school and how this creates a high safety issue. The project managers have not identified this as an issue.

I use my voice to express the concerns about the students walking through an extra feeder lane in order to get to school after the construction is completed. Again, the project managers have not identified this as an issue.

These are real issues to our families in this community. And we do not want to lose any of our precious students to a project that has not been well
planned and has not included our community concerns.

Safe Walk Home is asking that the
Houston-Galveston Area Council, Transportation Policy Council to delay approving $100 million requested by TxDOT. This will allow TxDOT to address our safety concerns and look into alternative designs.

So I leave with one question today to every council member here. If this was your child or your grandchild walking to school through these conditions, how would you vote today?

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Walters.

MS. WALTERS: Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: I'd like to invite Peggy Robinson, followed by Robert Holley.

MS. ROBINSON: Good morning. My name is Peggy Robinson, and I am the president of the Montie Beach Civic Association -- Civic Club.

On behalf of the Montie Beach Civic Club, I'm asking you to please delay the vote on the 100 million funding request by TxDOT for Segment 2 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project.

Montie Beach Civic Club is named for our city park, but our neighborhood encompasses the Brooke Smith neighborhood in the city of Houston District H and Harris County Precinct 2. Our boundaries are I-45,
North Main, Airline, and Link Road. So we represent roughly one-half of the western side of Segment 2. And we are one of those communities that has been mentioned over and over again this morning that is ethnically and economically diverse.

We have been following as a club the plannings of the I-45 expansion for many years. We've had two full meetings about this in the last year. And, additionally, we keep our members updated and our neighbors updated through social media.

The delay we request would allow TxDOT to address the concerns that we have raised. We participate in the Make I-45 Better Coalition, as well as we have been attending the City of Houston facilitate -- facilitation meetings.

Our concerns are the same as everyone else has expressed. We're worried about air quality and the negative effect of the increased density. We're worried about noise. The plan currently provides no provision for sound miti- -- mitigation laws. We're worried about flooding because I-45 is where our neighborhood waters go when we had Harvey and other events. And we're worried about safety and encouraging innovative 21st century designs for pedestrian and bicycle safety. And that all leads to connectivity.
So when I-45 was originally constructed, it bisected neighborhoods, as you've heard. So we have lost our connections with our neighbors in Lindale Park and Near Northside. The current plans would further affect our connectivity with our family members, neighbors, and services like the "Y" and the Red Line.

The City of Houston Planning Department has just hired -- the meeting was just last week -- for the first time Huitt-Zollars to work with us over the coming months to develop a scheme incorporating community goals and desired outcomes for Segments 2 and 1.

Why the rush to fund a project that is not yet adequate -- adequately planned to incorporate our community's concerns? So I am asking you on behalf of myself -- I live within those 500 feet of I-45, and I garden and breathe that air. But also my community is wholeheartedly behind me. And I have a list of signatures, but, unfortunately, our next civic associ- -- club meeting is not until next week. So we would have many more.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Robinson.

MS. ROBINSON: Thank you very much.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, I'd invite Robert Holley, followed by Oni Blair.
MR. HOLLEY: Good morning. My name is Robert Holley. I'm with the Fair Housing & Neighborhood Rights, also representing the Texas Organizing Project. I have done some outreach at Kelly Village, which is at I-10 and 59.

And let's talk about devastation and deterioration of the neighborhoods. You have a school, first of all, that's Bruce Elementary that's less than 200 yards away from that intersection. The noise that's coming off of I-10 and 59 is so phenomenal. I think it's quieter on JFK Boulevard.

Also, businesses have gone. On one side of I-10, we have a lot of gentrification with the building of town homes and condos. There's no businesses. There's no eateries, except for one that's not too far away. There's no grocery stores, just convenience stores that sells alcohol. And this is affecting the black and brown communities. And when I'm talking about the devastation, also there's no more neighborhoods. People are displaced. People had to move. People are homeless.

We need to think about going to our neighborhoods, including some of our housing units, and talking to the people to see what's best for them in keeping our families together, keeping our communities
together.

Thank you. I'm Robert Holley.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Thank you, Mr. Holley.

Now, please I'll invite Oni Blair, followed by -- followed by Mary Fillamore -- Fill- -- Fillmore, I think. I'm not sure.

**MS. FILLEY:** Filley.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Filley. Thank you.

**MS. BLAIR:** Good morning. My name is Oni Blair. And I am the executive director of LINK Houston. LINK Houston advocates for a robust and equitable transportation network so that all people can reach opportunity. I am also a member of the Technical Advisory Committee and have had the privilege of sitting at the same table that you are sitting at now and debating this issue on July 17th.

While the issue did pass at that time, there were two nay votes, and the discussion went on for over an hour. Many of the people who did vote in favor of it honestly had many concerns of which predominantly focused on the displacement issue. And I say that because that wasn't part of the update today. The H-GAC website has been down all week. And there are no minutes for us to share with you that provide that detail.
There are members of the TPC that are also members of the Technical Advisory Committee who can share what happened at that meeting and some of the discussion that took place.

I am here to also speak on Item Number 8 and to ask you to delay this vote. I have been very clear on the concerns that we have that I share with the community members that have been here today, predominantly around the displacement, which is inequitable, as well as the flooding, the historical and cultural displacement, and the many other challenges that come with this project.

While I have been advised by many people to actually ask for the item to be removed, I am not asking you to do that today. I am coming here with confidence in the City of Houston's project that they are putting forward with TxDOT and with many other entities that is set to start in August in which they will consult with communities and work with them using the technical expertise of Huitt-Zollars and the University of Houston's Community Design Resource Center to put forward a schematic, a design that is understood by engineers and planners on all sides that reflects true mitigation, that addresses the concerns that people have put forward today.
The numbers that many of the people before me have cited -- I want to be clear -- come from the Draft Environmental Impact Study. They are not mock numbers that their individual committees made up. They are from the Draft DEIS.

And those include displacement of 168 single-family homes, 1,067 multifamily homes, 331 businesses that will be displaced, and by the estimates of the Draft Environmental Impact Study, 24,873 people's jobs who will be impacted.

These numbers pale -- or the numbers from previous projects pale in comparison to these. So, for instance, the Final Environmental Impact Study by TxDOT lists that project -- the 290 project displaced 360 total housing units, and the I-10 Katy Freeway expansion displaced a total of 190 housing units according to the FEIS.

Those are important because I've been asked, how does this project compare to those? And the comparison is significant to note. This project is of concern more than any other project going on in our region because of that displacement. And that is why we are asking you to delay this vote so that the process that's going forward with TxDOT can consider how to adjust the right-of-way and limit the impact to people's
lives, particularly low-income and minority people who are identified in the current Draft Environmental Impact Study as being significantly and adversely impacted by this project.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Blair.

Next will be Mary Filley, followed by Dexter Handy.

MS. FILLEY: Good morning. My name is Mary Filley. I am a resident of District D. I am in Segment 3, but I can tell you that residents in Segment 2 will be drastically affected. And I'm here on both their behalf, as well as others who use Light Rail to go from their homes in that segment to, say, jobs in the medical center, as well as other issues.

It has been easily and ready documented how this impacts people in their homes and also their ability to make a living and to get to work on time. And all of this connects that it will create major disruption. This is no small thing. It's even studied. A major corporation uses Maslow's theory of hierarchy to understand how people need to feel a basic level of security, not snowflake security. We're talking about you know where you live, you feel confident, you can do your job, you're a vital contributor to the Texas Medical Center, to schools, to your church, to your
community. That's the basic level. And if that's not satisfied, people do not advance.

    I quote Abraham Maslow. He said, "I suppose it is tempting if the only tool you have is a hammer to treat everything as if it were a nail." And we are not nails. We do not want to be pounded by this. And in that metaphor, we ask you, of hammer and nails, to use your ingenuity. You're -- you're very smart people on this side of the -- of the lectern. Find some more tools in your toolbox to solve this problem.

    I ask you to delay this vote not because I'm against advancement. It is the Texas Department of Transportation, not the Texas Department of Freeways.

    I saw the emblem about bikes. And Council Member Robinson, you know we've been talking about this 2015. We really don't have (inaudible) bike lanes on frontage roads. And we have not addressed the driver-centric culture and how they treat somebody on a bicycle. A driver sees a cyclist and says, that's a nail, and my car is a hammer.

    We need this. Back up to rethink this. I encourage you, please, to go back to your toolbox, not just the comment cards, but please come and meet with us and talk and hear these things out; cup of coffee, whatever, a granola bar if it makes you feel better.
But, please, let's delay this vote maybe even past January of 2020 and start having real talk about multiple solutions that move us and not about loading more cars, single-driver occupancy cars on freeways, and take care of your citizens who use multiple transit options to get to the job so when you go to the medical center, when you go to your doctor's office and those people are working at $10 an hour and they're single moms or whomever, that you get the best care possible and they're focused on you and -- and how they can take care of you, and then they can go home and take care of their families.

Thank you.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Thank you, Ms. Filley.

Next, Dexter Handy, followed by Darren Wiler.

**MR. HANDY:** Good morning. My name is Dexter Handy, lieutenant colonel in the United States Air Force retired, and I'm the chair of the Greater Houston Coalition for Complete Streets, also chair of the Citizens Transportation Coalition.

The Citizens Transportation Coalition advocates transportation solutions which will improve the quality of life. I live in Rice Military Division, which is located within City Council
District C.

The CTC, or Citizens Transportation Coalition, is guided by ten principles, and five of them apply to this project. Provide access for all, design Main Street to be safe for all people, provide passenger rail and mass transit, support creation of livable centers, increase the transparency and project accountability.

This project, in its current form, prevents serious concerns associated with these principles. I'll address the more visible ones this morning.

First, over 1,000 homes and 300 businesses will be affected. You've heard this already -- and I'm going to reiterate it -- displacing a vulnerable segment of our population and many of my fellow military Veterans.

As we do not see air quality measurement devices in this segment's geographic sector -- I go back to what happened in March -- this suggests that air quality has not been satisfactorily measured to establish a baseline for current air quality, construction phase air quality, and post-construction air quality in this area. How can we know how it's going to improve if we don't even have any measurement
devices there today, okay?

   This project is supposed to produce pollution, but no measuring devices are in place and data available, if there is any, is not being made available to the public.

   This project must be redesigned to mitigate new normals for flooding. You've heard that already. This project must be designed to accommodate, improve safety for all people, including folks with disabilities, pedestrians, bicyclists, and the new emerging micro-mobility vehicles; e-scooters, e-bikes, etcetera. The travel corridors must accommodate these mobility factors, all of them.

   Finally, many of the public engagement sessions appear to suggest that TxDOT is exercising the illusion of inclusion. We feel like the public's concerns are being ignored and that pre-approved design will go forward with adverse effects to the environment and to the population.

   Until these issues are satisfactorily addressed to this design, I ask that you-all delay this vote to fund Segment 2 of the North Highway Improvement Program until 2020.

   Thank you very much.

   MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Handy.
Next will be Harrison Humphreys, followed by Marlisa Briggs.

**MR. HUMPHREYS:** Good morning, council members, staff. My name is Harrison Humphreys, and I'm a transportation policy advocate with Air Alliance Houston.

This morning, though, I'm going to take off my Air Alliance hat and speak from my position as the co-lead of the Transportation Working Group for the City of Houston's Climate Action Plan.

Just yesterday, the City unveiled the first complete draft of the plan. I'm proud to say that that was myself and many other experts, advocates, engineers, and concerned citizens invested into drafting a plan yielded a product worthy of admiration.

The goals the plan lays out are ambitious, and they reflect the urgency warranted by the threat of climate change. In unveiling the draft plan, Mayor Turner clearly explained, quote, we can't fix the problem overnight, but if we take bold action to lead our city on a sustainable path, we'll leave a better Houston for future generations. The NHHIP in its current design runs contrary to the goals laid out by the major just yesterday. It is not bold, imaginative, nor sustainable.
First of all, one of the main tenets of the transportation portion of the Climate Action Plan calls on a mass reduction of vehicle miles traveled per capita by 2050. It would be counterproductive to spend the first 10 years of a 30-year time frame building a project that diametrically opposes the stated goals of the empty reduction.

Second, the CAP draft plan also calls on a drafted increase in transit ridership. As is pointed out in the last TAC meeting, there is no access points to METRO's Park & Ride for communities within Segment 2. So the arguments of the project will help transit ridership seem unfounded.

As one of the co-leads on the Climate Action Plan Transportation Working Group, as a lifelong Houstonian, but most importantly as a member of the first generation to experience the worst effects of the climate disaster, the short sidedness and lack of concern for how projects like this will affect future generations is frightening.

I've said it in this room and several others across the city. We cannot fix our congestion problem by continuing to do the same things that created the problems in the first place. We cannot build our way out of congestion. We cannot perpetually expand
highways. And we certainly will not achieve the Mayor's vision of a transportation paradigm shift or the lofty goals of the Climate Action Plan with projects like the NHHIP in its current form.

With that, I request that you move to delay the vote on funding the project until 2020.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you,

Mr. Humphreys.

Next, Marlisa Briggs, followed by Kevin Moore.

MS. BRIGGS: Good morning. I am Marlisa Briggs, executive director of the North Houston Association.

NHA is a regional organization that covers about 1300 square miles in North Harris County and Montgomery Counties. Our job and mission is to advocate for quality regional solutions that impact North Houston. We appreciate the opportunity today to speak on two agenda items. But right now, we'll speak on Agenda Item Number 8.

The North Houston Association urges passage of a resolution affirming the funding partnership for Segment 2 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Program and Mitigation of Adverse Community
Impacts. We have closely monitored this project for at least ten years. And we are confident that TxDOT is working to meet the expectations regarding public information and stakeholder engagement. In all, more than 270 public and stakeholder meetings have been held. And many project modifications have occurred as a result.

We're encouraged by the mitigation efforts outlined in the resolution and that we've heard spoken about today, which will result in improved air quality, public safety, aesthetics, and livability. We also support the ongoing public engagement of -- during the program. And we support the project as a whole.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Briggs.

Next, I would invite Kevin Moore.

MR. MOORE: Hi. Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I'm a 15-year resident in Eastwood, Houston's oldest planned community. I'm the president of the Eastwood Civic Association and (inaudible). We've represented a diverse community of about 2400 homes in the Near East -- East Side.

Given our location, my residence will be primarily impacted by Segment 3. We are here, however,
to voice our support for those impacted by Segment 2, and we're requesting a delay in vote -- in the vote on Agenda Item 8.

Most of the points I intended to bring up today have already been shared by others, so I'm not going to rehash those. I do want to say that the impacts of the project others have shared flies in the face of everything Mayor Turner has said during his recent unveiling of the next phase of the Complete Communities Initiative. Based on that, we're a little bit disappointed in his support for the pro-- -- for this vote.

It also goes counter to H-GAC's own Liveable Centers Programs of which our community is under study for participation in. We can't turn a blind eye to the values -- to these -- to those values by accepting this project as it stands.

Additionally, I want to point out that the mitigations we saw listed by TxDOT are almost all being assessed or will be considered. There is no firm commitment from them on any of these solutions, yet we are being asked to make a firm commitment to TxDOT. Until TxDOT can make firm commitments to resolving those issues, we should not make that firm commitment.

Again, I ask the council to delay the vote
until we can get a truly innovative solution that is in line with the values we claim to have as a city and community rather than the failure of imagination that is currently proposed.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Moore.

Next will be Johnny Matz, followed by Bob Harvey.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You mean Johnny --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Johnny Potter?

MR. ALAN CLARK: I may be -- may be mis-- mispronouncing this. With the Greater Houston --

MR. MATA: That's me.

MR. ALAN CLARK: -- Coalition.

MR. MATA: A lot of people want to speak, so I -- you already have my -- the position that the Greater Houston Coalition for Justice has taken. The Greater Houston Coalition for Justice is a -- over 20 civil rights organizations, national, state, and local.

I want to just kind of give you the -- the statement that you have that -- and ask you to follow your commitment that local government also initiates effort in anticipating and preventing problems.

And according to TexSTAR report itself --
I am not going to take the time, because you already heard about that report. And the report was real disenfranchising people of color, children, and -- and saying what the impact will be, you already heard it, so I don't want to be repetitious.

I just want to let you know that the community appeal of the organizations on our board has been to delay the scheduled vote. And you heard it with resounding voice.

What I did get today in this meeting is a chilling effect when the first thing off the bat, a motion to vote before hearing the people. And it gave me the impression of the fox guarding the henhouse.

Whether you are elected or an appointee, you're here to serve the community. I applaud all of these people that represent the community that have gotten you or others in office.

I will also say that I was disappointed with you, Mr. Chairman -- and this is not an attack. But Title VI of the Civil Rights Act wants to make sure, as a recipient of federal funds, all of you in your cities or wherever, in this agency, that you allow people to testify that don't speak English.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's right.

**MR. MATA:** And you were denied -- they
were denied.

So with that, I will tell you, you've seen the numbers. And -- and if things don't go right -- I'm 82 years old. I'm almost 50 years in the Civil Rights War. I'm a -- I was raised in Second Ward. I just got on -- on -- I was declared on remission from leukemia. In 204, I had prostate cancer. And living close to that industry and now we're about to plan more possibilities of more people being endangered environmental.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

(Individuals speaking Spanish.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Johnny.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Mr. Chairman, next is Delvin Dennis, followed by Randall Baxley.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I believe you had --

MR. ALAN CLARK: I'm sorry. Bob Harvey is next. My apologies.

MR. HARVEY: Thank you very much. Good morning, TPC members. Thank you for providing this time for community input.

I am Bob Harvey. I'm the president and CEO of the Greater Houston Partnership which advocates on behalf of the 11 county Greater Houston region.

As you-all know, the Houston metro is a

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remarkably fast-growing and opportunity-rich region.
We've added over a million to our population just since 2010. Infrastructure is key to that continued growth and continued opportunity in Houston, as are great neighborhoods, green spaces, hike and bike trails, and all the other amenities that make Houston a great place to live and work.

I am here to speak in favor of the full resolution as presented by the staff on Item 8, which --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

MR. HARVEY: -- would include and extend the funding partnership between the Transportation Policy Council and TxDOT for the implementation of Segment 2 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Program.

Approving the commitment of 100 million in Category 2 funds is important to demonstrate the region's desire to advance this critical infrastructure for the region and to leverage funding through TxDOT's 2020 Unified Transportation Program, which as you've heard will be considered by the Texas Transportation Commission on August 29th.

We, the partnership, have been in discussions with Tex- -- TxDOT and others, and we understand that discussions between TxDOT, regional
partners, and impacted communities are ongoing and have been productive. We also understand that TxDOT is committed to address concerns in making appropriate adjustments, particularly as those concerns relate to right-of-way acquisition, noise and air pollution, flood mitigation, and mass transit.

The partnership believes that the North Houston Project is an important project that will enhance safety, mitigate congestion, decrease travel times through improved mobility and operational efficiency. It will also expand transit capacity and improve the image in economic development of our region. And it will do all this while maintaining effective evacuation routes.

Having the Transportation Policy Council as a local partner on this project will also allow for added project benefits, including additional funding for the implementation of important community identified measures that would mitigate potential adverse impacts.

For all these reasons, the partnership encourages you to approve the resolution as drafted by staff and presented as Item 8, committing 100 million in funding towards the implementation of Segment 2 of the North Houston Project.

Thank you very much for your time.
MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Harvey.

Next will be Delvin Dennis, followed by Randall Baxley.

MR. DENNIS: Good morning, council members. Yes, it is still morning.

My name is Delvin Dennis. I am a vice president with OTHON Engineering. I am here to speak in unequivocal favor of this resolution put before you today under Item 8 of your agenda packet.

Also, I am here as -- my previous life, I served 31 years for TxDOT all in the Houston District. I retired as district engineer in 2011. And I'm here to tell you that work on this project started before then, okay? So this is not something that just started in the last year or two.

Earlier in my TxDOT career, I spent significant time on Interstate 45 on the construction -- the initial construction on Interstate 45 from I-10 up to Shepherd and then from Shepherd Drive up to Beltway 8 where the footprint of I-45 was widened, the barrier-separated reversible HOV lane was put in place. And I can guarantee it's carried millions of people and vehicles since that time and has been a tremendous benefit. So Interstate 45 in these limits has not seen any reasonable increase in capacity for over 30 years.
Being a member of TPC is not an easy job, especially on days like today. I was an alternate voting member and a voting member of TPC for over 13 years. So it has its moments. Each of you were selected by your county, by your city, by your interest organization to represent them on this important body.

The item before you is asking for a hundred-million to create a funding partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation for Segment 2. I heard comments this morning that talked about I-45 from Downtown Houston probably to halfway to Dallas. All we're talking about is Segment 2 from Interstate 10 to the North Loop. It's about four miles, okay?

And the Texas Transportation Commission has important action that will be before them in August with regard to an update to the Unified Transportation Program. All that information is in your -- is in your background information in your packet.

I am -- I am going to finish out by saying, I had the opportunity to work with County Judge Jim Yarbrough over the years. He's now Mayor Yarbrough for City of Galveston. But Judge Yarbrough had a favorite saying, and I think some of you around this table has probably already heard it. TxDOT is looking for partners --
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DENNIS: -- not dependants.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Dennis.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're quick to let the community know when their time is up. I think everybody should be subjected to the same rules.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir, they are.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you. We'll now invite Randall Baxley, followed by Andrea French.

MR. BAXLEY: Hello. My name is Randall Baxley. I am a native Houstonian who lives in the Near Northside, which is part of the City Council District H, Harris County Precinct 2. And I rode the 700 and the 25 to come here in morning, Ms. Patman.

And I am asking you to delay the vote for funding of the NHHIP until TxDOT returns a complete plan, as well as an Environmental Impact Statement that answers the many comments made by our communities.

The impact to our watersheds and marshes from Galveston Bay -- Galveston Bay, you here -- to the Brazos Valley -- Brazos Valley, are you here -- as well as in Hogg Park should not be ignored.

This has been called a boondoggle because it is. It's been going for 20 years, and yet there's no
actual plan being presented to the community. 2500 or 
25,000 comments, pages and pages and pages and pages
have been presented to TxDOT, yet TxDOT has not come
with comments to the communities and to the
representatives of these communities of which I am part.
And that part being that part that is I-45 between 610
and 10. We know where Segment 2 is. It's right there.
It's right next door to Jefferson Elementary. It's
right next door to Hogg Elementary. It's right next to
25 other elementaries and schools that will be affected
by this. And we know where it is. We do not want to be
pan- -- pandered to as if we do not know where our
freeway is.

I was born in this town. There were no
freeways here when I was born. These freeways came
through our neighborhoods. They destroyed our
neighborhoods.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. BAXLEY: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good job. Good
job.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next will be Andrea
French, followed by Stephanie Thomas.

MS. FRENCH: Good morning. I am Andrea
French. I'm the executive director for the
Transportation Advocacy Group for the Houston Region, more commonly known as TAG. TAG's core mission is to attract additional funding for the Houston Region for the infrastructure needs that we have. We represent the eight county Houston Region. Our membership consists of over 140 companies, government agencies, management districts, nonprofits, community organizations, chambers of commerce, and individuals.

TAG Houston Region supports the approval of the H-GAC resolution affirming the funding partnership for Segment 2 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Program and the Mitigation of Adverse Community Impacts.

This project provides a solution to a critical component of our region's infrastructure challenges and is a result of many, many years of hard work and advocacy from our leaders and industry experts. We do not want to risk losing this investment or sending a message to the State that this money should be utilized in other areas of the state. We have all worked much too hard.

TAG's core mission is funding infrastructure. We want funding for all modes and all projects designed to enhance and improve our connectivity and quality of life. We are extremely
sensitive to the concerns surrounding how this project can potentially impact communities, and we strongly support H-GAC's and the City of Houston's Planning and Development Department's efforts in promoting community involvement for this project.

We anticipate regular updates from TxDOT regarding mitigation of these concerns. We encourage continued public involvement that provides for meaningful cultural engagement to address community concerns. It is important to TAG to build public confidence in infrastructure projects, and we hope that effort is given its due importance now and in the future.

Thank you for your time.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Thank you, Ms. French.

Next is Stephanie Thomas, followed by Jessica Wiggins.

**MS. THOMAS:** Good morning, Council. My name is Dr. Stephanie Thomas. And I work with an organization called Public Citizen. We are a public interest group. And here in Texas, we focus on energy, the environment, and ethics.

First, I'd like to say, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak because public participation is the lifeblood of democracy.
Second, I also want to acknowledge that I am here representing my organization, but I also reside in City Council District H, Karla Cisneros' district, and I'm part of Precinct 2. And about a mile from where I live is Bruce Elementary School.

So several schools through this project will be placed about -- about 500 feet within the proximity of the highway. And if you know about air quality, those schools will be more subject to greater amounts of air pollution, potentially impacting the health of students. And places like Bruce Elementary School already have high rates of asthma. So this is particularly detrimental to those students, to our youth.

And I also want to echo some of the comments that I heard earlier. I have also been part of the working groups around the City of Houston's Climate Action Plan. And one of the things that we really need to be focusing our attention on is getting people out of cars, finding other ways to move people around our area that do not pollute, that do not create harmful greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollutants that are impacting our -- our health, our livelihood, and could even threaten the region in much, much greater ways.
I've heard some of the people supporting this project as it stands talk about progress. But we have to ask the question, of whose progress? Are we building highways at the expense of our communities? Because if so, we need to rethink our plan. And I ask you to delay this vote because we need to have more answers before moving forward.

Thank you.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Thank you, Ms. Thomas.

Next up will be Jessica Wiggins, followed by Simone Kern.

**MS. WIGGINS:** Hello. My name is Jessica Wiggins. I'm with the advocacy organization Bike Houston. I will cover two topics, safety and connectivity.

According to TxDOT's crash information system, there have been 424 crashes involving people on bikes and walking crossing I-45 or using the feeder road since 2010 in the city of Houston alone. 75 of those people involved in those crashes were killed. Despite the loss of life, TxDOT did not include any analysis of bike or pedestrian fatalities in their safety analysis or claims. If TxDOT is going to make claims of improving safety, we need to include all people and all road users.
On the basis of connectivity, TxDOT openly reports that direct impacts to mobility -- please listen to this -- may include restricted access to community facilities and businesses, increase cut-through traffic in residential areas, restricted access to pedestrian and bicycle routes, and reduction of transit services. That statement alone negates the concept and fundamental purpose of transportation investment entirely. It's like listening to a commercial for a new drug for headaches and learning that the side effects are worse headaches and death.

Bike Houston opposes this highway initiative on the basis of safety and connectivity. We need infrastructure investment desperately in our city, but will not accept a project that fundamentally disregards the local street network and puts our most vulnerable road users' lives in danger.

You have a responsibility to delay this vote and explore other options for safe and equitable mobility. Thank you.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Now we'll hear from Simone Kern, followed by Molly Cook.

**MS. KERN:** Here we go. It's our turn.

All right. My name is Simone Kern. I'm a resident of Idylwood neighborhood. I've been here
entertaining a toddler through this very long meeting for her future and because we all need to think about the future of the children of this city and where we're going to be decades down the line because this project will impact our city for decades.

After Hurricane Harvey, the people of this city expected bold leadership to keep our city viable in the face of the climate change that is on our doorstep. I still live in a Harvey-damaged house. I'm seriously worried what the city will be like when Ramona is an adult. It may be uninhabitable because it's just completely under water or because it's unbearably hot during the summers. They get hotter and hotter every year.

$7 billion for a wider highway is not the kind of bold, courageous leadership that we expect from our elected officials. A wider highway means more pollution, more dangerous roads, more suburban sprawl, which means more development, which means more flooding of our homes, and increasing the carbon emissions that are literally destroying life on Earth. Experts say it won't even reduce traffic. It'll be just like I-10.

So we know that this can only benefit the developers who stand to profit --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.
MS. KERN: -- off of more construction and any corrupt politicians who stand to get kickbacks from them.

We could use $7 billion of which this 100 million is the first drop to build a green public transit system to connect all the neighborhoods of Houston and truly make this a great city to live in. We can connect the city through greenways that will offset flooding and cool the city and absorb air pollution.

But $7 billion for a wider highway is not it. This plan demonstrates a total lack of vision, imagination, or courage, dooming our city to a bleak future. We demand that you go back to the drawing board and come up with a much better plan for the future of our city. And if you're going to spend billions of Texan taxpayer dollars on a public works project, please show some vision and make it count.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Kern.

Next will be Molly Cook, followed by Etie Parat.

MS. COOK: My name is Molly Cook. I live in District C in Montrose. I am an ER nurse in the Texas Medical Center. And I have a master's of public health.
I grew up in Spring and went to high school in The Woodlands. My parents have a home on Lake Conroe. I have a very vested interest in improving efficiency on 45. I grew up on it. And I urge you to delay the vote. I do not support the expansion of Interstate 45 and certainly not the plans as they stand today.

The project as it stands, we've discussed it. It's going to uproot families, tear apart communities, and destroy thousands of jobs. We know that change and progress come at a cost. But this is neither change nor progress. It's not even going to work for the main problem that it is saying that it's going to fix. We know that it does not solve congestion, and we know that it will only put more cars on the road to expand it. This is a repetition of our past mistakes. And there is no evidence that it will work.

Using the 100-year floodplain in the design is an insult to families and first responders who suffered and risked their lives during Harvey. We know better. Let's do better.

What are we doing? Freeway expansion is not the future of Houston. All of us driving alone in our cars is not the future of Houston. Yes, we do need
to get people around. Yes, we do need to improve carbon emissions. Idling is not worse for the environment. Moving cars quickly is worse for the environment. In addition, moving more cars more quickly is actually way more dangerous. So it can't -- it just doesn't make sense that it would improve safety or have positive effects in climate change and reducing carbon emissions with the plans as they stand today.

We in Houston want creative evidence-based equitable traffic solutions that prioritize improving environmental justice in Houston and mitigating the effects of climate change.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Cook.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, we'll have at a Etie Parat, followed by Alejandro Perfair.

MR. PEREZ: Perez.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Perfair -- thank you.

Prevare [sic].

MR. PARAT: Good morning. Thank you for your attention. My name is Etie Parat. I live south of the Medical Center. So while we're all going to be impacted by this project, I'm not going to be directly in the way of the expansion, so I would like to offer my take.
I first came to Houston and the U.S. in the year 2000. Since then, I went -- I met my wife here. She's a native Houstonian. I graduated from the University of Houston studying civil and environmental engineering.

And I want to express two main concerns I have with this project. The first one is that the people that will be physically impacted by this, many of them are sitting here. They're not being heard. And I think that's obvious. That's why this crowd is here.

When I think of an equitable and transparent process of infrastructure investment, this is not it. I think people need to be heard. We need to take the time to address their concerns.

My second concern is with our strategies for developing as a region. We're about to -- we're proposing to invest massive amounts of public funding for a project that is essentially doomed to fail. We know this. Expanding highways don't work. We can look at the Katy Freeway and see that congestion has increased.

More than that, when -- as -- as a member of the young generation that will inherit this city with all its flaws, with all its potential, I want innovative -- I want to see innovative solutions to our
mobility needs. I don't want to see a region and a city that prioritizes roads over people. And I think we can do better.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, Alejandro Prevare.

MR. PEREZ: Perez.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Perez. Thank you.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

MR. PEREZ: Buenos dias, everybody. Good morning. Thank you guys for allowing me to speak here today.

There is different ways of getting around the city of Houston. One common bond that everybody probably has here is that we love this city. It was mentioned earlier that we love Texas. I love Texas too. And with that love for this city, what does the city have is diversity. Diversity is the core of what Houston is. And because of that, there is also -- those people, I think, who are diverse have different ways of getting around town, all right? Not everybody drives a car. Not everybody rides the bus or ride a bike or use Uber. I mean, all these different ways of getting around town is what this city needs. We do not need more concrete expansion projects to get cars through town and for people who don't -- really don't live here.
So, you know, I rode my bike today from here. And I live in District H up in Northline Commons. It took me an hour to get here, but I rode my bike because I know it's possible. And because it's possible -- not a lot of people feel that way. And I know there's a safety concern with that. You know, I have my lights. I have my helmet. And I'll make sure I'll be seen because that's the only thing I have for people who drive cars and know nothing but cars can kind of give me some sort of consideration, all right? Bright colors and all that. And, you know, this project the way it stands, it's -- it's -- it's addressing -- not addressing connectivity.

My main issue was -- living in that area is how the 45 expansion is going to mitigate the issue of the Light Rail when they're putting feeders through that Light Rai; I've -- I've -- I've gone to meetings since 2017. This is when I first heard of it. And I -- every time I go to these meetings, I ask the same question. I have not gotten any answers on that. And, I mean, what -- what -- I mean, it's been asked earlier -- or it's been mentioned earlier. This community has been submitting feedback. We have not heard any -- any responses to that feedback. And for this vote to go up today, you know, for more funding to
go ahead and move on without addressing what we've been concerned about is like -- you know, it's what's -- what's next, right? I mean, if people vote for this today -- if you guys vote for this today, what would we be in the future with -- with connectivity? And people who want to move here and connect. I mean, it's an attractive city. People come here regardless of the -- of the transportation infrastructure that's pretty bad. So, you know, why not make it better for them and the people who already live here?

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Perez. Next, Laila Khalili, followed by Beth Lusto.

MS. KHALILI: Good morning. My name is Laila Khalili, and I work at Avenue.

I am here to ask that this body delay the vote to give $100 million to fund Segment 2 of the NHHIP. This decision-making body is one that many people are not familiar with. People know who their council member is, and maybe they know about commissioners court. But most folks don't know that 28 people from elected and appointed positions across a 13-county region make major transit decisions that impact their quality of life.
In my work, I spend a lot of time with community members providing training, resources, and information on how they can get involved, how they can be heard, and how they can help make their community in Houston a better place to live.

At Avenue, we believe that communities know what they need to survive and to thrive and that residents are experts in what works for their neighborhoods. I'm sure many of you have heard the phrase, "The people who are closest to the payment are closest to the solutions." And I believe that is true here today.

Part of our (inaudible) work is to ensure that residents have the support and resources to create the neighborhoods they want and deserve. And that requires us to listen and then to act.

Today, many residents have shown up to advocate for their neighbors, their schools, and for their families. They took time off from work, carpooled, and prepared to come here perhaps for the very first time. For months and in some cases years, community leaders have been fighting to have their voices heard offering ideas, suggestions, and giving their time to do intentional community engagement around this project so that Houstonians know what is happening
to their communities. Please hear them. Listen to their concerns. For thousands of people, their homes, jobs, schools, health, and the very air they breathe are at risk.

Your power comes from your constituents, and they are doing everything they can to make a difference. Please delay the vote.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you. Next, Beth Lusto, followed by Fabian Ramirez.

MS. LUSTO: Good morning. My name is Beth Lusto. I'm a resident of the Near Northside, which is in District H and, as you probably know, borders the east side of Segment 2.

There are -- we've heard quite a few speakers. I'll try not to duplicate the many points that have been raised and instead choose to focus on one. And that is connectivity.

But as we've all heard, the vast majority of speakers that you've heard today -- I wasn't counting -- but are urging you to delay the vote to 2020. I've counted five so far who were -- were not in favor. I question whether any of those five people are directly impacted versus being employed and -- by entities that stand to benefit, but that don't reside in
the area.

Please, I urge you to listen to the residents, the impacted families over the voices of PR professionals. They're greatly outnumbered. There's a reason that -- I don't know -- 100 or more people took off half a day of work to be here desperate to have our voices heard. So I urge you to listen.

As I said, I'm going to speak to the connectivity issue. It's certainly not the most important. I mean, obviously, displacement, pollution, flooding, these are all giant issues.

But on the subject of connectivity, this plan, as planned, would create an almost mile-long barrier, spoke essentially that radiates from the north side of the fourth largest city, soon to be third, in the country, a wall -- an almost mile-long wall straight out of the north side of the city that is impassable. You have dense populations on both sides, and you've just built a wall through those populations with zero connectivity. It's -- I'm not an urban planning professional, but it doesn't take one to understand that that is a terrible idea.

Like many have spoken before, I just urge you to delay this vote. We've heard a lot of talk about mobility. Whose mobility? Not mine. And it's not a
coincidence that the wall that's going to be built is
going to disproportionately negatively impact those on
the east side, a population that has been historically
underserved and will be further alienated and prevented
from accessing amenities on the west side. And it's not
a coincidence.

I urge you to delay the vote.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you. Fabian
Ramirez, followed by Phillip Salerno.

MR. RAMIREZ: Hello, everyone. My name
is Fabian Ramirez. I'm here to ask the -- the
Houston-Galveston Area Council Transportation Policy to
delay approving $100 million --

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

MR. RAMIREZ: Yeah. I'm asking to -- the
Houston-Galveston Area Council Transportation to delay
approving $100 million for the NHHIP TxDOT until next
year. This will allow TxDOT to address more concerns of
the citizens from the communities that are here today.

One of the main reasons I wanted to ask
for this is because as a native Houstonian who graduated
from the University of Houston-Downtown as a structural
engineer and also worked as a structural engineer for an
oil and gas subsidy development, I know for a fact that
no matter how old the drawings are, no matter how long
the project has been in development, when an error has been detected, it's an engineer's ethical responsibility to address those issues. And I think there's a lot of them here today. For that very same reason, I think this needs to be delayed. It doesn't make any sense.

From a sustainable -- sustainable point of view, Houston deserves to be an energy leading com-- city. I mean, there's all different types of man-- mass transportation alternatives. This is not the way to go.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Phillip Salerno will be our next speaker, followed by Mary Schultz -- Schultz.

MR. SALERNO: Good morning, members of the Houston-Galveston Area Council Transportation Policy Council. My name is Phillip Salerno, and I serve on the board of the Citizens Transportation Coalition as the treasurer. I live in the Forrest Lake Townhomes where I serve as vice president and treasurer, which is within City Council District C. And I also served on the H-GAC High Capacity Transit Task Force.

All highway and, for that matter, city street projects should include multimodal high-capacity transit at the beginning of each of these projects. No longer should residents of the city core sacrifice their
land, homes, places of worship, businesses, and communities for a shorter commute. The NHHIP, aka the I-45 project, will provide bidirectional HOV max lanes that will allow METRO the opportunity to provide bus rapid transit, BRT in the service corridor. But at what cost to the residents, businesses, and communities along that corridor? Should the taxes paid by the residents and businesses along this corridor be used to further isolate and divide these communities?

Remember, these aren't TxDOT's -- TxDOT dollars spent on this project. They are taxes paid by the people. Citizens across the city are asking, why is this project necessary? What will this project really do to improve their lives and their mobility?

TxDOT and the City of Houston need to continue and complete real community involvement in this project. The TPC recently formed a committee to review project selections -- project selection and its ranking criteria. The last call for projects was just completed a couple of months ago. The I-45 project has been in process for years, and yet TxDOT failed to submit the funding request during the recent call for projects.

For all of these reasons, I ask you to delay the vote to fund Segment 2 of the NHI -- NHHIP until 2020. Thank you for your time.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good job, Phillip.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Now we invite Mary Schultz, followed by Carol Kern.

MS. SCHULTZ: Good morning, transportation Policy Committee, and thank you for this opportunity.

My name is Mary Schultz. I am a member of the Norhill Neighborhood Association in the Houston Heights and also of several organizations that are concerned about how climate change is threatening us in the city of Houston. I am in City Council District H under Karla Cisneros. And Rodney Ellis is my county commissioner.

I'm here today to ask you to delay the vote until 2020 of the idea of funding the I-45 TxDOT plan. Actually, everything that I wanted to say has been very eloquently said already by a number of people, so I am not going to repeat it. I am just going to say one thing. Climate change is here, and it is accelerating. We are going to have more floods if we don't do serious work to take carbon emissions out of our atmosphere. By the middle of the century, we are going to have one-third of our days of the year under the heat index of 100 degrees plus. That's just a fact.

So I think that the City of Houston knows
this. The Mayor knows this. And we've already heard about the excellent work being done on the Climate Action Plan. We know that there's been work done to connect a lot of communities with Complete Communities connecting them to resources and to each other. However, we're seeing also that the TxDOT plan for I-45 unintentionally sabotages all of these goals to protect citizens from climate change and from the effects of climate change, which will increase.

So there are -- and also I want to say that it -- it is based on a process that is connected with the past. It's the same pattern of building roads is the only solution to moving people around. And that may have worked fairly well so far. But as younger members of our audience here today have said really well, we need to be thinking of the future. We want to be the outstanding city of the country. We already have a template in the Climate Action Plan.

So let's use this opportunity with TxDOT, delay the vote. Then give them a chance to build in more innovative ideas and to take -- and to not include covering our porous spaces with more cement to the extent that we're going to have more flooding.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, let me invite
Carol Kern, followed by Nancy Saibara-Naritomi Tony.

**MS. KERN:** Good morning. I made it before the morning. So here I am. My name is Carol Kern, a concerned citizen, taxpayer, and homeowner in the Near Northside. I represent North Lindale Civic Club. I -- my representative is in District H.

And I am here to ask the word of the day. The word of the day is value. We assign a value to anything that we buy. I want to ask you that -- to please delay the vote of $100 million down payment on this massive infrastructure project.

TxDOT is still waiting for federal approval to move forward. Why is it a good business practice to put down a down payment when you don't have all the reports? I mean, seriously. It is -- I mean, nobody goes and buys a car and only three tires are on it. Where is the other tire, you know?

So it is my understanding that also you have not received the air quality study, which is due in January of 2020. What is the value that you put on your health?

All I am asking is, do not rush into a vote with all -- without all the facts. Why would you not consider the flooding issues, the displacement of
citizens in low-income areas to benefit commuters who have chosen to move out into the surrounding areas?

Let's review. This project was presented in 2003. Sixteen years later, our objectives have all changed. All the reports are now in -- not in yet, and we value -- we -- please help us weigh the value of one choice over another. I ask respectively, choose today to delay this vote until 2020 when all the facts are in. Please do not put the cart before the horse.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, we have Nancy Saibara-Naritomi, followed by Sara Montelongo.

MS. SAIBARA-NARITOMI: Hello. My name is Nancy Saibara-Naritomi. I'm third-generation Japanese born and raised in Pasadena, Texas, about 13 blocks away from 225. I was coughing all the time I lived in Pasadena, but now I live in Sharpstown. And by chance, because I'm a volunteer at 90.1 FM KPFT Pacifica for ten years, a fellow board member told me, "Hey, Air Alliance is having a breakfast on Thursday morning. Would you like to go and find out about I-45 expansion?" I said, "I never heard about that," you know, because I'm always listening to the radio, KPFT, and I don't listen to television.

And I was shocked. And I was so
appreciative of Air Alliance for doing so much research, especially health -- the -- the impact on health and on the already challenged communities there that are living right there.

You've got to put yourself in those people's homes and how they're using air filters if they can afford it, but still coughing and -- and coming to Air Alliance breakfast meeting and with their weak voice trying to say, you know, they're -- they're worried about the future, about the children. Are y'all?

Okay. I lived 27 years in Japan. And they do not have the option to expand anything because 70 percent of the country is mountains. So they just don't have the room. All the cemeteries are way up in the mountains. You know, it's very -- and then they don't -- they have like two or three oil companies. So they don't have cheap gasoline.

When I left in 2006, it was -- for one quart -- one liter -- one quart of gasoline was a dollar and 37 cents U.S. dollar. So you understand not too many cars and not -- a lot of bicycles, a lot of walking, subways, public transportation. It runs on time, not like in Houston. And you miss that -- you miss that bus or that bus driver goes a little bit too fast, and you've got to wait for 30 minutes to get the
next bus.

And so, anyway -- sorry. I -- I lost my car, my gas-guzzling car, and -- and I've been on public transportation now for -- since 2017. So you learn a lot of things.

There's a lot of improvements we can make. You know, when compared with Japan, everything is on time. And here it's awful. And we -- we -- Houston, we're in a fantastic city with so many people. Different thinking is coming in. We're the most -- what is it -- diverse city in the United States. Now we beat New York City. They can't have -- they can't brag that anymore. And guess what? The other big cities, they're dying. We are growing. We can be a template for the whole nation. Come on. Don't do this. Do something better.

Thank you.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Next, we'll have Sara Montelongo, followed by Monte Large.

**MS. MONTELONGO:** Good afternoon. My name is Sara Montelongo, and I am the district director for State Senator Carol Alvarado, who is an ex officio member of this council.

On her behalf, I would like to read the following letter that was sent to Commissioner Clark
earlier this week.

"Dear Commissioner Clark and members, I am writing to request that you postpone the scheduled vote of the H-GAC Transportation Policy Council regarding the $100 million in funding for the current I-45 project. This is an important project, and we all want to see it done well.

"At this time, a vote to approve federal funds may be premature in light of the many concerns expressed by my constituents. I realize that TxDOT is working very hard to address our concerns; however, issues regarding flooding, bike and pedestrian crossings, air quality, and neighborhood history still remain. Postponing this vote would not only increase the level of trust of residents. It will enhance the overall outcome by increasing the likelihood of community support.

"I appreciate your consideration of my request.

"Sincerely, Carol Alvarado, State Senator District 6 and Ex Officio Member of the H-GAC TPC."

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Sara.

Next will be Monte Large, followed by Susan Chadwick.

MR. LARGE: Hello. Thank you for the
opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Monte Large. I am here with my wife and eight-month-old baby girl who -- I don't know where they went. They disappeared somewhere. But we live in the Near Northside just north of the U of H-Downtown where the proposed new highway interchange would move about a thousand feet closer to our house, covering or eliminating most or all the green space along White Oak Bayou next to where we live.

I am here to ask you today to delay the vote for $100 million. Under the current plan, not only would our family lose our neighborhood park. It would bring the (inaudible) close to our house and within 500 feet, a distance the EPA deemed the danger zone, of the schools our daughter will likely attend.

While losing precious green space to massive freeways would be devastating, our biggest concern is air quality. I am here to give voice to one of the often abstract effects of freeways in our communities. I grew up here in Houston a few blocks away from a freeway and was, unfortunately, one of those kids the statistics cite. As a young man, I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, and after a tough battle am luckily in remission now. Hodgkin's is a cancer associated with environmental factors such as air
pollution and particulate matter from freeways. And while my wife and I are certainly concerned about our own health, we are most concerned about our daughter who would be especially at risk.

Please delay the vote for the $100 million and give TxDOT the time to address our concerns and the concerns raised by our neighbors, the people here, and those living in the other neighborhoods along the project corridor.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Monte.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

Susan Chadwick, followed by Reagan Lutter.

MS. CHADWICK: Good afternoon. My name is Susan Chadwick. I am president and executive director of Save Buffalo Bayou. We are a nonprofit organization advocating for people and the national environment, for modern flood management practice. Modern practice is based on understanding how nature works.

Through that advocacy, I've come to understand that streams are like highways. People think that if you just make streams bigger, deeper, and wider, it will solve our flooding. But it doesn't. It just makes flooding worse. Like building bigger highways, it
doesn't solve congestion. It just makes it worse. These are scientific facts. As members of the Transportation Policy Council, you are surely aware of these facts.

Others here today have spoken to you most eloquently about the overwhelming damage that this misguided project will cause to our city, to neighborhoods, businesses, homes, schools, and churches, to the physical and environmental health of our people, to our tax base and productivity, to our general future.

At this time, as the Houston-Galveston region is faced with the dire consequences of climate change in the form of increased and more frequent storms and more and more flooding threatening our very existence, this project is a particularly bad turn in the wrong direction; more cars on the road, more congestion, more flooding, more carbon emissions.

I am a native Houstonian. I grew up here. Our highways are never finished. They could never be big and wide enough. We are being buried in concrete. We need the option, the freedom to use our valuable time letting someone else drive, meeting and communicating with others from all walks of life on trains, buses, and sidewalks rather than sitting alone going nowhere in cars. Spend our tax dollars on mass transit.
I see no benefit from this backwards project except to the concrete companies, one of the most polluting industries on earth, to construction and engineering companies.

It's time to vote for the people. I urge you -- I urge you not to delay a vote on wasting 100 million of the people's money on this destructive project. I urge you to reject it outright, just say no.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next we'll hear from Reagan Lutter, followed by Diane Pfeifer.

MS. LUTTER: Good morning, Council. My name is Reagan Lutter, and I am a law student at the University of Houston. I am speaking today on behalf of Bayou City Waterkeeper, a local nonprofit organization that uses law, policy, and science to protect and restore waterways, preserve wetlands, and fight for resilience from flooding for communities in the Harris County and Greater Houston area.

Bayou City Waterkeeper joins the organizations and community members here today to request that the council delay its vote on this resolution. Respectfully, this vote is premature. TxDOT must take more time to address and problem-solve the many concerns raised by people living in
neighborhoods along the project corridor.

Along with the many concerns raised by the organizations and individuals before you today, TxDOT must account for how this project will worsen flooding. For instance, Segment 2 will convert up to 27 acres of much needed open space to impermeable concrete. Adding more concrete to this area will increase runoff into our already burdened drainage system and worsen both local and pass-through flooding in the area. Further, many of the schools along I-45 are already in areas ranked by FEMA as most prone to flooding. Through this project, TxDOT should address, not exacerbate, this flooding.

Using the more accurate data gathered after Hurricane Harvey, TxDOT must show this project will not worsen flooding for area communities. TxDOT must show that this project will not undermine local efforts to make the Greater Houston region more resilient to flooding, including Harris County's $2.5 billion flood bond initiative.

This council should not vote on this resolution until TxDOT addresses these serious flooding concerns. This council also should not vote until TxDOT evaluates and accounts for how increased runoff from the expanded highway will degrade local water quality. As a result of this project, more floatables and more
pollutants will enter the TCEQ Section 303(d) impaired waters of Buffalo Bayou, White Oak Bayou, and Little Oak Bayou.

This project should leave us and future generations better off, not make our already impaired waters even more polluted. TxDOT must show this project will not undercut the City of Houston's recent $2 billion commitment to improve water quality by repairing its wastewater infrastructure. Until TxDOT addresses these concerns about the impact of Segment 2 on local water quality, this council's vote is premature. The TxDOT I-45 expansion seriously threatens flood resiliency and water quality.

We urge the council to delay its vote on this resolution to allow TxDOT more time to address the public's concerns.

Thank you for having me today.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

Next will be Di- -- next will be Diane Pfeifer, followed by Abigail Cavenja.

MS. PFEIFER: Good afternoon. Wow. We've transitioned to the middle of the day here.

Thank you. I'm Diana Lerma Pfeifer. I live in Lindale Park, a current civic club president. I am a native Houstonian. And I've lived inside the Loop
my entire life. I work downtown, and so being inner
city is special to me. But I am here to say that, of
course, I'm asking for the delay. I'm wearing it on my
chest because that's where I feel it the most, in my
heart.

I saw on your website that you have a
program that's called Our Great Region 2040. And in
that, it states, "The plan will call to make us one of
the greatest places to live, to work, and to succeed by
2040."

Well, I'm here to tell you today, Friday,
July the 26th of 2019, if you don't look at what we're
doing today, there will be no future. There will be no
success in 2040.

Right now today, we're making a decision
that will cost us 24,000 jobs. I'm looking at each one
of you wondering how long and hard you have worked for
your community to get jobs, to get people to come there
to work, to live. How many of you have built schools in
your neighborhood? And now you want to take our
schools, 26 schools, and make them within 500 feet of a
freeway. How safe is that for our children? How --
well, what is -- what about their well-being? That's
our future. Our future in 2040 calls for those very
children to be working in this city, be going to our
colleges, to becoming maybe someone like you. And if we take away that opportunity, what have we done today? So there is no way that you can possibly believe that you are looking to make a great region in 2040 and be considering this plan. There's just no way.

We're asking you to use your mind. If you won't use your heart, use your mind. Remember the numbers. They're huge. 24,000 jobs, over 5,000 families being displaced, 26 elementary schools that will be affected directly by this. Look at the numbers. More concrete does not make a better way of life.

We live in a tremendous city with tremendous, brilliant minds. Please, please give us a chance. Give this community a chance to come to the table with some real solutions. Don't cut us short today.

And I do want to say to Tom Lambert at METRO, I surely hope that METRO will not support this plan. If they're going to come to the table and ask us for $5 billion in November, they better be thinking about what they're doing when they decide whose side they're on.

Thank you very much.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, we'll invite Abigail Cavenja, followed by Daphne Scarbrough.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We will prevail.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

MS. SCARBROUGH: Mr. Clark --

MR. ALAN CLARK: Yes.

MS. SCARBROUGH: -- did you call me?

MR. ALAN CLARK: Yes. I -- well, no. I said you're second.

MS. SCARBROUGH: Second.

MR. ALAN CLARK: I'm sorry. First was Abigail -- I'm sorry if I can't pronounce the last name correctly -- Venja -- Cavenja.

MS. CAVENJA: Hello. Thank you for your time today. My name is Abigail Cavenja. I was raised and currently reside in a neighborhood off the North 610 Loop and Yale Street. So I live right next door to Independence Heights, which will be impacted by the I-45 highway expansion. My city council member is Ms. Ellen Cohen.

I believe TxDOT has chosen to expand I-45, including the additional HOV lanes, in the most disruptive way possible. I am requesting that the TPC delay the vote on dedicating funding to the I-45 expansion project till 2020.

TxDOT should consider installing the
additional HOV lanes without expanding the highway's footprint. TxDOT has previously constructed, for example, double-decker lanes on I-35 in Central Austin and also I-635 in Dallas to maximize space without widening the right-of-way.

By de- -- by delaying this vote, this provides TxDOT additional time to consider alternatives that are less harmful to the communities that will be impacted.

Also, currently, voting to go ahead and fund -- provide funding for the project will signal -- will signal to TxDOT that the community approves of the current expansion design, when the community impacted by this project clearly does not.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, I'll invite Daphne Scarbrough, followed by Joetta Stevenson.

MS. SCARBROUGH: Thank you. I am Daphne Scarbrough. I do live in District C. We would be affected by the southern end where the Southwest Freeway comes around from the Pierce Elevated.

And I am not going to repeat. They have had such good speakers. I am very logical about this. I am a near native Houstonian. I remembered when Bellaire got sliced by TxDOT. I'm on the board of the
Bellaire Historical Society. They have not forgiven you yet, TxDOT. They -- they still -- I was amazed. You -- they are still upset. So -- and, of course, all you have to do is look at Emancipation Boulevard and all of the businesses that were devastated when 45 went through.

We do understand the need for transportation, but there is also a need for the neighborhoods, the businesses, and the jobs. And I would ask you to postpone this decision primarily on a logical viewpoint. I do not understand how you can make a designed decision. And Houston has the best in engineers. We have the best in construction. We have done more with less so many times. But how can you make a decision about going up or going down when you do not have current floodplain maps? That should be enough.

$100 million could be used so many other places. Our Port of Houston is still vulnerable. Everyone who lives close to Buffalo Bayou, White Oak Bayou, Hayes Bayou, they are all in danger.

Here we are two years later. Nothing has really happened. You have an opportunity today to look at what you're doing with this amount of money and try to make it go further and be more productive. So as always, thank you for this opportunity.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ask Lawrence Battelle to come forward.

MR. ALAN CLARK: I'm taking people in order.

Yes. Our next speaker, Joetta Steven--

MS. STEVENSON: Good evening, everyone.

My name is Joetta Stevenson, and I'm the president of the Fifth Ward Super Neighborhood, and I also sit on the board of the Texas Organizing Project, Monus TOP.

I ask this committee to please, please delay this vote. My historic community is under siege. It's a community that many people love to quote and love to bring up some of the most outstanding Americans, a Barbara Jordan, a Mickey Leland. Well, you know what? Being under siege is not a fun place. And that's not a fun place for their memories either.

We're under siege basically because of decisions that are being made by persons who are usually given reports from entities like a TxDOT and what I call the usual list of money-driven suspects based on wall maps and computer-generated numbers, reports that either lack or shamefully minimize the human cost of massive family dislocation -- dis-- I'm sorry -- displacement, loss of businesses, damaging effects on our community's
health, including clean air and the environment.

And if any of you know anything about Fifth Ward, we are a plethora. We are like a Petri dish for environmental issues.

Yes, I've attended many of the TxDOT meetings. As a matter of fact, over the last few months, they've gone into overdrive. They seem to be every other couple of days. But, basically, they have been more or less a dog and pony show. They basically have been more of a, quote, look what we've planned for you, unquote.

To this committee, collecting sign-in sheets from community members is not community engagement. We need to be meaningfully included in this project. There are far too many unanswered questions regarding this project to rush for a vote on this today. Listen to the people. Listen to a room filled with registered voters. Delay this vote. Please delay this vote.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Our next speaker will be the Honorable Jew Don Boney, followed by Robin Holzer.

HON. JEW DON BONEY: Good morning. I want to thank you for the opportunity to share some brief remarks.
I -- it seems to me that you've already made up your mind, that this is an exercise that you're going through to let the community have a say. And I am going to offer a prophesy that once the public comment is over, you're going to vote to approve this.

We've seen this movie before. North 45 destroyed Fifth Ward. 59 destroyed the other part of the (inaudible). The same thing happened in Fourth Ward. And now here you come again.

I'm sorry for that.

I served as a member of city council with Bob Lanier for two years, mayor pro tem under Lee Brown for four years. And I learned a few things. And I also worked with TxDOT. They've got some wonderful engineers.

They seem to -- whenever they build a new freeway, a new road, to cut through the minority communities and destroy. We've seen that over and over and over again in Houston. It's almost like you go to school to learn how to dissect the black, the brown, and the poor community because that's all that you've ever done.

Wonderful engineers, but they're not the only ones with blazing ideas.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.
HON. JEW DON BONEY: The other thing that you need to really fix is what you call civic engagement, public participation because it sucks. TxDOT has never known how to outreach into the community; not to just get input, but to make them partners as stakeholders in this vision that we're all trying to live.

So I am just going to wrap it up and say, we've seen this movie before. Whatever community engagement you think you got has obviously been inadequate. As policymakers, we know we make better policy when we engage the people that we're there to try to serve and make life better for. But when we think we're so all wise that we can figure it out by ourselves, that the experts know better what we need in our community, we fail.

I would ask that you would reject the proposal. Let's come back and put together a collaborative process and actually make the thing work.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Now we'll invite Robin Holzer, followed by Consuelo Cabrera.

MS. HOLZER: I admit I'm more nervous about doing this than I've been in quite some time.

My name is Robin Holzer. And the first
meeting I attended in this space dealing with transportation was 16 years ago. And the meeting looked nothing like this. There were a handful of people in the room. A few very smart, very heartfelt neighbors came to talk about a project that they had concerns over. But in the end, they had come too late. And the contracts had been let. And mostly they went home frustrated.

So the first thing I want to call to your attention today is that this room is very different than what happened with the Katy Corridor 16 and 17 years ago. These people have not come too late.

The second thing I want to say is that listening to the people on both sides of this lectern, I am struck that we hear the same project, but we're thinking about it very differently. For Billion Dollar Gary and Delvin Dennis and others here, the Katy Corridor -- the Katy Corridor Freeway Project is legitimately an amazing fete of engineering project management. It is an accomplishment that they can celebrate. But it is not a fete of city building. It is not a fete of economic development. It is not a fete of environmental justice. It ate up 95 percent of the commercial tax base of the city of Spring Valley. It was a deeply flawed project. It also had great things
we've heard about. The HOV lanes and the toll lanes work well for transit. So it's a very mixed bag depending on who you talk to in this room.

This -- this -- okay. What am I on? Number three?

Okay. So the third thing I want to say is that the people in the room have changed. When the Katy Corridor came, it was a handful of smart people. This I-45 project has garnered thousands of volunteer hours from some of our city's brightest urban planners, from its traffic engineers, from its economic development people, in -- and environmental justice leaders and organizers and neighbors and health experts and public health people, in addition to all of the investment that TxDOT has made.

So as you at the TPC decide what have I heard today and what's my role with it, I want to make sure you give proper value to the heavy weight of evidence that this representative group has brought to you.

Where I would end is the thing that concerns me most, and it's a final thing that's different with the Katy Corridor. At that time, we had checks and balances between the federal government, the National Environmental Policy Act, the EIS process that
captured concerns of the public and then required TxDOT and its consulting team to address them.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Holzer.

MS. HOLZER: The process is very different today with TxDOT self-certifying and with federal highway not at the table and with our EIS being incomplete. So I would ask you to delay the vote. And it is your turn now to hold the consulting team accountable for really delivering a great and complete and robust project that we all need for our region.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

Now we'll invite Consuelo Cabrera followed by Tanya Debose.

I'm sorry. Is -- is Consuelo here?

MS. CABRERA: (Through Interpreter) Good morning. I am Consuelo Cabrera, and I reside in west -- west side -- Northside. I am a community engineer in the community center. I am here to express a concern in communications with the Hispanic community about the expansion of 45 and north segment. Take into account that the Hispanic community is more than 60 percent of the total population.

They say they're concerned about the effect that this is going to cause. The -- the
construction will cause -- the construction will cause flooding when the time of flooding comes. We are also concerned about the air quality since there are not enough green spaces to balance off the pollution, to balance off affecting the population. That will -- that will give a bad air quality for the people. There is also concern about how the historical heritage is going to be preserved.

So then we are asking for the delay on the voting for the funding of Segment 2 till 2020 until all the concerns of the population that is being affected are being answered, and specifically the Hispanic community.

Thank you so much.

(Individuals speaking Spanish.)

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, I'd like to invite Tomaro Bell, followed by Todd Thurber.

MS. BELL: Good afternoon. First off, let me begin by saying that what just occurred is one of the main problems with the alleged transparency and participation that TxDOT claims they're giving. For over a year, they have been asking for bilingual notifications about this project, and they haven't done it one time. How is that inclusion when (inaudible) is one of the biggest parts of this project? They want --
I want to make sure I stay on my points.

Secondly, the gentleman got up and talked about how this project started in 2003. Everybody in this room want to know, in 2003, why they weren't at the table. They were at the table. They were the menu. We getting off today. That's why I'm here. We want to be a participant of this project. We don't want to be processed. We want to be at the -- be on the process, not processed. And that is a problem that you-all have.

There's only seven past chairmans of the Super Neighborhood Alliance. That goes from Clear Lake to Kingwood. I am one of those seven. I am here today though because I live where this project is affected.

Let me tell you-all something. What TxDOT did with 288, Third Ward still has not recovered. Now, 288, as you-all know, is the detention pond for the Macgregor area. But because of the development that has occurred, now that detention pond is going into our area.

When they started doing this money-making new HOV lane down 288, they told us, "We don't mitigate flooding," okay? "We don't mitigate flooding." I said, "How can you not mitigate it? Hell, you're causing it. You took out $9 million worth of trees that the federal government gave to help us so that you can make more
money." Like the gentleman said before, that's not TxDOT dollars. Them are our dollars. Those are taxpayer dollars. You have to include the public in this.

And let me tell you about this nail in the coffin, you-all trying to get to Houston. Yeah, we may have some growth. But the odds -- the lands of odds are whooping our butt. That's Pearland, Sugar Land, Woodlands. The people are moving out there and are the companies. Downtown should not be something you fly past. It should be a destination.

If you remove that I-45 Pierce Elevator, you can make a ramp so that those who are coming to downtown can land, not bypass. And you-all around looking. This is a ten-year project. We can lose Super Bowls, Olympics. We can lose all kind of conventions because don't nobody want to sit on 45 while you get done.

If you-all would pay attention, during Harvey, you saw the massive flooding that we had. Suppose we have to get the hell out of here. Go 45, down 59, down 10, down -- we stuck luck chuck. What is wrong with y'all? Pay attention.

And I'm going to tell you, some of these meetings you-all have had have been a waste. You come.
You listen. Oh, but you can't ask no questions.

We not your children. We are adults. We are grown adults who are participating in the money that we're contributing. We want you to listen. It's not that hard. Listen.

Even in their own documents, TxDOT shows a negative impact. You know how long it took for them to even look at the socioeconomic injustice, say (inaudible)? Oh, well, look, we don't give city $90 million for those housing projects that we're going to take out. What they do with that money, we don't know.

Okay. How is that including and making sure these people can move back? Because let me tell you what I see this as. This project is the acceleration for gentrification that has made developers' dreams come true.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next -- next, we'll invite Todd Thurber, followed by Tanya Debose.

MR. THURBER: Mr. Chairman and members of the policy council, thank you for allowing me to be here today. My name is Todd Thurber, and I'm a current board member of ACEC Houston. And I'm here representing ACEC Houston to express our support for this resolution,
which is the funding partnership for Segment 2 of the
North Houston Highway Improvement Program and the
Mitigation of Adverse Community Impacts.

As you-all know, public engagement is
critical to developing a successful transportation
project. For the NHIIP [sic], TxDOT has held numerous
public and stakeholder meetings throughout this whole
corridor with many project modifications having been
made as a result.

ACEC Houston is encouraged by the
additional mitigation efforts of TxDOT as outlined in
the resolution, which will allow TxDOT and the community
to continue to gather public input and to develop
alternatives to minimize impacts to the adjacent
communities in the region as a whole and to gain public
consensus in order to move this very important project
forward.

Therefore, ACEC Houston supports the
leadership of this council, TPC, in proposing this
resolution and supports the members approving this
resolution in order to be able to allow this project to
continue.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, we'll invite Tanya
Debose, followed by Leticia Ablaza.
MR. JOHNSON: Good morning. My name is Ashley Johnson. I'm the community affairs director with LINK Houston. Unfortunately, Ms. Debose, for a medical appointment, was not able to make it. She has asked me to speak on her behalf, if that would be permissible to the council.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Go ahead.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you.

With regards to the Independence Heights community of which Ms. Debose is the executive director for the Redevelopment Council, they particularly have been profiled as a community that has been not only adversely affected, but also has had a history of effects to this community in a number of different ways.

The Independence Heights community particularly right now, even since the development of the north -- of the north area of 610, has seen residential displacement of communities, some of them being over 300 residences within that community in the last area of freeway construction that was going on there.

Even now, you're seeing adverse impacts in regards to the Independence Heights community not only in -- in the displacement of -- of people residentially, but also affecting businesses that are also north of the
610 area there near the -- near the Crosstimbers area, but also in one of the most glaring areas -- one of the glaring parts of the project is the displacement of a 114-year-old church, the Greater Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church, which was -- which was -- which was destroyed during the Hurricane Ike in 2008-2009, which then the pastor came back and rebuilt with his own hands to rebuild that church then along the North 610 area. And now, unfortunately, the construction design of this project is now going to go and displace that community and -- displace that church again and its parishioners there.

The question in regards to the project -- and I understand TxDOT has been involved in mitigation with them -- is, even if we really relocate those people to that community, where do you do it? And where do you do it so that it is comparable?

You're seeing a community, not only the community itself, but some of the -- some of the landmarks within that community that are being moved again, and people are being asked time and time again to accommodate progress. But what is the benefit within that community of this project as a whole? What is the -- what is the -- what is the benefit of a project like the NH -- NHHIP then to people when they see it
moving to the future?

They're always being asked to accommodate and accommodate and accommodate. But my question then to TxDOT then and to the members of the TPC is: When are -- when are these people within this community going to be allowed to have a fair shake and have a seat at the table from the beginning of the process?

And then even more so with the vote that's going on today is, how are you going to move and make an advance on a project right now when there are people who are still trying to understand the aspects and the impacts of it?

I can understand out front that you would need to move and -- move on this project expediently to see things moving forward. But you have to allow the community as a whole to be not only involved in it, but you need to allow the community at large to be aware.

There are many people on the TPC now who are geographically not near -- anywhere near Segment 2 or Segment 1 or different areas. But this is a multigenerational project that not only affects Houston, but it affects Greater Houston. And everybody around the table today needs to be aware of that and understand that you need to be accountable in that process. You need to make sure that your charity and that your
benefit in regards to the city as a whole includes not only people within your geographic or in the constituencies that you represent, but it represents the region for all.

Thank you for your time.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

Now I'd like to invite Leticia Ablaza, followed by Cesar Esperanza.

MS. ABLAZA: Hello. My name is Leticia Ablaza. I am with Air Alliance Houston. I am the community outreach director. I am here today to oppose the North -- the North Highway expansion.

And first of all, I would like to ask: Why didn't the H-GAC have translators ready and available? I was asked. And I would have been more than happy to, but I am not a certified translator. However, I think I can guess why. The Hispanic community was not properly informed in their language.

More importantly, I want to also come here and talk about the high number of childhood asthma rates in the area that are continuing to climb due to poor air quality. You would think that everyone here at this table would figure out a way to properly use $7 billion and probably more to help our current mobility problems that contribute to these issues and many other health
issues in this area regarding emissions.

You would think that with all the flooding in the city and with pro- -- and with more projected to hit our city in the next decade, that this board here at this table making these decisions about our future and our health, our homes, and our investments, that you would be able to figure out how to use this billion dollars to hire some of the best urban and mobility planners in this nation to properly accommodate the city with -- without turning this into a sea of concrete as many have pointed out.

There is -- there are no real traffic mitigations in place. Funneling all these cars into the city to park where?

Council Member Robinson, I go to city council on a regular basis, and you yourself know the parking issues in the city are a huge problem. And there's always constraints. And there's no way to be able to fix that with funneling more cars into the city. You're basically going to have gridlock downtown -- in the downtown areas with more people idling waiting for a parking -- waiting for a parking space. Please explain to me how this is going to help.

My son attends Energy Institute High School. And he and his classmates have been on projects
building models on how to better reduce emissions in their city. And I promise you, promise you, that widening freeways was not a part of their many varied solutions. These are young kids that have better ideas and ways to help our problems and understand that doing the same things that haven't worked is a sign of insanity and, in my opinion, corruption at its best.

I'd like to remind you, METRO, that the bond initiative vote is coming. And these are the very same people here that you will be asking to support this bond, when clearly METRO, our public transit, from my understanding, has little to -- has had little involvement in the planning of this freeway expansion.

I want to thank my commissioner, Adrian Garcia, for helping our community and our county -- our county judge, Lina Hidalgo. You represent the community that's being impacted and what our community looks like. Your staff has been amazing. I can't say that for the rest of you.

And I would also like to ask: Who here was the one that asked for the motion to not allow public input before the vote? Who was the guy?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you for your time.

MS. ABLAZA: No. I want to know. I -- we need to know for the record, who is the one that
asked for the motion for the record?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nobody asked for --

MS. ABLAZA: Your name, please, sir.

MR. MILICAN: Larry Millican.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Larry Millican.

MS. ABLAZA: How do you spell your last name?

MR. MILICAN: M-I-L-L-I-C-A-N.

MS. ABLAZA: Thank you, sir.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next invite Cesar Espinoza, followed by Lawrence Battelle.

MR. BATTELLE: Good afternoon. My name is Lawrence Battelle. And I am here to give remarks on behalf of Harris County Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis.

I write you today to request that you delay your scheduled vote on Friday to allocate more than $150 million towards the North Houston Highway Improvement Project I-45.

As a former member of the Transportation Committee in the Texas Senate, I understand the enormous responsibility of planning for the transportation needs of our growing region. However, it is very important to me that Houston-Galveston Area Council make the right
decision.

I represent communities in or very close to the entire 24-mile corridor of the proposed expansion of I-45. Residents have raised valid concerns about the potential negative impact on affordable housing, economic activity, and the environment, particularly for low-income residents and communities of color.

These concerns echo familiar historical patterns where highway projects in Houston and across the country decimated urban communities by eliminating housing and economic opportunity.

TxDOT must address these issues before moving forward. Holding a vote on Friday will be premature and undermine ongoing efforts to engage affected communities in the corridor. TxDOT and Houston-Galveston Area Council delaying the vote this week would signal to the community that their input is significant. We owe it to our communities to take the time necessary to ensure that this project is the best path forward for everyone in our region.

I urge you to simply delay this vote and give everyone more time to consider the full impact this project will have on the quality of life and economic opportunities of the people along I-45.

Thank you.
MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

And do we still have -- do we still have Cesar -- and maybe it's Esperson, the last name.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Espinoza.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you. Espinoza.

Thank you. I wanted to make sure we said it right the first time.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Espinoza, can you come forward, please?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm going to see if he's outside.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Would you like me to invite the next speaker, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Please. We can go back to Mr. Espinoza.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Yes. We'll return to him.

Jay Blazek Crossley.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't think Espinoza is here.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. Crossley is here. He's in the overflow.

MR. CROSSLEY: Hi. I was in the overflow room.
Hi. My name is Jay Blazek Crossley, and I'm with a 501c3 nonprofit called FarmCity. I grew up here. I went to Lamar High School. But now I live in Austin. But my parents, my brother and sister-in-law, niece and nephew live here and use the Houston transportation system every day. And so I thank you-all for your service for all -- and for all that you do to improve the quality of life for all the people of the Houston region.

I'd like to make three main points that current trends and travel in our region do not merit the expansion of this freeway, that the current facility is horrible though and needs to be fixed, and that we can do better.

I have been spending a lot of time looking at vehicle miles traveled and traffic count data. And there's some really weird stuff going on in that data. If you'll look at the TxDOT VMT data from 2005 to 2014, the total amount of travel in the region basically stayed the same while we grew tremendously, which, if that's real, means that the VMT per capita has been reducing in Houston over that time at a rate of 2.6 percent reduction every year. The people of Houston are driving less. Where our city is growing up, as it also is growing out, many people are finding ways to
walk and bike or just not drive as far. And that makes sense.

In spite of the TPC and TxDOT efforts to open up land for development, we have different patterns happening. Some Houstonians are moving in to car-dependent neighborhoods on top of our prairie and are forced to drive a bunch because that's the only option they have. But a lot of other Houstonians are driving less.

If you look at the traffic count data on I-45 specifically, you will see the total amount of vehicles that have -- driving on I-45 inside of Beltway 8 have reduced -- have been going down in the last ten years. Every single traffic count inside of Beltway 8 is on a downward trend; whereas every traffic counter outside Beltway 8 is going up because of the Grand Parkway. So I think the purpose of need of this proposed expansion is suspect.

And to my second point though, I think Quincy and the team at TxDOT are actually doing a great job given the flawed assumptions and flawed funding strategies for our state.

People die regularly on I-45. It is currently not a well-functioning facility. It needs to be fixed.
The safety improvements proposed, the flow improvements, the removal of the Pierce Elevated, the potential for a CAP, the proposal to upgrade four lanes to max lanes to carry more people, these are all great things that we need to do. We just don't need to add the lanes.

We should fix the freeway, use modern, safe design guidelines, keep 11-foot lanes, don't expand the lanes, and upgrade without expanding the right-of-way.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

MR. CROSSLEY: Thank you very much. And, please, this -- whenever you decide on $100 million, do not waste our regionally discretionary money on expansion. Dedicate that money to safety, transit, walkable access for the people who live here.

Thank you.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next, we invite Assata Richards, followed by Evelyn Merz.

DR. RICHARDS: Good afternoon. As a third-generation Houstonian of the historic and culturally rich Third Ward community, I am so very proud of Houstonians today. It has been a rare occasion to be in a room with the private sector, the public sector,
nonprofits, residents, researchers, renters like myself, and homeowners who are speaking with a clear and clarion voice on behalf of what they want this city to be and what they want our region to become. And I'm very excited about that.

Again, my name is Dr. Assata Richards. And I'm the director of the Sankofa Research Institute. I am the board president of the Emancipation Economic Development Council. I'm the board president of the newly formed Houston Community Land Trust. I am a graduate of HISD. I am a graduate of the University of Houston. And I earned my Ph.D. from Penn State University, but I chose to come back here.

And as a professor, I want to tell you something which I think you figured out. Tex- -- TxDOT did not do their best work. They did not do you a service. They have been inadequate, and they have not given you what you need to make an informed decision. And they have prepared you not for a decision which is based on the input and the best thinking of this city. Rice University has weighed in on this. The University of Houston has weighed on -- in on this. Scholars from across the country have weighed in on this to say that this project should not move forward as designed.

And you owe it to yourself, and you owe it
to the organizations that you represent to vote and tell
txDOT, come back and give me a better deal, project,
proposal to vote on, because if you don't, then you send
a message that Houston and our region will not lead the
nation, but will be continuing to do what we've done
before.

They, in their presentation, should have
told you about the 168 single-family homes. They should
have told you about their thousand multifamily homes,
368 which are deeply subsidized housing. We're
hemorrhaging affordable housing in this city, and you
know it. We cannot afford to lose a unit without a
replacement strategy for those affordable housing units.
You cannot go anywhere and tell anybody you're going to
destroy 60 homeless Veteran units and be okay. You
cannot tell anybody you're going to destroy 331 small
businesses with no strategy to replace those businesses.

    Saint Paul, Minnesota, got it right. They
had a plan in place with the private/public
philanthropic community to say how we're going to
strategically bring those businesses back online
stronger and better before.

    You saw what METRO did in Second Ward. It
was a mistake. And we do not have to repeat mistakes.
We're better than that. You should not sign a document
that says this does not preclude. You know that's not good work. The documents say, it must stipulate.

They did not do their homework. Most importantly, they did not take community engagement seriously. And it shows, right? When you do it right, when you engage deeply, when you listen, and when you respond to what you hear, you bring the community here as your support and not your opposition. Until they do it right, tell them go back and bring it back to you again in 2020.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Next speaker will be Evelyn Merz.

MS. MERZ: Good afternoon. My name is Evelyn Merz. I am the conservation chair of the Houston Sierra Club and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club. And I am here representing the Sierra Club today.

The Sierra Club does share the concerns about the displacement of residents and businesses and the injustices inherent in this project; however, today, I am going to focus my comments on air quality and flood risks, which are issues that the Sierra Club works on.

The staff recommendation for the low-emission zone is frankly a pitiful attempt to mitigate the air quality concerns that have been raised by this project. Do you really think that an electric
vehicle recharging facility and enhanced air quality monitoring after the fact is going to protect local residents and workers from particulates and the additional emissions from the expanded highway in this area? And how could it protect them from the tremendous amount of particulates and emissions that are going to result during construction and the inevitable traffic backups during this project? This is not mitigation. This is window dressing.

The -- the earlier presenter noted, when he made the initial presentation to you-all, that the recently released NOAA Atlas -- that's the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Atlas 14. Rainfall frequency data was going to be used and included in this project. How is it going to be considered?

The Harris County Flood Control District is going to be remapping the 100-year floodplain as a result of the NOAA Atlas 14 for the entire county. And it is widely expected and unaccepted that what is currently mapped as a 500-year floodplain is going to be the 100-year floodplain after this (inaudible) county is remapped.

That is significant because NOAA Atlas 14 changed what were the definition of the 24 of the
100-year rainfall event from 12 to 13 inches in a 24-hour period to 17 to 18 inches of rainfall in a 24-hour period. That is tremendous.

The -- exactly how is TxDOT going to account for this? It's a major expansion in the 100-year floodplain. I have not heard that.

Standard procedure has been to treat close-in neighborhoods as sacrifice zones to enhance mobility for more distant and yet-to-be-built neighborhoods. But what is needed now is an opportunity to develop an alternative plan that protects the livability of neighborhoods, the health of the residents, and safety from expected increases in the amount and severity of rainfall.

And I do appreciate this opportunity to speak with you. Thank you very much. And we ask you to delay the vote.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Thank you.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Next will be -- next speaker will be Arviele Fortia, followed by Robert Holley.

**MS. FORTIA:** Good afternoon.

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** We're nearing the very end of our list of speakers, Mr. Chairman.

**MS. FORTIA:** Okay. Good afternoon. My
name is Arviele Fortia. I am a resident of Kelly Village Apartments and a single parent. This is my son Corbin.

I am here today to contend that the 45 expansion should be tabled until the relocation of every resident affected has occurred for the following reasons. There are three.

One, traffic is horrendous. It has been since the work began some -- quite some time ago. I believe a couple of years ago, two or three years. In any case, my son and I ride METRO to get to and from school and run errands, etcetera. And with the schedule being as it is, he has to get up -- we both have to get up at five a.m. every morning to be on time for school for eight due to, like I said, routing and scheduling of the -- the buses, the -- let me go back to my notes.

Okay. So with traffic and with the construction that's going on in this area, it makes the commute even longer than it already is. And because of that, my son has been late to school far too many times. And that's something that has already been taken care of. But moving on, it's -- it's just not fair to him or any other student that has to go through something like that just to get to school.

Subsidies are received by the schools in
reference to attendance. And lowered attendance means lower money for our children's education. They should be able to be their best, their brightest at any -- every single day. In this situation, that's not occurring.

Second reason, a lot of people are being faced with wrongful eviction. I've been going back and forth with Kelly Village HHA, J. Allen Management in court for the past two to three years just to keep my residence.

In 2015, I believe, we were originally informed at that point that this TxDOT deal would basically be -- be taking place. There would be some time that lapsed where basically once the property was purchased, all the residents would have to be relocated. They would receive vouchers.

I attended a board meeting earlier this year, I believe, January, or December of last year. And I asked specifically what was the status as far as residents receiving vouchers due to this expansion. I was given an answer that that expansion was off the table, there had been no vouchers given. I know people who have received them.

The point is, there are several apartments in this area where this construction is to occur where
people are being displaced. And to assist J. Allen and all these other property managers and all these other government entities to move these people out of these areas -- people are being charged excess utilities. Their rent is being raised. And these are people who are low income. They're already in a situation where they're doing their best just to make ends meet. And what's happening here is, all these people are being moved around, kicked out to accommodate people who really, not to be ugly, can afford to live anywhere.

And there has been a reduction in the amount of properties that are available for these displaced residents to go to. That's the problem.

I personally feel as if -- since TxDOT is benefiting from this, they should also practice some social responsibility and help contribute to creating affordable housing for low-income persons who are doing their best to get their kids to and from school, get to work, pay their bills, who are contributing to society, taxpaying residents.

Okay. So we're asking you-all to -- I am asking for you-all to put the shoe on the other foot. If you were on this side of the table, if you had to go through some of the things that we -- I have had to chase buses with him in a stroller when he was younger.
I have now a bad hip, crack in my hip, crack in my elbow. I don't look like it, but I need a cane. And I can't keep running after METRO and -- and -- and the train because -- to get where we need to go due to this traffic.

They don't want to stop. They don't want to slow down. If there's traffic, there's chances there in some areas that there are homeless persons who kind of gather at these areas. And that causes the bus drivers not want -- not to want to stop. And that's a problem.

So moving -- moving on -- and I'm going to wrap this up because I know I'm being timed.

This wrongful eviction that's occurring here, it contributes to, as I said, the homeless population, which we've been trying to diminish in the past few years to accommodate tourism, businesses mostly central to Downtown Houston and the upper-middle class and the like. And, basically, it's making it harder for the money that's provided by taxpaying citizens to be efficiently used to close that gap.

Third, it's harassment incurred by residents from J. Allen. Precinct 6, HPD, they're constit- -- they're contractors of the constituents who are benefiting on the outskirts from this -- this
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you, ma'am.

MS. FORTIA: And thank you so much for listening. Just please put the shoe on the other foot. It could be you at any moment.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Thank you.

We have one more presenter signed up, Robert Holley.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, just as a point of personal privilege, I just want to let the audience and the folks in the overflow know that we've got pizza coming. I know you guys have been hanging around, and I know people are probably getting hungry. Food is coming. We're going to make that available for y'all.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Commissioner.

Robert Holley spoke earlier.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Oh, I'm sorry. He did.

MR. HOLLEY: That's okay. I was able to yield my time if I can. If I could say something, I will again.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Holley.

MR. ALAN CLARK: I'd like to confirm that Cesar Espinoza is not present to speak. Is he still
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Okay.

JUDGE HIDALGO: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make my -- my alternate motion that I've been waiting -- patiently waiting to make, if that's --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay.

JUDGE HIDALGO: -- all right.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Go ahead, Judge.

JUDGE HIDALGO: Thank you, sir.

First, I -- I just want to highlight the reality is this body is being asked to provide seed funding essentially for a project that hasn't fully run down and that as it stands is deeply, deeply problematic.

I'm especially concerned about flooding. In Harris County, we just accelerated our drainage projects to a cost of $60 million. We're trying to figure out the situation doing everything we possibly can. We raised our detention standards so new development doesn't increase flooding down streams. We've been working with all of your communities on gauges throughout our county where we're forming the way we do our office of emergency management communications. We're working to be as smart as we can.
And highways should be held to the same standard. We have got to be smart. I can tell you with certainty, this project's impact on flooding has not been fully run down. My Harris County Flood Control District folks need six more months to finish discussions with TxDOT and understand what the impact will be. And I cannot, in good conscience, support a project until that has been run down, nor should we living as we have after Harvey, the Memorial Day Flood, the Tax Day Flood, and the Kingwood rains you-all saw and that I had to fight to make sure we got money from with our colleagues at the city council and -- Houston City Council and Fort Bend.

We have a duty to seek answers to this. And if this feels wrong and it feels rushed, it's because it is wrong and it is rushed. I will make a pledge for innovation. As I've come into office, I've been meeting with business leaders from all sorts of companies. And I can tell you, they have trouble recruiting folks to come to our region because a lot of people are used to living in a place where there's different forms of transportation.

As I mentioned last month, voting to fund this project before we fully understand its repercussions is akin to putting a down payment on a
house before we've seen it. It is only responsible to wait. And at best, we ought to work. We've got to be willing to accept, courageously say when something has not been fully run down and to say, hang on. Let me take a look at this.

So I move that we delay this vote until January 2020 in order to fully understand and assess the impact of this project on Harris County residents and our region's residents.

MR. GARCIA: Second.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well, hold -- hold on just a moment.

Do we -- the challenge we have, Commissioner, is that you are Judge Hidalgo's alternate.

MR. GARCIA: According to the rules -- and we vetted these with Alan Clark -- I am a Harris County alternate -- alternate. Gary Trietsch is not here, and so I'm -- I'm -- I'm replacing his vote.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And that's the same case for alternate Martha Castex-Tatum with the City.

And I would like to, for the record, state, Mr. Chair, that the motion that currently is on the floor, with no exception to Judge Hidalgo, was not
vetted with all officers earlier. So I will tell you from the City of Houston's standpoint, that to proceed without the mitigating dollars is not acceptable. And --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well, we're -- we're in discussion --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you. And that is my point of discussion.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Well, I just wanted to clarify that because that issue is raised that you are Judge Hidalgo's alternate and that it's a different position. I just want to clarify that so if anybody questions it, we've had that discussion.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Very good.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: So --

MS. PATMAN: Well --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, Ms. Patman.

MS. PATMAN: I am confused about the process here --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

MS. PATMAN: -- because in the ordinary course, it seems to me what would have happened is, the Houston-Galveston Area Council's motion, which we've all reviewed and evaluated and some thinks is sufficient and some don't, would be considered first in my view, not
being an expert on parliamentary procedure.

So what's happened here -- and then -- then Judge Hidalgo could make a substitute motion to that motion. What's happened here is a completely new concept has been -- a motion has been made outside the course of -- you know, we weren't -- we were at public comments. And I'm not -- I'm not an expert on parliamentary procedure anyway, so I'm not --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well --

MS. PATMAN: -- meaning to fuss at anybody. But I guess my question is: What -- what are we doing here?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Until --

MS. PATMAN: There was no -- there was no floor in which to make a motion to strip the protections out of the Houston-Galveston Area Council motion. So now what we have is --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well, the Houston-Galveston -- the -- what -- what Alan stated was a recommendation by staff.

MS. PATMAN: Okay. But why --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Council --

MS. PATMAN: -- was somebody allowed to make a motion --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Councilman Millican made
a motion, and that was seconded by commissioner Beckendorff. And according to Robert's Rules of Order, which this body voted on years ago to follow, that states, "Until a motion is made and is stated by the chair, no discussion ends in order. The rule of motion before discussion serves as a valuable meeting time when you start off with the defined proposal that I move. Your group discusses the motion's merits and all the details necessary to make that decision."

So --

MS. PATMAN: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- that is the proper way to do that. And we have not -- we have not necessarily followed that. And a lot of governing bodies don't necessarily follow that. But in an issue that is as important as this, I thought it was important that we follow Robert's Rules of Order so nobody can criticize the process.

MS. PATMAN: Okay. That makes sense. Well, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: So we have a motion on the floor --

MS. PATMAN: But what about the --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: So Judge Hidalgo is -- is making either a substitute motion, or she's making an
amendment to Mr. Millican's motion. So what we'll do at this point is, she's got a motion to second. We'll discuss her amendment or substitute motion. We will vote on that. If that is successful, that, at that point, will become the main motion. If that is not successful, Councilman Millican's motion will be the main motion. And we can either have continued discussion, or there may be other amendments to that motion. Is that clear? Does everybody --

MS. PATMAN: So how --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- understand that?

MS. PATMAN: That -- I appreciate the study you've given to this and your knowledge of it because I suspect you may be the only person in the room that fully, fully, fully understands Robert's Rules and their application to this proceeding. So thank you for that.

So what is the appropriate avenue with respect to the staff's recommendation because neither of these two motions embodies the staff's recommendation?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: That's right because it's a staff recommendation. And it's our place to decide what we're going to do with their recommendation. Whether --

MS. PATMAN: Well, how does one consider
it --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Whether --

MS. PATMAN: -- because I want to consider it --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Whether we -- whether we accept it as -- as recommended or as Councilman Millican made the motion to change that, that is -- that is totally acceptable.

JUDGE HIDALGO: I just want to clarify, Mr. Chairman, and to Carrin. I believe the staff recommendation is an additional 50 million; is that right?

MS. PATMAN: 50 million plus one-and-a-half --

JUDGE HIDALGO: Plus one-and-a-half for mitigation of community concerns.

My -- my motion -- my alternate substitute motion is to delay this vote on -- regardless of which one it is because 50 million is a drop in the bucket compared to 70 billion. And, again, you don't put a down payment on a house until you've seen it.

MS. PATMAN: No. I --

JUDGE HIDALGO: You don't write a check until -- you can't give the money and then say, hey, well, we'll take it back later.
MS. PATMAN: No. I --

JUDGE HIDALGO: So I just wanted to make clear --

MS. PATMAN: -- do understand your motion.

JUDGE HIDALGO: -- that, regardless, my motion is to delay the vote.

MS. PATMAN: Yes, yes. I do -- I do understand that and respect your position, of course.

What I am trying to figure out is, what is the right procedural avenue to have the staff recommendation considered as a motion?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well, we have the main motion. Now we have a second to the amendment. So we would need to vote on the -- on the amendment. If the amendment was successful, then you could come back -- or defeated, you can come back and make the -- another amendment or substitute motion, and then we would vote on that.

MR. ROBINSON: I sense there's room for discussion on the substitute amendment.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Right. And we've got a -- we've got a question from Mayor Zimmerman.

MAYOR ZIMMERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am a little bit confused. So is the second by Commissioner
Garcia -- with all due respect, it was my understanding that the reason that we had -- the City of Houston had two members and Harris County had two members, there's a primary and there's an alternate. So because Commissioner Radack is not here, his alternate is not here, then I am not sure that's a legal second because he is -- Commissioner Garcia is the alternate for Judge Hidalgo. And I would like clarification on that particular issue.

MR. ROBINSON: Perhaps Mr. Clark can clarify that for us. It was our understanding that the City is at least different.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Both Harris County and the City of Houston have more than one voting member on the policy council. And in our past practice, we have allowed the designated alternate from the City of Houston or from Harris County to serve as a voting member for any primary member that they had appointed. That has not been -- that doesn't occur very often, obviously. But the bylaws of the organization states that you have -- to be a voting alternate member, you have to be nom- -- nominated in the same manner as the primary member, which the City of Houston and Harris County have done. So I believe that's within their purview to do so.
MR. MANN:  Point --

MAYOR ZIMMERMAN:  So you're saying --

MR. MANN:  Point of parliamentary procedure.

CHAIRMAN CLARK:  Hold on -- hold on just a minute.  I'd like to respond to that.

And based on what Alan just said that that was part of the bylaws of the TPC, that's why I think his motion -- his second is in order.  Under other organizations and under normal practices, that would be out of order because, as you stated, he's Judge Hidalgo's.  But based on the bylaws, I believe that's in order.

Yes, Mr. Mann, point of order.

MR. MANN:  So I don't think that it's an amendment.  I think it's a motion to table, which is different because an amendment is a change.  This is a motion to table.

CHAIRMAN CLARK:  Well, she's doing a subs- -- she's doing a subs- --

MR. MANN:  It's --

CHAIRMAN CLARK:  -- substitute motion.

MR. MANN:  Well, it's not a substitute.  It's a motion to table --

MS. PATMAN:  No, it isn't.
MR. MANN: -- I believe. From a parliamentary --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

JUDGE HIDALGO: Well, also, if there's an issue with the second, then there may be another second that's separate --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

JUDGE HIDALGO: -- from Commissioner --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There's not an issue with the second.

JUDGE HIDALGO: Okay. Well, but just to say, you go do -- I can tell that --

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

CHAIRMAN CLARK: I've already -- I've already ruled his second in order, so that's okay.

Yes, Councilwoman?

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: Mr. Clark, I have some questions that -- I mean, this is an opportunity for us. We have, in the room now, the decision-makers, the people, the stakeholders, and also TxDOT. Before I make any decision, I think it's important and prudent of each of us to get all of our questions answered.

There are lots of questions I'd like to pose of TxDOT so that we all can hear firsthand information because we're getting information from...
several different sources; from letters, from e-mails, from phone calls, from briefings. I want to make my decision based on firsthand information from TxDOT. Regardless of whether it's the main motion, the substitute motion, the resolution from -- from the staff, I want to make a decision with firsthand information from TxDOT.

We rarely have an opportunity to have the stakeholders, the decision-makers, and TxDOT in a room. If we can take a deep breath, get our questions answered, I think we would all be in a better position to move forward.

Is there going to be an opportunity to ask questions of TxDOT on behalf of the stakeholders in the room?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, ma'am, we will have full discussion on this issue.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: Before we --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, ma'am.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: -- vote on any motion, any resolution?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well, let me -- let me re- -- re-clarify. We've got the main motion. Then we've got the substitute motion. We have a motion and a second. So now we're going to open it up for
discussion. So that would allow you or anybody else to ask any question they want in regards to -- to anything that was said in the public comment, to TxDOT, to Alan Clark, or anybody else. Now we can discuss the issue.

But being that there were procedural issues that were raised, I wanted to get those off of the table so we could get on with the discussion of whether we were going to move forward with this or are we going to move forward in a modified way, but just to begin the discussion.

So with that, I'll call on Trish to -- for her question.

**MS. POLLARD:** Not to beat a -- not to beat a dead horse, but I agree with Mayor Zimmerman with regard to Harris County's two -- two voters here present.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** It's a technicality.

**MS. POLLARD:** Will you please --

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We can't hear you.

(Inaudible).

**MS. POLLARD:** Well, the microphone is on. I agree with Mayor Zimmerman regarding the Harris County two voters here. Commissioner Garcia is an alternate for Judge Hidalgo. And Gary Trietsch was
the -- is the alternate for Steve Radack. He left. I
don't think you can pick and choose and just say, oh,
I'll be alternate for this guy that just left. I mean,
either we follow the rules or we don't.

Can you please read me what -- out of the
rules of procedure or our bylaws what allowed -- would
allow him to vote?

MS. LEWIS: If I could, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well, let's -- let's
finish this here, Carol.

MR. ALAN CLARK: So --

MS. LEWIS: I kind of want to help --

MR. ALAN CLARK: -- my understanding of
the --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay.

MR. ALAN CLARK: -- Transportation Policy
Council bylaws is that it identifies the voting
membership and the process for the designation of --
designation of alternates. The designation of
alternates, we traditionally pair those with a member
because normally -- normally, there is only one
alternate per member.

MS. POLLARD: Right.

MR. ALAN CLARK: For the City of Houston,
County has two -- they have, in fact, in the past allowed alternate members to -- to serve who are not necessarily shown as the alternate member for one particular representative. In our bylaws, it just simply says that the alternate members, to be eligible to vote, must be designated in the same way as the primary member. So we received a list of -- of -- of primary members and alternate members from the City of Houston and from -- and from Harris County.

I -- I will have to say, the bylaws are very -- relatively simple and straightforward here. There's not a lot of nuance to them. And based upon our past practice, we have allowed alternate members to serve for a primary member even if it wasn't necessarily the primary member they were shown in our directory as having been appointed to.

This is for the City and for the County. No other agency is in that position. And we also don't allow agencies to make a -- we can't allow the agency to say someone else today is going to serve as my alternate. It has to actually be -- go through their -- their process for making those designations. But we have allowed that in the past.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Carol.

MS. POLLARD: I still think it's out of
order.

MS. LEWIS: So, Mr. Chairman, my point was going to be, I appreciate your ruling and Alan's description. But since people are having a level of discomfort with this with Commissioner Garcia's approval -- concurrence, I guess I should say, I would second Judge Hidalgo's motion so that that removes that issue from --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Thank you.

MS. POLLARD: Well, it doesn't -- it doesn't remove it if -- if he still intends to vote.

MR. GARCIA: Yeah. And that was going to be my point. If -- if the -- if my colleague will allow. So I just want to make sure that the record reflects that this -- this -- this body has set precedence on this matter before so that we can proceed with the rest of the dialogue.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Well, that's why I went ahead and ruled as the chair that your motion was acceptable. And it's based on what Alan had said in the -- with the bylaws being fluid like that. Without a hard definitive yes or no, I'm going to -- I'm going to go ahead and allow his vote just because it's -- it's the right thing to do.

MR. ROBINSON: Pursuant to that, is there
a moment that I could inquire with TxDOT to please inform this body what you, Quincy, believe will be the impact of a delay?

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, council member.

Before I start, I'd like to thank the folks that have come and stayed with us all day today, the comments they've offered, the time they've donated to us, and the thought and sincerity of -- of how they've been working with this. I appreciate it very much.

All righty. Our situation is -- is complex and -- but let me step through it with you.

And first off, the question is: Why is this important today? The funding for projects -- the construction for funding for projects for TxDOT is in something called a UTP. That's the Unified Transportation Program. It's a ten-year plan that's updated every year. And, typically, there's additions and subtractions to that plan. That's typically the update, all right? In our case, it would be an addition.

Also, in our case, the update is, it's going to be at the end of August. So it's important for us to get a decision made now so that a decision could be made on the update by the Transportation Commission.

Why is the Transportation Commission
important is because, in this case, they're prepared or planning to commit a significant amount of money to Segment 2 project, all right? In excess of $700 million. And it was expected that our partners at the MPO would -- would also contribute a match if you will. And it was determined to be in the amount of $100 million. That money, it comes under federal Category 2, which is municipal mobility. And those are the funds that are passed to the MPO to contribute to projects in -- in our area. This is not an unusual action. We've had many transfers like this on projects, whether on I-45, Gulf Freeway, North Freeway. I mean in many places.

The criticality of this is -- is -- is heightened when -- when we begin to look at the entire state of Texas. The transportation needs especially in the five metro areas are significant. And in Houston, we don't want to have this motion made to delay and send a message to the commission, hey, we're not ready, and then we get out of line on the funding for this very important project. Even though it's a ten-year plan, there's no telling when you would get back in line.

**MR. ROBINSON:** Well, with that point, I think you've begun with the word "typically." And I think, as clearly demonstrated by this morning's
discussion, these are extraordinary circumstances that
require extraordinary performance from TxDOT. And I
think, if my understanding is correct, the UTP is
updated every year.

And in this case, were there to be a
delay, I'd like to know what that impact might cause to
occur.

**MR. ALLEN:** Council Member, there will be
no guarantee when that money will be available again.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Discussion?

**MR. GARCIA:** Quincy, the -- the last time
that I -- this is sort of a bad penny or a reoccurring
nightmare. I'm not sure which. But I was on city
council when TxDOT last proposed to expand I-45. This
was after Hurricane Rita.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah.

**MR. GARCIA:** And the argument was used --
that we needed to expand 45 back then was because
Hurricane Rita demonstrated the need to have more lanes
available for evacuation. That was roughly twenty --
two-thousand- --

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Five.

**MR. GARCIA:** -- six or '5.

**MR. QUINCY:** Yeah.
MR. GARCIA: And so the -- this conversation gives me confidence that although this is a difficult decision to make -- and I don't make it lightly -- that that experience -- today's ongoing dialogue related to the same project and the same idea of that particular project is that we will continue to be at this table.

And I think it's imperative to understand that history to realize that we didn't have it right then. We still don't have it right today. Otherwise, these folks would be on board because they were part of that conversation back then as well.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. GARCIA: And we just have not been able to move the needle in creating that public confidence on what this project is intended to provide.

So I just want to share that history with my colleagues because, you know, there's some value in having a few gray hairs and having been at the table before. And that has been the experience on this particular matter.

We've -- we've been there. We've had that conversation. TxDOT was told to go back and rethink it, figure it out because you wanted to acquire back then historical property and -- and we're right back here
with the same -- almost nothing has changed. And that's -- that's a little frustrating.

So I just wanted to share that -- that history with everybody.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any other further discussion? Carol?

MS. PATMAN: I'd -- I'd like to ask Quincy --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Carrin, I hate to do this to you, but I recognized Carol in --

MS. PATMAN: Oh, I'm sorry, no. I thought you recognized me. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Sorry about that.

MS. LEWIS: That's okay. And I was -- I would have been okay with --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: I know. But I just want to try --

MS. LEWIS: -- going ahead -- okay.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- to keep everybody in order.

MS. LEWIS: All right. Well --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Then that way nobody gets upset if I -- I don't want to miss anybody.

MS. LEWIS: All right. Thank you.

So Carrin was actually about to ask Quincy
a question, so I would really like to let her ask it first if you don't mind --

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** All right.

**MS. LEWIS:** -- us swapping.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** All right.

**MS. LEWIS:** And then I --

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Go right ahead.

**MS. PATMAN:** Quincy, assuming the ultimate decision for a moment, which is not at all to be assumed right now -- but assuming that the ultimate decision is to move forward with the project with the environmental mitigation funds and community funds in there, what is TxDOT going to do to involve the community and make sure that every single concern is taken into account, because some very serious concerns have been expressed here and to -- to many of us individually, as -- I mean, it's just very, very, very concerning.

And -- so what are you going to do -- if you are given the authority to put it in the Unified Transportation Plan, what are you going to do to make the community comfortable?

**MR. ALLEN:** Carrin, thank you for asking that question.

Right now, we are -- got several things
going on. We have take -- gone through a comment period on our Draft Environmental Impact Statement. It was mentioned here today that we received thousands of comments. And those are in order between two- and three-thousand comments. We're in the process right now of going through those comments and addressing them. How we address those comments will become part of the FEIS or the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

As we've been going through this process though, we have been getting comments, and we began -- somebody mentioned TxDOT is having a meeting every night. We began a second level of public involvement. We have a partner in this. The City of Houston and mayor's facilitation team has worked with us. And we have gone out and we still are going out, receiving comments.

The -- with the FEIS, the process doesn't stop. We can change the project. We can modify it. We can improve it in any number of various ways. The D -- the DEIS, though, it reaches the FEIS once we get a record of decision. In other words, in this case, the FHWA has delegated that to TxDOT's environmental division in Austin. They will review what's been done and make a determination, you know, whether we're -- we've addressed it well enough or not and -- and so
forth.

The record of decision is not expected
till the very end of this calendar year or the first
part of next year. The reason I'm laying this out for
you is because our public involvement will continue.
The issues mentioned here today, many of those are
underway and being worked on right now. And even when
the FEIS is determined an issue, that process can
continue. The project can be modified, improved, or --
or altered.

And we've got examples of that. A recent
one I would -- I would offer you is the work we did on
US-290. We changed that project five years after the
record of decision several times; the lane assignments,
how we were going to accommodate METRO in your case in
that corridor.

And so I am trying to represent an agency
who's listening, taking what we're hearing and acting on
it. I think we're hamstrung a little bit where we are
in the process because it has -- I'll just own it. We
haven't communicated, I guess, as well as we needed to,
to tell you what we've done.

And I'll give you several examples. I
mean, you guys have mentioned Clayton Homes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.
MR. QUINCY: And we've taken great strides. And we are doing what basically has been asked. And that is work with the Housing Authority, find another facility very close by, keep the folks in their homes where they are now, get the other facility up and running, fully developed, and move our customers' wants.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What about the schools?

MR. QUINCY: And we are going to -- the locations that we've identified are close enough to the existing location that -- and I say, "we." This is a partnership that we're working with, with Housing Authority.

The effort is being made not to have to change the schools. So, I mean, get it close enough -- get the replacement facility close enough that the schools don't have to change.

Is that helpful?

MS. PATMAN: It -- it is. I think that what we all --

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

MS. PATMAN: I think what we all really need to be reassured of is, I've still got all those buses, Quincy. We really need to --
MR. QUINCY: Well, let me -- let me speak to that.

MS. PATMAN: Let me -- we really need to be --

MR. QUINCY: Okay.

MS. PATMAN: -- reassured that un- -- assuming that we vote today to allow it to go into the Unified Transportation Plan, because there's -- the dilemma is, there's a lot that benefits transit in this. And so, you know, we don't want to lose that money because we're always looking for money. As many of the speakers have said, there is -- there is woefully inadequate money for transit in the region.

And I am familiar with the processes where you get in line. It's important to get in line to have any chance of getting the money; otherwise -- that's what's happened with Houston. For many, many years, our community was not united behind the need for transit in Houston. And as a result, other communities were able to build more robust systems with those same federal dollars because we weren't in line.

So I am very familiar with the concept that you need to get in line. And I think what we're considering today in part is -- is making sure we get in line for these dollars. I'm familiar with that.
I just want to make sure that the concerns of the community have been heard loud and clear and you're going to redouble your efforts to make sure they're incorporated.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's not.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

MR. ALAN CLARK: Could I get y'all in the back to just go ahead and listen? The -- the council listened to y'all when the -- when public comment was made. It makes it real challenging to hear everybody speaking when -- when people are making comments. So if you could refrain from doing that, I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They're the one with the mic.

MR. ALLEN: Our -- our efforts have been doubled. And -- and we're also benefiting from the efforts the City of Houston is helping us with, with their facilitation team. The effort is extreme right now.

MS. PATMAN: And METRO will do anything to help as well.

MR. ROBINSON: Let me make a point on behalf of the City.
It is -- it is one thing -- and, Quincy, I know you and I have spoken about this. It's one thing to listen. And you have had so many meetings that we know you people are listening. But it's very important that we are responsive to those concerns that are being aired by the community.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

MR. ROBINSON: And I -- while I may have confidence in your ability to respond, I think that is where the proof is in the pudding. And whether or not one is to delay or whether we are to move forward with this, there is a critical moment where the City maintains that it will be within our power that we will kill this at least in our interest. And we will not support a project that is not in the interest of our citizens and the City of Houston.

And I think that is something that you and I have spoken about. And if that needs to be memorialized in a memorandum of understanding, one would have to work on that very carefully. But I think with the current motion on the floor, to delay, I think we have a first order of business.

JUDGE HIDALGO: We all know that you don't get -- once you give money, you're not going to --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Judge --
JUDGE HIDALGO: -- take it back. We all know --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Judge --

JUDGE HIDALGO: -- how government works.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- could we --

JUDGE HIDALGO: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- go back to Carol real quick? And I'll come to you next.

JUDGE HIDALGO: Oh, apologies, Carol.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you.

JUDGE HIDALGO: I thought -- I thought we moved on from that.

I just -- I want us to be realistic. I mean, the people want to commit to vote for me in four years, and I promised to be great. I mean, that's -- that's just not how it works.

MS. LEWIS: But I would -- I would say, I do trust that you are going to be great for four years.

But, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, sitting here, I have -- I have two sides of me going on. I've got a head side, and I've got a heart side. And one of the things that we're hearing is that when we have public involvement, the most important thing is trust between the agencies and the citizens. And so we've got a gap there.
What I would say is that we're not going to fix that today. But we will fix it if we all agree that we're going to work toward it. And so that's what I would like to sort of say, you know, as we're listening to all the comments that have been made -- and I really want you to know that I appreciate every single person who came, every single person who made a comment.

I was offended when there was an insinuation that we weren't listening and that we weren't going to hear you because we absolutely -- many of us, I know, absolutely are listening, and we're very sensitive to what you have to say. And so I am glad that we sort of clarified why that happened in the first place was just trying to follow something parliamentarily, but not a reflection at all of our listening --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Carol, can you --

MS. LEWIS: -- to what you say --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- move the -- move the mic a little closer to you. People are having a problem hearing you.

MS. LEWIS: Okay. Thank you.

So, basically, my point is, I thank all of you, and we are listening to what you're saying and it's very important to us.
And I said I've got kind of two saids --
two sides, a head side and a heart side. My head side
starts off with as a 40-year transportation
professional -- I've been planning in this region for
40 years. And one of the things I know is that if I ask
myself in 2030 and I-45 is just like it is today, am I
going to be happy? And I'm going to have to say the
answer to that is no. It has been said that there are
problems with that facility, and we need to address
them.

Now, Commissioner Garcia already mentioned
that we remembered working on this in 2005-2006. So
here we are 2019 and nothing has happened. And so --
well, I shouldn't say nothing. But we're not there yet.
And so the point is that we do have to keep moving
forward.

So the head side of me says, yes, we
indeed need to go ahead today and move this $100 million
forward, as in the staff recommendation along with the
1.5 million for community planning and the additional 50
million to help with the mitigation. That's usually
important.

As long as I've been doing planning in
this region, I don't ever remember the City of Houston
putting resources, H-GAC putting resources combined with
1 TxDOT and METRO and Harris County to get something done right. So this is the first time I hear that being done. And I think it's important.

And so I just -- I don't want to take too much time because I know we've been here awhile. But I just also have to make a little point about some of the comments being made.

The idea that you can take money that was in a highway column and put it on transit or put it in flooding is an incorrect assumption. We can't. We'd have to go all the way to Washington. So I do have an advocacy that we start working with congress to make sure that the money comes to us not in silos and so we can make suggestions and recommendations where we need them. But to go away today thinking that we could take any of this money and put it on any other initiative is incorrect. So with that, I'll just wrap up.

And my heart side of that is that I am listening to you. My heart side would want to delay for the purposes of confirming to you that we're listening. But the head side of me also knows that that really doesn't mean that.

Okay. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Judge Sebesta.

JUDGE SEBESTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Quincy, it's been about four-and-a-half, five hours. But with the $100 million commitment that we would make, what would the -- would Texas Transportation Commission put forth? Remind me. It's been a while.

MR. ALLEN: The construction costs would be 740 million, and they would also contribute stuff that's outside the UTP to bring the total project cost of this project to $1.2 billion. So we put -- or the -- the MPO puts in 100 million, and the project --

JUDGE SEBESTA: Is 1.1.

MR. ALLEN: -- 1.1 billion from -- from TxDOT.

JUDGE SEBESTA: Okay. I know over the years, we have discussed and discussed and discussed how this region has gotten less dollars than other regions throughout the state of Texas. Dallas has done better than us. San Antonio has done better than us. El Paso, they've done better in getting more dollars for vehicle -- for miles traveled, what have you.

If we do not approve this, that $1.1 billion, Texas Transportation Commission, any idea where it might go? Is it going to come to Houston, this region for another project? Or is it going to be scattered around the rest of this very, very large state
with very many needs?

MR. ALLEN: A significant percentage of that money has been dedicated to addressing congested areas. And the focus has been on the metros; Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Austin, and Houston, all right?

But us sending a message that we're not ready basically or that could be interpreted that makes me a little bit nervous, that we get out of line and then -- Tucker, with all due respect, we'd be behind Austin. I'm messing with you.

But there's -- every metro has got a list of unfunded projects. And this money is not going to sit idle. So --

JUDGE SEBESTA: I understand. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Commissioner Garcia.

MR. GARCIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On a couple of points, number one, on the -- on the community engagement, Quincy, you mentioned that about 2500 comments have been taken in on this.

MR. ALLEN: On the -- during the comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Commissioner, we received over 2500 comments. And now in the efforts, we're getting even more comments.

MR. GARCIA: Yeah.
MR. ALLEN: The package I was talking about was what was originally received during the comment period on DEI's.

MR. GARCIA: Got you.

And to that end, you know, I met with you earlier. We talked about this. I attended one of the community meetings that you had in my precinct. And I appreciate that.

And -- and so I've been just listening to the community and hearing what the feedback is from all these various meetings. And so you trust me to verify. And so I have launched an online survey. Many folks in this room have probably participated in that.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

MR. GARCIA: But just in my small effort -- I didn't hire a communication firm. We just -- my staff put it together. We put it online. Just our effort in just recent days has netted nearly 1,000 respondents. And that gives me a credible pause to compare my effort to the process and the effort of a behemoth organization known as TxDOT.

And so I -- you know, the -- the -- I think it's very, very important that we, you know, number one take the input and -- and you've done that, and I've done that. But with the feedback that has been
provided, people are concerned, and many of them have
spoken to the issue of neighborhood connectivity,
flooding.

And on the point of flooding, number one, I do appreciate that TxDOT is willing to incorporate the
Atlas 14. But there's other areas along 45 that are
great opportunities to further address -- address flood
mitigation that we haven't even gotten to. We --
there's been no conversation on.

**MR. ALLEN:** Commissioner, I don't mean to
interrupt you, but please allow me to come back to that
point --

**MR. GARCIA:** Yes.

**MR. ALLEN:** -- when you're done.

**MR. GARCIA:** Yes.

And so -- so I want to make sure that we
are taking the input and that we are effectively coming
back to the community and demonstrating your -- this is
the input you gave on these issues; these are the
changes that the project has taken as a result of these
changes.

And -- and then, you know -- you know, you
mentioned Austin. As bad as Austin is -- number one, my
daughter lives there. But as bad as Austin is, it's
interesting to see that Austin has split-level systems
to facilitate some -- some of their express traffic.

I think we -- we're looking at widening as the principal solution of this -- of this effort. And I just -- I just think that we have not yet really challenged ourselves to think of additional innovative approaches and solutions, whether they're from some part of the country, some part of Texas, or whether they're from other -- some other part of the world that we can incorporate to the issues of -- the young lady that spoke about Japan, you know, those -- I just have not -- I am not comfortable that we have gotten out of the traditional TxDOT mode of addressing traffic congestion. And that is principally widening. And that is -- that's disheartening given the fact that that was the fundamental point of rejection in 2005.

**MR. ALLEN:**  I was in East Harris in 2005. But I wasn't -- I was dealing with some other problems there. And I didn't follow the City of Houston/TxDOT interaction there. So I'm not sure what the proposed work on 45 was at that time. I can speak to what we're proposing now.

Commissioner, we are widening, but we're only adding three lanes. And that'll bring -- those lanes are for transit. And that'll bring a total of four lanes for transit. Right now when you go north and
south in that corridor, there is one lane. It is
inbound in the morning. It is outbound in the
afternoon. The plan we have, 24/7, two lanes each way.

MR. GARCIA: Okay.

MR. ALLEN: And those are based on
modeling numbers that we use demographic data. The
growth we have in Montgomery County is significant,
obviously. But what our modeling is also showing us is
that 50 percent of the traffic that comes to town wants
to pass through, whether they're going -- if they're on
45 going from north to -- to south to Galveston or
U of H or Texas Southern, wherever it is.

And so the alignment and the
configuration, how we did the lanes downtown was to
accommodate that. Back to Segment 2, we're adding three
lanes, okay? And that'll bring a total of four transit
lanes in that corridor.

The question has been asked, will BRT work
on this, bus rapid transit, which is a -- sort of a
hybrid transit element between buses and rail, but more
like buses? The answer is, yes.

Have we been in conversations detailed
with METRO about Light Rail in that corridor? The
answer is, yes. Tx-- --

(Inaudible crosstalk.)
MR. ALLEN: What?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

MR. ALLEN: Okay. TxDOT has committed in writing not to -- to work with METRO, not to preclude them from space in the corridor. And we're having those conversations. There is a cost involved, obviously.

And the other work we're doing on Segment 2 that's very important is the interchange with 610, one of the oldest in the area. Certainly, it's got the oldest standards. If you travel that like I do, you know that when you get on, that big, yellow first sign you see is go slow because if you're in a big truck, you're going to dump over. If you go around the corner, you look up, you're in the left lane of 610. I mean, this is from another era, and we need -- we need to improve that.

MR. GARCIA: So a question just real quickly. Number one, I appreciate the feedback. And I think this is what folks are looking to do.

But by the same token, the reference to the conversations with METRO are important. They're good. But the -- but they're conversations. There has been -- I have not heard yet that we are going to incorporate METRO strategies for mass -- mass transit into these. There's -- it sounds like there's
conversation. There's dialogue.

But I'd like to see that there is a commitment from both entities and ready to move forward on -- on this at the same time because having -- having the conversations I've had with a few engineers, I'm being told -- I'm not the engineer, but I trust their input -- that widening isn't entirely necessary. And so that's what has me having some pause in this regard to achieve the respective goals.

MS. PATMAN: Let me know if -- if -- if you want --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Carrin --

MS. PATMAN: -- answers from METRO.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. I'm sorry.

MR. ALLEN: Well --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: I didn't mean to interrupt. I just -- I don't -- I'm -- I'm keeping track of the order here, so I just --

MS. PATMAN: Sure. No, I just --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: I mean, I appreciate you responding right away because that way we --

MS. PATMAN: Just let me know.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- can get it addressed.

Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: Commissioner, I'd be glad to
review the information with the engineers that are speaking to you in that I want you to know that when we're working with METRO, that we ask the engineers that are working on Segment 2 to do engineering high-level studies. How much space is needed? How much does it cost based on other numbers that come from previous projects, recent rail projects? So we're not just -- it's more than a conversation. We're doing detailed -- detailed work there.

The last thing I'd like to come back to and then I'll back up and yield the floor. And that would be flooding. You mentioned flooding. I'd like to inform you -- and that's one of the weaknesses of our process. It -- we are not able to communicate so clearly on -- in real time of what we're doing.

But the flooding is significant, the effort we have there. And we're working with the City of Houston and with Harris County Flood Control District on solutions that start down in the middle of the central business district and move north along White Oak Bayou for a short time and then Little White Oak. And as we get to 610, we have talked to the Independence Heights community. And I have tasked my folks to figure out a way to get an opening there under 610. And we've got sketches and preliminary designs on the drawing.
board in my conference room.

Are we ready to publish yet? No. But for you guys to be -- you know, for us not to inform you as well as we should, that -- that -- that's painful for me, especially when we're working as hard as we are.

The last point I want to make on flooding is, it's not just downtown. We're going up Little White Oak Bayou, across 610. Now we're heading north toward Beltway 8.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. No, no, no. I got order here.

Council Member Castex-Tatum, you're up.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: Thank you very much.

Clearly, Mr. Allen, there has been a huge disconnect in our communication with the stakeholders. I think that we have some clear identified concerns with the project. I'd like to know from you a couple of things.

As far as process, it's my understanding that today, we were looking for a decision of record. What we were going to do today was to support a resolution that said that this region is supportive of this project.

Does us supporting this resolution, saying, as a region, we support this project prevent us
from addressing the concerns that have been raised today?

It's my understanding that there's a vote today, and there will be a vote in the spring. If between today and the vote in the spring there is no movement to address -- concretely address the concerns of the residents and the stakeholders that are here in this room that we have all heard from, there is an opportunity to kill the project. But I don't want us to miss an opportunity to get in line for the funds if we agree, as a region, that this project is a project we want to see happen. And I don't want us to do that at the risk of not hearing and making moves for the residents who are affected the most.

I think that there's still so many unanswered questions about the process and then about the people. But the most important "P" in the room is the people.

So I want to hear the process, and then I want to hear, have we had a conversation with HISD? Are the -- is this highway right next to the school? How is that going to affect those students? What are we going to do about that?

I also want to hear, are the people going to be displaced? Where are they going to go? How are
we going to address the people that are going to be
displaced? But then we also, as a body, need to know,
if we don't vote for this resolution, what is the real
impact?

I know you said this is a ten-year plan. Does this mean that we would have to put in more money
in a year, more money in two years? I feel like there's
a lot of loose ends, and we're being asked to make a
decision without all the information.

So can you speak to the process and then
also to the -- the several concerns that have been
raised? And then I have one final question.

**MR. ALLEN:** Okay.

**MS. CASTEX-TATUM:** The pro- -- can you --
can you speak succinctly to the process? And don't --
don't do it like in a bunch of legal jargon and -- and
acronyms. Just are we voting today on this and in the
spring, we're going to vote again on something else.

**MR. ALLEN:** Yeah.

**MS. CASTEX-TATUM:** -- regarding --

**MR. ALLEN:** Excuse me. Today, we're --
if we -- when we vote, we're voting on contributing
$100 million to the project, okay?

**MS. CASTEX-TATUM:** Right.

**MR. ALLEN:** The process that we're in is
the environmental process. And right now, we are evaluating comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the first one. And we've been after that for over a year.

We are also taking additional comments from all of the public involvement that we're doing, both City of Houston and TxDOT and the stuff that we're doing together. If somebody had something they wanted to give me before they left today, we would certainly accept it and put it into the record, all right?

More process, we're looking to get the responses of how we're going to mitigate or deal with the concerns that have been expressed through this process, the responses to that, as early as the end of this calendar year; if not the end of this calendar year, the first quarter of 2020.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: So is the project designed?

MR. ALLEN: The project is not designed.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: So are we in the planning phase?

MR. ALLEN: The project is in the planning phase.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: Okay. So now that we are in the planning phase, can all of the concerns that
MS. CASTEX-TATUM: And how is that done?

MR. ALLEN: Well, we have a team of engineers and environmental specialists that go through the comments and say, here's what's being asked or suggested here.

I'll give you one example just quickly that came outside of the DEIS -- I mean the Draft Environmental Impact Statement process.

We were in a meeting in Austin talking about air quality and some other things. And somebody from the Northside mentioned to me, we sure would like to be able to keep southbound 45 exit ramp to North Main. And I said, "Wow." I said, "That area is tight. It's got cross-streets that exist that make it very difficult. We might have to close Cottage. That's a tough ask."

A couple of the folks in the room said, "We think we can close Cottage." I said, "Okay." We went back home. I've got designers that have got design details to lay over our schematic to show how that ramp would go in.

Now, I've got other people working on, all
right, if Cottage doesn't have cars on it, let's use it for pedestrians. So they're working on pedestrian access for that.

Unfortunately, that work is being done inside our walls, and there's not a good vehicle necessarily to communicate every day, all right, here's something that -- that's on the windshield that -- that's really good and -- at least in my opinion, it's good.

We had a similar question about ramps on the northbound side as well. And we are working on those too. Those are two quick examples.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: Okay. And I just have to say this because for far too long, communities of color, they have always taken the brunt of infrastructure projects. And if we don't do this right, we will continue to perpetuate the distrust of big government and people that participate in our democracy. And we have a -- a responsibility as this body to make sure that the people trust what we're going to do.

And I understand this big picture. I really do. As a region, we need a project. But is this the right way to do this project? And are we communicating the concerns of the people?

My -- my last question that I want to ask
of you, Mr. Allen -- and -- and please don't take this personally. But I want you to be able to explain to me, if you were sitting in -- in -- in the -- in the position that you had to take a vote today and you've heard all of the people who have spoken today, you know the big picture, do you feel that you can confidently say to the voting members and to the people in the audience today that we are in the best position to take this vote today for the record of the decision and that if we do pass -- and if we do have a vote to move forward with this funding, that you, as Tx- -- representing TxDOT, will make the changes necessary and the people here who have raised these very valid concerns can trust that their concerns will be heard, because I'm hard-pressed to believe that -- well, I'll let you answer.

**MR. ALLEN:** Okay. You've laid out a lot there for me all in one question. Here --

I'm sorry?

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Well, before you address that, Quincy, let me just say, pizza has arrived. It's over here in the lunch room. So if you want some, please help yourself.

Hopefully that was okay, Commissioner. I didn't want to be telling people to eat your -- eat your
pizza. I see you've got yours already, sir.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I was testing it.

It's -- it's okay. It's safe.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Go ahead, Quincy.

MR. ALLEN: All right. Where we are in
time -- I'll try to make this quick -- is an opportunity
to confirm we want to be in line for funding. It is
not -- just getting in line for funding does not say
that our environmental process, whether it's responses
to the draft environmental document or the final, is in
any way complete or a slam dunk. We still have got to
prove ourself there.

Part of that process is taking the
comments and responding to them and integrating what can
be integrated and dealing -- or it may -- they may have
an idea, and we may do it a little bit differently, but
it's a great idea.

So what this does is kind of -- it's a
stage things. It's a funding thing. Get in line for
the funding. The environmental process continues. If
we decide later that we don't want to do this, we
just -- I mean, we can make that decision later. But we
can't get back in -- in the funding line.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: So it's not a -- it's
not a linear process. Two things can be happening
simultaneously?

        MR. ALLEN: Yes, ma'am.

        MS. CASTEX-TATUM: Okay. But how do -- how do we -- where -- how do I tell the people who are so very concerned that if we vote today, that's not going to happen? What assurances do we have that if we vote today to give -- to do the funding, that those things will happen?

        MR. ALLEN: All right. The thing is, I've got to have an environmental document for this project, all right? Funding is one thing. But the environmental document becomes the critical path if it's vote -- once we vote for the 100 million today.

        But if we don't have the environmental document, we can't do anything. It's a game-changer. It's a -- it's a game hinderer if it's not handled properly.

        And I have to commit to what I'm hearing from the public, our public involvement, to address those concerns and then have somebody looking over my shoulder that says, yes, they were properly, whatever, addressed. Or we don't have a project.

        And -- and you said linear tracts. It's kind of separate tracts. We've got a funding tract over here. But the environmental tract is as much or even
more power -- you know, powerful than the funding.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: So tell me again what the impact of a delay would mean.

MR. ALLEN: All right. If we delay, we have to -- we get out of line for the $1.1 billion that has been -- is being considered to be put on this project in the UTP update at the end of August. We get out of that -- we send a message and say, hey, we're not ready. And we get out of that funding line.

MS. CASTEX-TATUM: So how do you get back in line?

MR. ALLEN: We're at the mercy of other projects. The money will go, and then we have to raise our hand and say, "All right. We're ready to get back in line." They say, "Great. We don't have that money here. So just -- just wait." And when it'll be available, I don't know.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Is that -- are we good -- are you done, Quincy? Are you done, Council Member?

Jeff.

MR. TAEBEL: I have a question for Alan. This goes back to the conversation had at the Technical Advisory Committee that was referenced.

Will this body have another chance to vote
on actually allocating the $100 billion? And if so, when and how do you envision -- what would happen between now and then?

**MR. ALAN CLARK:** Yes. We'll have -- this vote today is clearly stating what our intention is. The actual programming of money for projects occurs in a document we call the Transportation Improvement Program. You-all hear us talk about amendments to that every meeting.

The next update of the Transportation Improvement Program, which will extend it two more years to the time period when this project can be funded, happens this spring. Traditionally, we would be bringing to you that document around March. Asking for your approval in May. Ultimately, it becomes effective with the beginning of the new federal fiscal year. It also has to be concurred in by the Texas Department of Transportation.

So there -- there will be, in -- in the next six months, another time in which you have to affirm -- if you were to act positively today, you would have an opportunity to then affirm that by programming those funds specifically in the Transportation Improvement Program.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Go ahead. Thank
CHAIRMAN CLARK: Council Member Pollard.

MS. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My question -- and I appreciate all the public speaking. I really do. The -- all your comments. Even though you accused us of already coming with our minds made up, mine wasn't. And I -- I appreciate all this discussion. It's helping to crystallize a lot of this.

My question for Quincy is -- and you've discussed some of it in answers to others questions. But do -- give us a little better view of the extent to which you have worked with the Harris County Flood Control District and -- and what their reactions and comments and -- and input has been on that process.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you for your question.

We work very closely with Harris County Flood -- Flood Control District, and we have for as many years as I can remember. Every project that we have, we run through their office to make sure that whatever we're doing drainage-wise on that project doesn't -- what do you call it -- overload another part of the system.

In this case, we have been specifically looking at improvements to Buffalo Bayou with Harris
County Flood Control District and the City of Houston. Principally, you've heard of the North and South Canal. If we're able to do those cut-throughs on that, we've done the analysis with Harris County Flood Control. We believe that that would significantly improve the drainage in that area. That's not the only area that needs it.

The other thing is, once you get the water flowing well through there, then we've got to look downstream because we don't want to push this problem --

**MS. POLLARD:** Right.

**MR. ALLEN:** -- on somebody else. And we've had those conversations with Harris County Flood Control. And they're helping us with examining the flow downstream.

Now, more recently, last couple of weeks, as I said, we've moved -- started moving back up Little White Oak Bayou. And that -- that's got a lot of things there. I mean, it -- it weaves its way in and out of 45.

More specifically what I've had my staff working with them is looking at, hey, how can we improve this principally right there at 610? If you look at the -- there's a culvert there that goes under 610. And if you look north of that, the water flows from north to
south. You can see that the water builds up there behind that culvert.

And the thought was -- in our shop was, could we rebuild that piece of 610 on this project and put an opening like you might see at Braes or TC Jest or something like that where it's a V-shaped concrete channel that allows the water to go in, and then you flatten off some spots up at the top that might lend themselves well to future pedestrian access, if that makes sense.

Your question was how we've been working with flood control. Almost weekly, if -- if that's helpful, but...

**MS. POLLARD:** And is there a significant portion of this project that's underground? Am I recalling that correctly?

**MR. ALLEN:** Yes. There's a significant part of this project that's below grade, yes, ma'am.

**MS. POLLARD:** And is that -- is that going to become a retention bond? Or how -- how do we plan to keep cars from flooding and -- and people out of that?

**MR. ALLEN:** Okay. Thank you for the question, a separate question from what we've been doing.
MS. POLLARD: Uh-huh.

MR. ALLEN: But I'd like to offer an example to you of an area that didn't flood that's below ground during Harvey. And that would be the piece there between -- on 59 between Shepherd and the Spur, okay?

In that project, we've got a four-story building underground that you don't see. It's our pump station.

MS. POLLARD: Uh-huh.

MR. ALLEN: We're going to use that technology, as well as others, to drain that downtown piece that's behind George R. Brown or the piece that -- we've got a small piece up there in Segment 2.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay.

MS. POLLARD: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Jeff Weatherford.

MS. POLLARD: Thank you.

MR. WEATHERFORD: Mr. Chair, the last TPC meeting, the last two TAC meetings, I've been very vocal. After the last TAC meeting, Mr. Gant might say too vocal about the public outreach and getting the public on board with this. So I'm not going to rehash all that.

I was really looking for the clarification
that Mr. Taebel got. But, basically, my comment on that would be, if we were to move forward with this and in the next six months, we don't see tremendous progress, then I think you'd probably see a lot of people around this table with a different point of view when it came time to put that $100 million actually in the TIP. So that would be my comment today.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Okay. And then Justin Beckendorff.

**MR. BECKENDORFF:** Quincy, I know this is -- is -- will be a time range. But where do you feel, if you had a crystal ball, where this project would actually start or it would be -- begin to be moved if we -- if we voted to approve this today?

**MR. ALLEN:** My best estimate would be sometime in 2023 and maybe as early as first quarter of 2024.

**MR. BECKENDORFF:** Okay. So we're still looking at five to six years plus before anything.

So that -- is it a fair assumption to say that there is still a fair amount of time for us to go ahead and do this so we can remain in line for the 1.1 billion, and we still have a fair amount of time to work with the citizens and address their concerns while remaining in line to secure that money?
MR. ALLEN: Thank you for the question. Yeah, you're getting in line on a ten-year program. You'll be in year one if -- if it's selected in August. And then, like you say, it stays in that program until it's needed. It comes out with a TIP -- I mean, the transportation improvement vote, so --

MR. BECKENDORFF: Okay. And then would it also be a fair statement to say if we do not do this and we -- we get out of line, that that 1.1 billion will be disbursed to other project -- projects and that those projects -- there's a good chance that they may not even be in this area? They could be in Dallas or San Antonio?

MR. ALLEN: Or El Paso.

MR. BECKENDORFF: Yes, sir. Or El Paso?

MR. ALLEN: That's correct.

MR. BECKENDORFF: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: State Representative Dennis Paul.

MR. PAUL: I appreciate it, Mr. Chairman. I've got just more of a comment. I'm here as an ex officio member just to come in and express my opinion to y'all. And thank y'all for y'all's service. But I do want to see support of this project and y'all's support going forward with this --
this $100 million on a vote today.

I can tell you from my experience working at the State, that if we don't show the Transportation Commission that we have an interest in this project, those -- all those dollars will be gone. I can guarantee you that Austin, Dallas and Fort Worth, San Antonio, El Paso are all just jumping at the bit to get these dollars. And that's why it's important that we show the commitment that we do want to go forward with the project and show that this is something that's important to our region. And it is going to be extremely important to our region. This is going to be a major highway through our -- our -- the state -- the center of our state.

You know, I'm a native Houstonian as well and seeing this project -- you're seeing these 45 projects going through all my life. And it's critical that we get this.

You know, somebody mentioned Hurricane Rita. My family, we were in a mandatory evacuation zone during Hurricane Rita, and we evacuated. My 95-year-old grandmother was stuck on I-45 through this region for 14 hours. She almost died that day.

So for all the people that did die that day going through this hurricane evacuation, going
through a traffic situation that was unbearable --
luckily, my grandmother didn't die that day. She passed
away a year later. And I think a lot of it was due to
the stress from which she went through with that thing.

But this is going to be critical, critical
for hurricane evacuation, critical for our community for
mobility and -- and transportation of goods and people
through and out this community.

TxDOT has been a good partner working with
us in numerous projects in our region. We've had major
redone of I-45 itself in our -- in my district.
Currently, we're going under a Highway 146 total rebuild
through our district through that -- through an
extremely densely populated area, a densely business
populated area, as well as residential. We've had
numerous meetings with them. We've got those addressed,
those concerns, and got it done. And now we're finally
moving -- moving forward on that project to get it done.
It's going to be a major change of highway through this
whole region.

So they can do it. I think we need to
get -- get this project done, get this -- go ahead and
start working on this because we will lose these funds.
We will lose this opportunity if we don't. And it could
be another ten years.
And as the doctor said, if you're going to be here in 20 years and that highway is in the same position it was, then that was a shame on all of us as elected officials and leaders here to not get it done.

And we're early enough in this process. We're talking about -- he's still using the word "Draft Environmental Impact." Those concerns, we'll be able to take it in. I know that they're going to be able to hear from the communities and hopefully address most of their concerns in what they're able to do at the -- at the final project.

As far as flooding, I mean, nobody around this region is going to be doing more for flooding than -- than what I have been doing in the last couple of years just to make sure that we can get the resources that we need. We're getting the State to get resources that we need for flooding.

And it's a violation of our state law for them to create a project that's going to flood and make things region. So I know they're going to be working for flooding to get those things done.

So, Quincy, thanks for what y'all are doing. And I think this is a great project. And I support y'all going forward, as well as making sure that you do take care of all these concerns and address them...
as best y'all can of what these people are saying.

So with that, Commissioner --

COUNCILMAN CLARK: Thank you, sir.
Commissioner Garcia, you're next.

MR. GARCIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I too had a mother stuck in that traffic, and it took her 24 hours to get from Scarsdale to Katy. But the problem with that was that Judge Emmett learned not to call -- not to say the word evacuation because everybody would do it all at once. We have since learned from that mistake.

And on this particular matter, Quincy, you know, one of the other things -- you know, there's a TxDOT doctrine, I guess, if you will, that I -- that I don't think we have really spent time thinking about. And that is that when we widen to any significant extent, whether it's one lane or whether it's five lanes, do we not still encourage single-use vehicles on the road?

And so I'd like to see that the project has some design in it that our neighbors from the north or the west or east know that there's, you know, options to just driving -- commuting through individually on these roadways. But it -- it just seems to me that the things that I've learned over the years is that the more
we widen, no matter to what extent, we do nothing to
discourage single use of vehicles and encourage a
gravitation towards mass transit. They have to work
together.

MR. ALLEN: I appreciate your comments.
It -- Commissioner, I would just -- I would offer this
idea, that we're not changing the number of single-use
car lane capacity. It's not growing with this project.
The only thing that's growing is transit. To use the
transit lanes, you've got to have more than one person
in your vehicle.

In a sense, we are incentivizing people to
have more than one person in their car or to take
transit in the form of -- in what we know now as bus and
what might be something else in the future, whether
that's bus rapid transit or Light Rail. I very much
appreciate your comments.

The one thing I'd -- I'd like to add just
to remind everyone, we do a lot of hurricane planning
now. It's what we learned from Rita and from -- from
the other storms, Hurricane Ike and then obviously
Harvey.

If we were to get hard -- hit hard with
another storm surge that, like, came with Ike or we
thought might come with Rita, we have provisions in
place now to contraflow where we can put all the
outbound traffic on all of the lanes and shut down the
inbound. We have that on I-10 going west towards
San Antonio, and we have it on I-45 going north toward
Dallas.

If you want to see what's on I-10, as you
get down to the edge of our district, look and see those
yellow water-filled barriers. That's the crossover. We
have a detailed plan with the Department of Public
Safety. We can implement that in a matter of hours. So
we don't want anyone's family to be hung up in that.

My mother was on the way to Nacogdoches.
That's where her sister lived at the time. And we've
got horrific tales too. And I bet everyone in here has
them.

MR. GARCIA: Uh-huh.

MR. ALLEN: But I want to leave you with
the idea that -- that we have improved that situation.

MR. GARCIA: And I know that. And thank
you for that. But, you know -- and I appreciate the --
the response to the widening of the lanes because, you
know, I'm going to look at official, we have met, but
there's still a gap in the -- the full understanding of
this project. And so I -- I still think that we -- we
have room to grow and then to improve the dialogue and
the -- and the -- and the -- and the -- the input from
the community and making sure -- it sounds like
you're -- you're touching on some good high points. But
a lot of it also sounds like it's -- it's recent
correspondence.

So, secondly, in this -- in this
correspondence of getting out of line and getting back in
line, do we have an opportunity to address the
mitigation dollars today? Not -- leaving the 100
million aside, but addressing the mitigation dollars
today, is there an opportunity to do that today?

MR. ALLEN: (Inaudible).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is your mic on?

MR. ALLEN: Forgive me.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Is it back on?

MR. ALLEN: The mitigation dollars do not
affect us staying in line or getting in line or getting
out of line. The miti-- mitigation dollars don't. We
need the 100 million. That's what's been asked as -- as
the match for what we're doing to go forward.

MR. GARCIA: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mayor Zimmerman.

MAYOR ZIMMERMAN: Thank you,

Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Lewis, I want to thank you for your
comments. As I've had a chance to work with you over the years, you always seem to get right down to what needs to be done.

This is not a time for politics. This is a time for thoughtful action. I'm very concerned about the way some of our colleagues have spoken about TxDOT. That's not right. TxDOT has been a partner not only for this region, but for many of us as counties and cities.

And, Quincy, I want to tell you that you have the -- you've got our full support. I think you've got the full support of this body.

And, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to call the question, because we're not going to design that road now. So I call for the question. It's time to vote.

**MS. PATMAN:** I ask a procedural question.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Well, he called for the question. That supersedes everything.

**MR. PATMAN:** Okay.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** So what we're calling the question on is the reconsideration of Judge Hidalgo's motion.

And let me see if I can articulate your motion. And if I don't articulate it correctly, please let me know.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible) your
CHAIRMAN CLARK: Sorry.

So if I don't articulate it appropriately, please let me know.

Basically, what this is going to be a vote is to delay consideration of the 100 million. Does that -- does that cover your --

JUDGE HIDALGO: There's a motion to delay consideration of the 100 or 150 million recognizing that we don't trust with but verify with taxpayer dollars. And if all of this could be explained away in a 30-minute Q and A session, all these folks wouldn't be here. There's clearly some serious, serious outstanding issues. And we have to have the courage to say, wait a minute. There's an annual cycle. We're doing this out of line. We already reviewed our -- our annual plan three months ago. I was here. And --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Judge --

JUDGE HIDALGO: -- this is coming outside --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Judge --

JUDGE HIDALGO: -- the plan --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: On a -- on a calling the question, there's no discussion, no debate. I just wanted to --
JUDGE HIDALGO: That was all I had to say.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yeah.

JUDGE HIDALGO: Just call for courage --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: So --

JUDGE HIDALGO: -- and responsibility to our community.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: So, basically --

JUDGE HIDALGO: We're not saying no. We're saying, let's do it -- let's not put a down payment on a house we haven't --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Right.

JUDGE HIDALGO: -- seen. These are all promises.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Judge.

JUDGE HIDALGO: It's not written anywhere.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Judge.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Point of order.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you.

So what the motion is here is to delay the -- any funding on this particular project. If this particular motion passes, we will -- it will become the -- the main motion. We will vote again. If the motion fails, that means the main motion would --
will -- would -- would come up. And that would include Councilman Millican's to fund the 100 million and to come back and do the mitigation later.

And he didn't get an opportunity to explain why he was deferring the mitigation. But if -- when we get to that, he'll -- he'll have an opportunity to explain that. He had some thought behind that.

So what we're going to do is, I'm going to -- we've called the question. And we are going to vote on delaying the funding of the 100 million.

All in favor of delaying the 100 million, say aye.

(Individuals respond.)

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any opposed?

(Individuals respond.)

CHAIRMAN CLARK: It appears that the ayes -- the nays have it. So the main motion is on the floor.

MS. PATMAN: Okay. I have a point of order.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I would like to --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Is your mic on?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- do the substitute motions --
CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mic on?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Put your mic on.

MS. PATMAN: -- for the main motion that substitutes the staff recommendation for the main motion.

MR. ROBINSON: Second.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. We have a motion and second. It now bears discussion on the amendment.

So what I'm going to do is I am going to recognize Council Member Millican, being that he made the main motion, and let him explain why he made his motion. So that would kind of wrap all this up into one -- one package, and we can move on to our other business.

Council Member Millican.

MR. MILLCAN: Thank you, Chairman.

I made the motion because of the fact that I believe that this topic is very passionate. We have a lot of input. And we need to consider this in great detail before we start allocating funds or deciding what -- what's going to happen or not. I think that the main thought process with allocating 100 million was to get our foot in the door and the slot taken with TxDOT and that we will have plenty of time to mitigate any of the circumstances and discuss the -- the money at that
time rather than to go ahead and allocate money today.

    UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Discussion?

    MS. PATMAN: Discussions?

    CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes. Dis- --

    UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Discussion?

    CHAIRMAN CLARK: Let me -- let me just

make a few brief comments being we're kind of winding
down here.

Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia also sent in a
letter of support of delaying. The mayor of Houston
sent in a letter. And I'll let the council member
address that.

I think what Councilman Millican was
wanting to do is -- is -- I received a lot of e-mails.
This is probably the issue that I've seen -- received
more e-mails and more letters than pretty much any issue
I've dealt with in a long, long time.

And I -- and I think -- you know, I
understand TxDOT and the position they're in. But I
also heard and listened to all the concerns. And I
thought it would be appropriate to take those mitigation
dollars and hold those back as an incentive for TxDOT to
negotiate in good faith; not that I think they're not
negotiating in good faith, but really listen to the
community and figure out what we're going to do for
those mitigation dollars and move forward that way and have them come back to us as TxDOT and maybe update this TPC council on a quarterly basis.

Any more frequently than that would probably be a little too soon because as we all know, government moves a little slower than we prefer. So if they update us quarterly, we would be able to continue to have them put because the citizens would be continuing to contact us as -- as they have. And it would allow us to, you know, get their issues addressed while communicating with TxDOT.

So I think that's why Council Member Millican suggested we pull those dollars out and make it more of a monitoring process, which would give us the opportunity to stay more engaged in the process and make sure we're really doing what we can for the citizens of the Northside.

Yes?

**MS. PATMAN:** Well, is it appropriate for me to spoke -- speak on my motion.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Oh, yes, ma'am. Please.

**MS. PATMAN:** Okay. The only way I can support moving forward today is if, in fact, the money that the staff recommended is in this resolution, is in what we pass.
I respectfully don't see how omitting this money gives us more leverage. I just -- it seems counterintuitive to me. So it seems to me -- and the staff has given this great consideration. And it's a good staff, an excellent staff. And they've taken into account a lot of considerations in a difficult issue and come up with this recommendation.

So first of all, I think we should stand by the staff recommendation. Yes, we're the board. But they're the ones that have had a chance to really delve down into these issues and try to forge something that they hope everyone can live with.

And, second, given the outpouring from the community today and given the fact that clearly moneys are going to be needed for mitigation and for even facilitating the process to hear their concerns, it respectfully seems to me appropriate to go ahead and move forward on that today. To do otherwise would seem to me to really be not giving adequate deference to those who have taken extensive time to show up today and express their concerns.

So I respectfully ask that my motion to -- my substitute motion be accepted. Thank you.

MR. ROBINSON: Mr. Chairman, I think as I've seconded that motion, I'd like to point out that as
referred to, the Mayor of Houston's discussion here
did -- it was based on that assumption that there were
to be mitigating dollars in that.

So Council Member Millican, respecting
your interest of going forward on this, I think for all
the reasons stated by the public here today, as well as
my colleagues representing the City of Houston, we feel
that that money that you carved out is essential to our
interaction in a fully engaged meaningful engagement as
was said this morning. And if we are to go forward, we
find it truly essential to the process.

And I think in that regard, the second
respectfully would have that added back whereupon I
think there might be the momentum to move forward with
this. And I'm speaking on my own behalf.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Judge, do you still have
some additional comments? You were on the list.

Okay. That would be Mayor Zimmerman.

MAYOR ZIMMERMAN: Thank you,

Mr. Chairman.

Carrin, would you be willing to -- or,
Larry Millican, would you be willing to amend your
motion to incorporate the 50 million for the mitigation
and include or request that TxDOT and H-GAC work
together to come back with a plan to update the TPC, as the chairman suggested, quarterly about that overall process? And if you would, then I think we can move this thing along a little bit quicker.

MR. MILLICAN: Most certainly.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. I'll view that as a friendly amendment.

The motion on the floor is to accept the staff recommendation with the quarterly monitoring.

Any further discussion?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

MS. LEWIS: Would you please repeat what motion -- would you please repeat the motion we are voting on, please, in its entirety?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. The motion is to accept the staff recommendation, which was in the packet. That would include the $100 million, plus the $50 million in mitigation funding. Not only would it include the 100 million, plus the 50 million, but it would also include quarterly reports from TxDOT to the TPC so we can stay abreast of this project and stay on top of it to ensure that the community's interest and concerns are being heard.

MS. LEWIS: So the staff recommendation also included 1.5 --
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 1.5 million as well.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes.

MS. LEWIS: So that -- that -- that's in this motion as well?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, that is correct, because the friendly amendment was that the staff recommendation.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just a point of excuse me. Just for a point of order, does Justin need to second that since he was the second in line originally?

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yeah. He -- yeah.

MR. ALLEN: All I was going to say is that we -- I'm committed to due process with Alan or somebody else from -- from the MPO staff to make the quarterly deal.

The other thing I'd like to remind -- I believe the 1.5 is for planning and the 50 is for substantive mitigation. But it --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yeah. We're going to put that the same it was in the packet as what -- what we're voting on.

Is everybody clear what we're voting on?
Any --

MR. ROBINSON: I've got one more caveat.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Oh, really?

MR. ROBINSON: Yes, I do. I've got one more point. And, Mayor Zimmerman, I appreciate what you've just done.

I know that where we are engaging with the public process, Quincy has involved a memorandum of understanding to engage the Mayor's committee that is based -- currently the facilitation group. And that is truly to incorporate these considerations by the public. And bringing that forward is -- will be the basis of our decision before the record of decision is made.

MR. ALLEN: Well --

MR. ROBINSON: Help me clarify that.

MR. ALLEN: Chairman, I don't know that that needs to be part of the motion for the --

MR. ROBINSON: Where we're operating now with moving forward with the facilitation group.

MR. ALLEN: I'm sorry. I -- you lost me. We have an MPO in place for the facilitation group. And you want to amend that, or do you want --

MR. ROBINSON: No. I wanted to state that again.

MR. ALLEN: Oh, that's all you're saying?
MR. ROBINSON: Yes.

MR. ALLEN: Yes. Let me confirm that we do have an MPO that established that facilitation group. And -- and I'm thankful for that.

MR. ROBINSON: Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: Uh-huh.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Hearing no further discussion, we're voting on the 100 -- the staff recommendation, which includes the 100 million, the 50 million, plus the --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 1.5.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- 1.5.

Hearing no further discussion -- oh, sorry, Commissioner. Go ahead.

MR. GARCIA: Yes. I just wanted -- earlier, you mentioned that Congressman -- Congresswoman Garcia had sent in a letter opposing the -- the project.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: I'm sorry if I misspoke. She was not -- she was not opposing the project. She was supporting --

MR. GARCIA: The delay --

CHAIRMAN CLARK: -- the delay. She supported the project. She was just looking for the delay.

MR. GARCIA: Exactly. And so I just want
to make sure that the record reflects. I know that Senator Alvarado's staff was here earlier and read her letter --

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Right.

**MR. GARCIA:** -- requesting the same delay. State Representative Christina Morales was also requesting a delay; Council Member Karla Cisneros also requesting a delay; County Commissioner Rodney Ellis also requesting a delay; State Representative Jessica Farrar was also requesting a delay; Council Member Robert Gallegos also supportive of a delay; as well as Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. So I want to make sure --

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Thank you for getting that on the record. I want to make sure that all those folks are recognized for their position so they can be recognized for that.

Hearing no further discussion, all in favor of the motion?

(Individuals respond.)

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Any opposed?

(No response.)

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Motion --

**MR. GARCIA:** Abstain.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Have the record reflect
that Commissioner Garcia and Judge --

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He abstained.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Okay. Judge Hidalgo voted against and -- and -- and Commissioner Garcia abstained.

Thank you very much.

We have Item Number 9. We need to stay for this business. Let's see if we can get through it in a timely fashion.

Item 9 is dealing with the -- with Approval of a Resolution Supporting Retention of State Highway 99 (the Grand Parkway) Segments B, C, I1, and D in the Proposed TxDOT 2020 Unified Transportation Program.

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** We have a motion by -- who made the motion?

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Matt.

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Matt Sebesta made the motion.

Who made the second?

(Inaudible crosstalk.)

**CHAIRMAN CLARK:** Bay -- the council member from Baytown made the second.