



September 3, 2009

The Honorable Judge Ed Emmett
Harris County
1001 Preston, Suite 911
Houston, Texas 77002

Dear Judge Emmett:

One of the biggest challenges we face is the planning and building of transportation infrastructure that will accommodate the growth of this region. And while the population of the area inside Beltway 8 in Harris County will grow more dense, all studies indicate the majority of our future growth is outside this core, in the unincorporated areas of Harris and surrounding counties.

The West Houston Association encourages Harris County Commissioners Court to declare local primacy for the further development of the Grand Parkway, State Highway 99. A declaration of local primacy may be done either individually or through the Grand Parkway Public Private Partnership Program or some further variation.

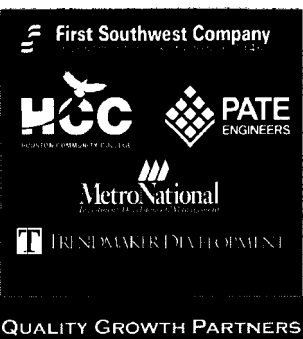
This recommendation should in no way be interpreted as a comment on the Texas Department of Transportation and the fine people who work there. The Association has had, and expects to continue to have, a constructive working relationship with TxDOT. We fully appreciate and respect all that TxDOT does in our community and state. As one of the states expected to lead the nation in population growth in the next half century TxDOT has an ever increasing challenge to meet the demands that growth will put on the State's system. It is the appreciation of those future needs that leads us to conclude that when a local entity has demonstrated the ability to provide equivalent infrastructure it should take the lead in doing so. Harris County has that capability, and the surrounding counties served by the Grand Parkway can as well, as evidenced by the Ft. Bend County Toll Road Authority.

Local development leads to local control of all segments of the Grand Parkway and in our view, is a preferable means of going forward with this important regional project.

Local control will maximize the opportunity for our citizen's county leaders to:

- have a direct say in the funding of the project including toll rates;

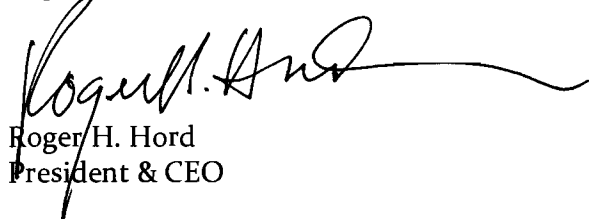
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- maximize the involvement of local companies in the project and the economic benefits of their toll dollars; and
- insure integration with local roadways

It is our understanding that unless the counties declare primacy, the Grand Parkway project will revert to TxDOT to develop under the same terms and conditions. However, for the reasons stated above we believe local initiative and control is a preferable solution.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger H. Hord", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roger H. Hord
President & CEO

cc: Commissioner El Franco Lee
Commissioner Sylvia Garcia
Commissioner Steve Radack
Commissioner Jerry Eversole