

Texas Transportation Institute

Public Perceptions Regarding the Texas Department of Transportation:

Focus Group Results

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Public Perceptions Regarding the Texas Department of Transportation: Focus Group Results

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Focus groups are an excellent method to delve into complicated issues and uncover what the public is thinking, why they think that and how they react to additional information or alternative scenarios. The Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) conducted a series of focus groups in July and August 2009 in eight Texas cities designed to investigate issues relating to mobility, connectivity, pavement quality, funding and general perceptions of Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) operations. The findings from the groups of seven to 12 participants are not a statistical sample of public opinion.

The findings suggest several challenges for TxDOT in the topics of providing information about the condition, status, plans and performance of the transportation system and the decision process for making investments to improve the system. They also indicate a general understanding that the Texas road system is better than that of nearby states and that the funding challenges are substantial. This executive summary identifies several themes from the focus groups and suggests some steps that should be considered to address the issues.

What They Said

Almost every focus group participant misunderstood some element of how TxDOT is funded. When asked an open-ended question like “where does TxDOT get its funding?,” few participants could identify even the basic funding sources – fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees – and even fewer knew that public schools are funded with fuel taxes. Other significant TxDOT funding issues – funding diversions to other agencies or the general fund – were also not understood.

Focus group participants had a good understanding of TxDOT’s general role in the funding, creation and maintenance of the street and highway network, and most understood that TxDOT had a small role in public transportation. About half of the participants could identify that TxDOT had responsibility for some major roads and the city or county was responsible for most minor roads. But the specific knowledge about which roads are in which jurisdiction was found infrequently. Participants in most of the focus groups thought that TxDOT could be spending its funds more wisely, specifically mentioning the following:

- Long construction schedules mean a road is torn up, creating more congestion and travel difficulties for many years. Several construction stages covering only short sections of a corridor at a time were mentioned as harming motorists, truck routes, emergency services and adjacent businesses.
- Many believed TxDOT was directly responsible for construction and expressed concern over construction workers standing idle or project work zones with no activity in them.
- Roads that had recently been finished were being resurfaced (e.g., seal coat treatments) sooner than required.
- Roads that were either inadequate when initially opened (e.g., not wide

“Projects take too long. Once done, they start over on the same road.”

enough) or poorly designed were mentioned as causing doubt about TxDOT’s planning, design and oversight program.

When the conversation turned to experience with roads in other states, Texas was generally considered to have much better roads than neighboring states and in most cases better than any roads the participants had experienced in the United States. Texas’ smooth roads and good rest areas were noted by several travelers. Texas lagged behind in the perception of the extent and effectiveness of intercity and urban public transportation modes and services. Several of the groups had the perception that the long-range transportation plans they knew about were mostly for roads and toll roads, and there was not enough discussion about adapting to high gas prices, limited fuel, climate change policies or larger numbers of older Texans who will be less able to drive.

After a brief explanation of the current transportation funding situation, participants were provided with information about the future outcomes of a set of options for allocating TxDOT funding to two broad categories: pavement maintenance and bridge quality versus urban mobility and rural connectivity. Current and future conditions were calibrated to each focus group location using data on current conditions and findings from the *2030 Committee Texas Transportation Needs Report*. Participants were “given” \$100 to allocate to each of the two categories, with outcome conditions described for each \$10 increment. In general the pavement descriptions were similar, though the metro and urban groups focused on reducing congestion and the rural group focused on improving rural connectivity. For all eight cities, the descriptions required that \$90 of the \$100 be allocated to the pavement and bridge category to maintain current conditions. The initial allocations were discussed among the group, and a re-allocation was allowed although only small changes were noted in most locations. A surprisingly large range of funding allocation was made with \$46 to \$82 for pavement and bridge issues, as noted in Table 1. A simple average of the values indicates that in the present environment of limited funding, participants are willing to see lower-quality roads and more bridges with weight limits in exchange for additional lanes and roads in urban areas and more divided highways in rural areas.

Table 1. 2009 Focus Group Allocations.

Region	Pavement/Bridge	Mobility/Connectivity
Overall	64	36
Amarillo	82	18
Arlington	46	54
Brownsville	46	54
Brownwood	72	28
El Paso	55	45
Houston	70	30
Killeen	63	37
Lufkin	58	42

Current funding was noted as a significant barrier to progress, but there was general agreement among the participants that their lack of current knowledge was a barrier to their support for funding increases. If they could be convinced that their tax dollars were being well spent and that any additional taxes would be well spent, the current system of vehicle registration and motor fuel taxes had the most support as

the mechanism for increased funding. Tolls and vehicle travel fees had some support, but also met with more skepticism about how these new processes would be instituted and fear about the misuse of the information collected. It should also be noted that the participants mentioned safety needs, even though there were no data available to identify the cost of those solutions.

When asked about a “successful” TxDOT, most participants identified solutions to the above problems and perceived inadequacies, but they also mentioned that one of their problems was with the lack of information about current and future activities. They appreciated the opportunity to talk to the researchers about TxDOT and wished there were more opportunities to discuss concerns. They also wondered why there

“Success is when I don’t have to think about TxDOT or the roads – they just work.”

was such a lack of knowledge about TxDOT within the group. Interestingly, a few participants noted that this might be a good goal for TxDOT (expressed as “success is when I don’t have to think about TxDOT or the roads – they just work”). But more often the issue was approached from the perspective of requesting more information about the agency, its performance, and current and future plans. Almost all participants said they left knowing more than when they began the focus group and looked forward to other opportunities to learn about transportation issues.

The Take-Aways and Some Possible Solutions

The findings of the focus group discussion relate to two broad areas of potential future activity for TxDOT. There are several issues related to *activities* that will address perceived shortcomings or enhance areas of good practice or positive trends. There were also findings that point to *how and when* the messages might be conveyed.

People Don’t Know Who You Are, What You Do or How You Get Your Money

This is the most significant and consistent finding in all eight focus groups. While the general activities of TxDOT are well understood, that knowledge is very thin, and in many cases the “knowledge” is just wrong. In some sense this is consistent with other technically oriented government agencies; the topics are complex, the issues numerous, and the outcomes relatively mundane. The idea that success means not thinking about transportation is both appealing if one likes “flying under the radar” and daunting for an agency attempting to persuade the public of the value of its services.

“Flying under the radar” is both appealing and daunting.

There must be a better education component to TxDOT’s program. Many taxpayers do not know the basic information needed to properly assess transportation’s role in society and the economy, and are even less equipped to properly judge TxDOT’s functions. An agency in this position is hard pressed to have a discussion about the proper roles, expectations, vision and funding sources or levels. The public must see the value they get for the limited funds available before the discussion can turn to what may be done with additional funding.

Across the United States, over the past decade there have been several local and statewide elections to increase funding, provide additional operating and funding flexibility, or develop new programs or projects (American Road and Transportation Builders Association [ARTBA] website: <http://www.artba.org/advocacy/government-affairs/transportations--elections/>). A review of these elections suggests that they passed because the voters perceived the agency as operating efficiently and effectively, saw the plan or program as providing good value for the expenditures, and saw the right amount of transparency

and accountability in place to maintain the schedule and budget that were promised (with updates and changes as required by the projects).

The following message elements could help inform the public on some of the basic misunderstandings identified in the focus groups. These are basic information pieces rather than a campaign storyboard; the proper mix of message and target audiences was not the subject of this research effort:

- What does the public care about?
- Funding sources – where does the money come from?
- Spending categories – where does the money go?
- Funding trend – for the recent past revenues and near-term future.
- Improvement trends – the Interstate-era spending in the 1960s and 1970s led to good conditions in the 1980s; now those roads have to be rebuilt, in addition to adding new capacity to handle growth.
- Status of projects, programs and problems – building on the activities in Project Tracker, TxDOT’s web-based project tracking website.
- Current conditions – for all major TxDOT activities at the district, county and state level.

The goal of these efforts is to be consistent and persistent. Erroneous understanding and misinformation will not be addressed in a few weeks, and trust is built over time. Effective communication on the technical topics that make up the bulk of TxDOT’s program requires continuous interaction between the public and the technical information providers; complicated topics require more than sound bites. The information program must be a part of the commitment to transparency and accountability and should not be conducted only when there is a push for additional funding. Focus group participants were ready to be informed but appeared to be interested in a longer conversation about TxDOT’s needs. Building a base of public information will lead to public support if TxDOT is doing a good job and making the best decisions. This longer-range view has proven to be successful in the past, and is more sustainable than a “momma wants new shoes” approach to providing public information only during funding increase campaigns.

A Few Logical Information Steps

Project Tracker is a good beginning for the kind of information that the focus group participants expressed a desire for. The information on projects and programs is an important component of the accountability and transparency aspects. While Project Tracker was not reviewed in depth (and therefore we cannot draw any conclusions about the style, format and organization of the website), the display and regular updating of key public information will be important in the future.

Focus group participants indicated they were interested in learning more about important transportation issues and TxDOT activities, but they did not think this education should be a product of 30-second television commercials (i.e., they did not want to be “sold” on TxDOT). This seemed to be a product of two issues – these are difficult concepts to communicate in a short time period and the suggestion that television commercials would be produced at a high public cost. With all of the free media channels open to an agency (e.g., Twitter, Facebook and its own website), there should be enough methods to provide an interested public with facts, current conditions and forecasts as well as to share information through surveys and study results. There may also be a role for viral or inexpensive information exchanges.

Building on reports and requirements from the Texas Legislature is another method for attracting attention to public interest issues. Project Tracker can be the “source for everything you want to know about

TxDOT,” but content such as current weather and road conditions, traffic congestion maps, travel time information, the 100 most congested roads, pavement quality maps and other elements may encourage visitors to look at other pages on the website. These can be the portals that are used to pull citizens into the information streams in a way that short-time-period campaigns cannot accomplish.

INTRODUCTION

Focus groups are an effective means of evaluating general perceptions of various topics. Focus group-derived data allow for an in-depth exploration of thoughts and opinions related to a particular topic, and demonstrate how those thoughts and opinions are communicated. Focus groups can provide a qualitative sample of public opinion that is particularly useful input as organizational changes are implemented.

TxDOT wished to develop an understanding of the current perceptions of the public about its agency, its functions and processes, and plans for the future. A series of focus groups were conducted in July and August 2009 to assess the strengths and weaknesses of TxDOT in a few significant topic areas. The output identified issues and priorities that were important to the public. The information gathered and described in this tech memo will be valuable input to TxDOT as new goals are developed and put forth. Moreover, the results can be used to formulate clear, articulate messages that resonate with the public.

The following eight focus group locations offered geographic diversity as well as representation from both urban and rural areas:

- Amarillo,
- Arlington,
- Brownsville,
- Brownwood,
- El Paso,
- Houston,
- Killeen, and
- Lufkin.

The focus group conversation concentrated on three main topics:

- general impressions of TxDOT, the transportation system in Texas and what the public appreciates about the system;
- what actions and attributes would make TxDOT more successful, i.e., what success would look like for the department; and
- a discussion of funding priorities, which required participants to allocate available funding to pavement, bridge, mobility and rural connectivity. Information for each location was developed so that the input and resulting condition descriptions were meaningful to the participants. For example, comparisons of pavement conditions for well-known local roads and major highways

were noted to provide a connection between the “real world” and the 2007 pavement condition measurements. The participants also received information on the urban travel time reduction effects and the effect on intercity rural routes from added spending. The participants, thus, had examples of the effects of various funding allocations and projected outcomes, benefits and relative costs.

Each focus group session lasted two hours with a free exchange of ideas, questions and comments. The elements of the discussion are reviewed in the next several sections, with particular attention to what the participants said about current conditions and situations and what changes they might support.

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

Recruitment of participants in the eight cities selected for the focus groups varied greatly depending on the size of the city. For some cities such as Houston, El Paso and Arlington, the researchers had available to them a list of past survey respondents who indicated a desire to participate in future research. These cities also host offices of the Texas Transportation Institute in local office buildings, and researchers were able to post flyers within those buildings to recruit locally (Figure 1). These same cities, along with the Killeen-Temple metropolitan area, also have active Craigslist websites. Response to posting the flyer in the “gig: event” category on Craigslist in these cities was good, and in the case of Arlington the Craigslist users filled the session before contact was able to be made with the list of past participants. While Amarillo and Brownsville have their own Craigslist websites, the response from these locations was less than expected. The remaining cities, Brownwood and Lufkin, do not have Craigslist websites dedicated to their specific cities but are included in the Abilene and Tyler/East Texas websites, respectively. Posting the flyer on these websites attracted few respondents. These two cities, along with Brownsville, had a much better response from the placement of the flyer as an advertisement in their local newspapers (Figure 2).

The use of other means of recruitment, specifically community calendars, contact with social organizations and social media venues such as Facebook, was not effective, except in the case of Amarillo, when a TTI employee in College Station saw the request for contacts on Facebook and forwarded the contents of the flyer to former classmates in the area. One social club located in the Amarillo area also responded to the request to make the flyer available to its membership. The recruitment process for each city is detailed below.

Houston

The recruiter contacted participants from past focus groups who had indicated interest in future focus groups and had provided email addresses. A flyer was also posted in the office building where the focus group session would be held and emailed to three social groups in the area. Seventeen individuals responded, filling the focus group and providing alternates should someone drop out.

Of the 17, one was from the previous focus group participant list, and at least four more were recruited by word of mouth from that person. Two others were recruited by word of mouth from TTI employees, and the rest responded to the flyer posted in the building.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please Join
Us for a

FOCUS GROUP

5:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.
Wednesday, August 5th, 2009
Killeen Community Center
2201 E. Veteran's Memorial Blvd.
Killeen, TX 76543

The Texas Transportation Institute is seeking ten individuals to participate in a focus group session discussing the Texas Department of Transportation and priorities for transportation investment in Texas. Eligible participants should be regular drivers over 18. The focus group will take approximately two hours and participants will be paid \$ 50.00 for their time.

For more information or to register, interested individuals should contact:

Heather Ford at (512) 467-0946 or h-ford@ttimail.tamu.edu
You must be registered to participate.



Figure 1. Sample Flyer Used for Recruitment in Targeted Locations.

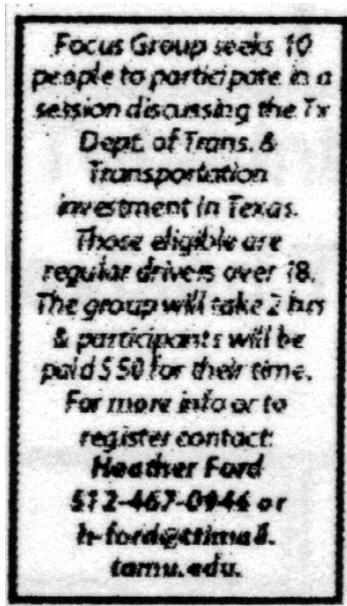


Figure 2. Flyer as It Appeared in the Newspaper Advertisements.

Killeen

No past participant list was available for recruiting purposes. While seeking a location to hold the focus group, the recruiter also asked contacts if they would post the flyer. The Killeen YMCA agreed to post it at the front desk. At Mary Hardin-Baylor University, the student union was under renovation, but the contact there asked that we send the flyer anyway and he would circulate it among the approximately 50 students that were on campus for the summer. The recruiters also sent the flyer to Central Texas Community College to post in the student union and to local libraries in Killeen, Harker Heights, Belton, Temple and Copperas Cove.

In addition, the contents of the flyer were posted to the Killeen-Temple Craigslist website and two online social organizations in the Killeen-Temple area.

Of the individuals that registered, one person was recruited via the online social groups and three others by direct contact from the recruiter in the process of making posting requests. The remaining people were recruited via Craigslist, either directly or by word of mouth from the Craigslist participants.

Amarillo

No past participant list was available for this area. The recruiter requested that the flyer be posted at the location of the focus group session and at the other libraries in the city. The contents of the flyer were posted to the "event" category on the Amarillo Craigslist website, and a copy was sent to a local social club. After receiving little response the first week of recruitment, a post was made on the personal Facebook account of the recruiter, asking for friends with contacts in Amarillo to provide suggestions on additional locations in the area to post the flyer. One individual who was recruited volunteered to post the flyer in her place of employment, a health-care facility.

One member from the social club was recruited to participate, at least one other participant was recruited via a library flyer, one was recruited via word of mouth from a TTI employee in another division who

saw the Facebook post, and the remaining people were recruited after the Craigslist ad was reposted under the “gig: event” category.

El Paso

The recruiter contacted participants from past focus groups who had indicated interest in future focus groups and had provided email addresses. A flyer was also posted in the office building where the focus group session would be held and was emailed to a local social organization. The contents of the flyer were also posted to the El Paso Craigslist website. Four individuals responded from the past focus group participant list. The rest of the participants were recruited equally from the building flyer and the Craigslist posting.

Brownsville

The recruiter requested that the flyer be posted at the local library as well as at the building hosting the focus group session. The contents of the flyer were electronically posted on the Brownsville Craigslist website and EventSetter.com website. After two weeks with very little response, a post for contacts in the Brownsville area was placed on the recruiter’s personal Facebook page, hoping that more opportunities to post flyers would be found, and a TTI employee from another program sent a flyer to a relative that works at the University of Texas in Brownsville to post on campus. A final attempt to recruit participants was made by placing an abbreviated version of the flyer as an advertisement in the *Brownsville Herald* on August 12, 2009.

Three participants were recruited via the Craigslist posting. No participants were recruited via EventSetter.com, flyers or Facebook contacts. The newspaper advertisement filled the remainder of the focus group slots and garnered several potential alternate attendees.

Brownwood

No past participant list was available. Researchers requested that the flyer be posted at the local library. The flyer was electronically posted to the Abilene, Texas, Craigslist website, which covers the area of Texas between Abilene and San Angelo. Only two participants were recruited via Craigslist after two weeks of posting, so a newspaper ad was placed in the *Brownwood Bulletin*. The ad ran on Sunday, August 9, and Tuesday, August 11. All of the remaining participants were recruited through the newspaper advertisement.

Lufkin

No past participant list was available. Researchers posted the contents of the flyer to the Tyler-East Texas Craigslist website and to the Lufkin Chamber of Commerce online calendar. The flyer was also sent to acquaintances in Lufkin for general distribution. Four participants were recruited from the Craigslist posting. An advertisement placed in the Sunday, August 23, edition of the *Lufkin Daily News* resulted in the recruitment of the remaining participants.

Arlington

The focus group held at the TTI offices in Arlington on August 31 was recruited in its entirety from individuals who responded to the posting of the flyer on the local Craigslist website. In this instance, the

recruiter had to actively screen out residents of counties other than Tarrant County since the ad resulted in an inundation of responses.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Role of TxDOT

In each focus group, there is confusion over what TxDOT does. People understand that TxDOT handles construction and maintenance of the roadway system. Not always clear, however, is which roads fall under TxDOT's jurisdiction. Farm-to-market roads are confused with county and city roads. Additionally, mass transit services are often confused as a duty of the department. When asked, participants guessed responsibilities such as issuing driver's licenses, giving speeding tickets, installing fencing to keep the deer from crossing the roads and setting tax rates. This misunderstanding points to the need to educate the public about the role of the agency.

Impressions of TxDOT

Even though the responsibilities of TxDOT are not completely clear, there are definite opinions about the job TxDOT is doing. Of highest profile are the construction projects. In each focus group, some issues relating to projects taking too long, workers standing around and travel delays associated with construction were conveyed. They say that maintenance should be the highest priority. There is an overall sense that the agency is disorganized and wasteful.

There is a sense that congestion is getting worse and TxDOT is not doing an adequate job planning for the future. As a Brownsville participant stated, "TxDOT should get the project done right the first time." Several of the cities mentioned the need for better public transportation as an alternative approach to increased capacity projects. This sentiment is less apparent in the large metropolitan areas where wider roadways with more lanes are desired. Seeking more input from the public is preferred when making funding decisions and acquiring right-of-way.

"TxDOT should get the project done right the first"

It is not all bad, however. Some very positive comments were heard. One person in Lufkin stated that TxDOT is a very impressive organization. In both Amarillo and Brownwood, participants said that projects are being done quickly. In Killeen and elsewhere, people indicated that highways in Texas are better than in other states. In El Paso, half of the participants raised their hands saying that TxDOT is doing a good job at roadway maintenance. The large metropolitan cities like Houston reported good impressions: they are very happy with the finished I-10 project. Even Arlington and Brownsville shared a few positive remarks. Therefore, virtually every focus group indicated satisfaction with some aspect of the department.

What Success Looks Like

Success means not having to worry about dying, as one person in Brownsville put it. The need for safe roads was heard across the state and surfaced in various discussions surrounding pavement condition, rest areas, rumble strips, pavement markings, pedestrians, speed limits, nighttime illumination, landscaping and trucks. It was quoted as the highest priority for TxDOT

"Success means not having to worry about dying."

in focus groups across the state. Even though they could not use this priority in the funding allocation survey, they considered it when “spending” their \$100 in the funding exercise.

After safety, the next most frequently heard measure of success surrounds maintenance. When it comes to maintenance, people desire smooth roads where debris is swept clean, structures are repaired quickly, traffic signs are clear, and potholes are fixed. One person in Arlington said, “On I-30 there was a pothole big enough to hurt a car. Some sort of hotline would be good.”

Problems associated with large aggregate surfaced in more than one focus group as reports of broken windshields and uncomfortable rides were made. Roadside mowing was mentioned in Brownsville as a way to measure success. A Lufkin participant had a creative idea about using the roadside as a place to harvest grass.

“On I-30 there was a pothole big enough to hurt a car. Some sort of hotline would be good.”

Finally, planning for the future was stated as a measure of success. They want smooth-flowing traffic using available technology like warning systems that alert drivers of incidents. In El Paso, someone mentioned the way crashes were quickly moved off the highway in Las Vegas, Nevada, where he/she used to live. It does not happen as quickly in El Paso, resulting in congestion and frustration. Planning also means understanding where growth will occur and accommodating it appropriately. The oil shortage, global warming and massive increases in gas prices need to be addressed by providing alternatives to driving alone. One Lufkin participant said that TxDOT should not be so interested in pouring concrete. Involving the public in these processes is also a part of good planning practices. Part of good planning practices means communicating with other local agencies. Several participants mentioned the need for more cooperation and coordination among agencies in planning for the future.

Allocation Scenarios

The element of the focus groups that dealt with the funding allocation issue drew upon the findings of the *2030 Needs Report* and the current pavement condition rating surveys. The regional needs and current trends were combined into an information document that provided participants with realistic choices connected to expected outcomes based on current revenue trends. The pavement and mobility allocation surveys (described below) used in one metropolitan region and one rural area are illustrated in Tables 2 and 3.

- Pavement and bridge quality – While the *2030 Needs Report* analysis only produced statewide pavement and bridge maintenance cost information, the district-level condition studies conducted every year provided information to guide the preparation of the condition scenarios. In all eight regions, “keep pavement and bridge ratings where they are now” required 90 percent of the funding; this might be on the low end of the necessary percentage of spending depending on the amount and type of growth. All of the scenarios were phrased in similar ways. Bridge deterioration was described as resulting in load-limiting bridges (rather than identifying “bridges falling down”) based on input from subject experts and a desire to keep pavement concerns separate from safety concerns. Examples of pavement condition rating were provided by pointing to specific road sections and using pictures of roads with pavement scores.
- Urban mobility and rural connectivity – Focus groups in larger population centers were presented with choices that described the effects on congestion due to the variety of investment levels.

Rural and small area urban choices concentrated on expected investments in wider and divided highways linking to larger towns or major routes.

The participants were informed about the general trend in vehicle registration fees and motor fuel tax receipts over the last 20 years to clear any misinformation on that topic. They were advised of their choices and the need to spend only \$100, and allowed 10 minutes to study the pictures and consider their choices. The participants made their choices individually for the most part, but the group was then asked to discuss their choices and then allowed to re-prioritize their “spending” after hearing other participants’ thoughts; in most cases no changes were made.

Table 4 illustrates the final spending profiles for each focus group. While there was support for maintaining the system, it should be noted that the average of each focus group was below the 90 percent of spending needed to keep pavements in their current condition. No one is suggesting that maintenance of the current system is not important, and the authors recognize that pavement quality deterioration has a nonlinear effect on the cost to repair damage (i.e., it is much more costly to repair a road that is damaged than it is to keep a road from becoming damaged). But the percentages show that in a time of limited funding, there is support for allowing minor roads to deteriorate if more divided highways can be constructed and travel times can be reduced.

Table 2. Lufkin Focus Group Allocation Survey.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality	Dollar Value	Mobility and Connections to Other Cities
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like 1 st Street between Abney and Lufkin.	0	Current roads only
10	10 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like 1 st Street between Abney and Lufkin.	10	A few major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
20	20 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like 1 st Street between Abney and Lufkin.	20	Half of the major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
30	30 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Raguet Street between Henderson and Thompson or Frank Avenue (SH 94) between Bynum and Herndon.	30	All major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
40	40 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Raguet Street between Henderson and Thompson or Frank Avenue (SH 94) between Bynum and Herndon.	40	All major and a few minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
50	50 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Raguet Street between Henderson and Thompson or Frank Avenue (SH 94) between Bynum and Herndon.	50	All major and many minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
60	60 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Raguet Street between Henderson and Thompson or Frank Avenue (SH 94) between Bynum and Herndon.	60	All major and most minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
70	70 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like 1 st Street between Lufkin and Timberland.	70	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
80	80 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like 1 st Street between Lufkin and Timberland.	80	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. One major congested street is widened.
90	88 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” – like 1 st Street between Lufkin and Timberland.	90	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened.
100	93 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” – like John Redditt Drive (US 69) between Raguet Street and Frank Avenue (SH 94).	100	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened, and one major congested rural road is widened.

Table 3. Arlington Focus Group Allocation Survey.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality	Dollar Value	Congestion
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like SH 360 Freeway between Park Row and Division Street or Pioneer Parkway between Center and Collins.	0	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 60 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
10	5 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like SH 360 Freeway between Park Row and Division Street or Pioneer Parkway between Center and Collins.	10	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 58 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
20	10 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like SH 360 Freeway between Park Row and Division Street or Pioneer Parkway between Center and Collins.	20	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 56 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
30	20 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Cooper Street between Park Row and Abrams.	30	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 54 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8 hours each weekday.
40	30 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Cooper Street between Park Row and Abrams.	40	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 52 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8 hours each weekday.
50	40 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Cooper Street between Park Row and Abrams.	50	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 50 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
60	50 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Cooper Street between Park Row and Abrams.	60	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 48 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
70	60 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like the SH 360 frontage roads north of I-30 Freeway.	70	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 46 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
80	70 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like the SH 360 frontage roads north of I-30 Freeway.	80	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 44 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.
90	Three-fourths of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” – like the SH 360 frontage roads north of I-30 Freeway.	90	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 42 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.
100	85 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” – like SH 360 Freeway south of I-20 Freeway.	100	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 40 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.

Table 4. 2009 Focus Group Allocations.

Region	Pavement/Bridge	Mobility/Connectivity
Overall	64	36
Amarillo	82	18
Arlington	46	54
Brownsville	46	54
Brownwood	72	28
El Paso	55	45
Houston	70	30
Killeen	63	37
Lufkin	58	42

Observations by Region Type

No single summary of the findings is possible; each of the eight regions had interesting facets to the spending allocations, and the results were not easily summarized by “metropolitan” or “rural.” The categories used below describe the set of choices provided to the participants. Participants in all groups recognized the need for additional funding and appeared to be open to an informed discussion about the alternative sources and uses of funds. Most groups also included a discussion about the types of congestion solutions that would be deployed, with some support for public transportation in all eight groups. Focus group participants in the smaller regions indicated both an understanding of the transportation needs of large population centers and a willingness to discuss a reduction in funding for their region to address the “big city” needs.

Large Metropolitan Regions

The high pavement/bridge scores in Houston were due to two factors: the negative effects of potholes and rough pavement on safety and the relatively small gains in travel time that would be achieved for additional spending on mobility improvement. They accept congestion as a way of life as one person said, “Congestion is like breathing. It is a fact of life. I grew up in traffic.” The Arlington group took the expected approach for a major region (and did not include safety in their maintenance thinking); participants favored mobility funding over pavement quality, despite the low 2007 pavement scores.

“Congestion is like breathing. It is a fact of life. I grew up in traffic.”

Small Metropolitan Regions

Brownsville and El Paso illustrated similar choices with comments focusing on the relatively good road conditions now and the need to improve urban congestion levels and major intercity routes.

Rural Regions

The rural and small urban focus groups in Amarillo, Lufkin, Brownwood and Killeen allocated more than half of their share of funding to maintaining smooth roads and bridges, but most of them saw the need to spend funds addressing the connectivity problems.

CONCLUSIONS

The focus group discussions identify several challenges for TxDOT but also several opportunities. The general lack of understanding about TxDOT is accompanied by an interest in the primary topics and a positive outlook on TxDOT's contribution to the communities and the state. Participants lacked knowledge about topics such as information about the condition, status, plans and performance of the transportation system. Very few participants could identify the major revenue sources, and most did not understand the decision process for making investments to improve the system. The focus groups indicated a general understanding that the Texas road system and rest areas are better than nearby states and that the funding challenges are substantial.

Almost every focus group participant misunderstood some element of how TxDOT is funded, and very few could identify the key revenue sources of the other activities that are funded from the motor fuels taxes (i.e., Department of Public Safety and public schools). This is an enormous challenge for any agency, but particularly for one with significant needs and a limited ability to raise its funds without approval of legislators and the public.

Focus group participants had a good understanding of TxDOT's general role in the funding, creating and maintaining of the street and highway network, and most understood that TxDOT had a small role in public transportation. About half of the participants could identify that TxDOT had responsibility for some major roads and the city or county was responsible for most minor roads. But there were also several items of "knowledge" that were incorrect and other topics where the participants felt TxDOT could be spending its funds more wisely. Texas lagged behind in the perception of the extent and effectiveness of intercity and urban public transportation modes and services. Several of the groups had the perception that the long-range transportation plans they knew about were mostly for roads and toll roads and there was not enough discussion about adapting to possible future challenges presented by high gas prices, limited fuel, climate change policies or larger numbers of older Texans who will be less able to drive.

The funding allocation exercise helped the participants understand the challenges TxDOT faces. The groups settled on a surprisingly large range of allocation – from \$46 to \$82 (out of \$100 total) for pavement and bridge issues. With \$90 required to keep the roads in their current physical condition, the allocations indicate a willingness to accept some level of deterioration in exchange for additional roads that could reduce travel time and provide more divided rural highways. The discussion also pointed to the need for a safety needs analysis similar to the pavement, bridge and mobility information in the *2030 Needs Report*. Current funding was noted as a significant barrier to progress, but there was general agreement among the participants that their lack of current knowledge was a barrier to their support for funding increases. If they could be convinced that their tax dollars were being well spent and that any additional taxes would be well spent, the current system of vehicle registration and motor fuel taxes had the most support as the mechanism for increased funding. Tolls and vehicle travel fees had some support, but also met with more skepticism about how these new processes would be instituted and fear about the misuse of the information collected.

When asked about a "successful" TxDOT, most participants identified solutions to the above problems and perceived inadequacies, but they also mentioned that success might be defined as "I don't have to think about TxDOT or the roads – they just work." Almost all participants said they left knowing more than when they began the focus group and looked forward to other opportunities to learn about transportation issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The most significant and consistent finding in all eight focus groups was that most Texans generally understand TxDOT's operations, but that knowledge is very thin and in many cases wrong. In some sense this is consistent with other technically oriented government agencies; the topics are complex, the issues numerous and the outcomes relatively mundane. The idea that success means not thinking about transportation is both *appealing* if one likes "flying under the radar" and *daunting* for an agency attempting to persuade the public of the value of its services.

- **There must be an education component to TxDOT's program** – Many taxpayers do not know the basic information needed to properly assess transportation's role in society and the economy, and are even less equipped to properly judge TxDOT's functions. An agency in this position is hard pressed to have a discussion about the proper roles, expectations, vision and funding sources or levels. The public must see the value they get for the limited funds available before the discussion can turn to what may be done with additional funding. Focus group participants in the smaller regions indicated both an understanding of the transportation needs of large population centers and a willingness to discuss a reduction in funding for their region to address the "big city" needs.
- **Education must be followed by action** – Across the United States, over the past decade there have been several local and statewide elections to increase funding, provide additional operating and funding flexibility, or develop new programs or projects (<http://www.artba.org/advocacy/government-affairs/transportations--elections/>). A review of these elections suggests that they passed because the voters perceived the agency as operating efficiently and effectively, saw the plan or program as providing good value for the expenditures, and saw the right amount of transparency and accountability in place to maintain the schedule and budget that were promised (with updates and changes as required by the projects). Such an approach puts pressure on the agency to perform well, to tell the public about good and bad performance, and to develop plans that react to public needs.
- **A few basic message elements communicated persistently and consistently will help** – The ideas below are basic information pieces rather than a "campaign storyboard"; the proper mix of message and target audiences was not the subject of this research effort.
 - What does the public care about?
 - Funding sources – where does the money come from?
 - Spending categories – where does the money go?
 - Funding trend – for the recent past revenues and near-term future.
 - Improvement trends – the Interstate-era spending in the 1960s and 1970s led to good conditions in the 1980s; those roads have to be rebuilt, in addition to adding new capacity to handle growth.
 - Status of projects, programs and problems – building on the activities in Project Tracker.
 - Current conditions – for all major TxDOT activities at the district, county and state level.

Effective communication on the technical topics that make up the bulk of TxDOT's program requires continuous interaction between the public and the technical information providers; complicated topics require

more than sound bites. The information program must be a part of the commitment to transparency and accountability and should not be conducted only when there is a push for additional funding. Focus group participants were ready to be informed but appeared to be interested in a longer conversation about TxDOT's needs. Project Tracker is a good example of the kind of information for which focus group participants expressed a desire.

Focus group participants indicated they were interested in learning more about important transportation issues and TxDOT activities, but they did not think this education should be a product of 30-second television commercials (i.e., they did not want to be "sold" on TxDOT). This seemed to be a product of two issues – the fact that these are difficult concepts to convey in short time periods and television commercials would be produced at a high public cost. With all of the free media channels open to an agency (e.g., Twitter, Facebook and its own website), there should be enough methods to provide an interested public with facts, current conditions and forecasts as well as to share information through surveys and study results. There may also be a role for viral or inexpensive information exchanges.

Building on reports and requirements from the Texas Legislature is another method for attracting attention to public interest issues. Project Tracker can be the "source for everything you want to know about TxDOT," but content such as current weather and road conditions, traffic congestion maps, travel time information, the 100 most congested roads, pavement quality maps and other elements may encourage visitors to look at other pages on the website. These can be the portals that are used to pull citizens into the information streams in a way that short-time-period campaigns cannot accomplish.

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF NOTES BY FOCUS GROUP

Amarillo

Seven participants were female, and three were male. Two were students, six were employed, and two were unemployed.

Impressions of TxDOT:

- TxDOT is responsible for road construction and associated delays, roadway maintenance, expansion projects, planning and street signs
- Participants also list responsibilities that belong to other agencies: issue driver's licenses, perform red light enforcement, issue speeding tickets and set tax rates
- Need to educate the public about the role of the agency
- The freeway congestion is getting worse; much delay due to construction projects
- Maintenance should be the highest priority since repairs are not being done quickly enough, though one participant was surprised by quickness of project completion
- Focus on inspecting and repairing overpasses
- Debris removal is not occurring

Success Looks Like:

- Traffic flowing smoothly; TxDOT does a good job timing signals
- Seek input from the public on funding decisions; more needed
- Success is not having to think about it; TxDOT has done a good job in this regard
- Better planning needed because Amarillo is becoming congested
- Safe roads should be a priority
- There is not a big difference in roadways in Texas as compared to New Mexico and Oklahoma
- Nine participants say TxDOT is successful, while one says maybe

The Funding Game:

- One participant knew that TxDOT is funded through the gas tax
- One participant said that tying fuel consumption to revenue generation is a problem because people are encouraged to consume less fuel; this same participant said that increasing the vehicle registration fee might be a better way to bring in revenue
- None are aware of the diversions of the gas tax to the Department of Public Safety or education; mixed responses on whether funding education from the gas tax is a good idea
- Need to educate the public on how transportation in the state is funded
- All of the participants placed a higher priority on pavement and bridge quality with most putting 70 percent of their money there over connecting to other cities

The Future:

- Participants generally agree that toll roads are a good way to make money; equity issues surrounding toll roads were mentioned by several participants
- Two participants said they would not support a tax increase, while four agree to an incremental approach of raising gas taxes, with a set maximum

- When asked about paying fees based on mileage, all participants said they do not support such a concept; the fuel tax is effectively “hidden,” so drivers are unaware they are being charged, while mileage-based fees are not hidden, so the public would attempt to bypass the fee
- Rest areas are getting too big; all that is needed is a bathroom and water fountain
- Dislike automated speed enforcement
- People here drive larger vehicles for safety and do not intend to buy a hybrid
- Participants agree that roadways will deteriorate if funding is not increased

Arlington

Four females and three males participated. Most have lived in the area for more than 10 years. All are employed, but all mentioned the need for the extra money for participating in the focus group.

Impressions of TxDOT:

- Waste money
- TxDOT does a fairly decent job (give them a C+ or B-)
- They do a quick fix and perform shoddy work on repairing potholes
- Not doing a good job handling growth; by the time projects are done, they are already outdated
- In construction zones, many people are not working
- Construction projects take too long

Success Looks Like:

- Better roads
- Safety – repairing the roads
- Roadway expansion; more lanes and wider roadways
- Bridge maintenance
- Priority should be on maintenance, not on making things pretty; another disagrees; nice trees and landscaping stimulates senses, so more likely to stay awake; trees in median block headlight glare; safety concern with trees in median, though
- Good lighting along the highway

The Funding Game:

- No one knows how TxDOT is funded
- Three of the seven place higher priority on pavement quality, while two put priority on mobility and congestion, and two gave 50/50 split
- Should not send our tax dollars to other states
- Increase sin tax and take a percentage for transportation
- Recognize that TxDOT does need help
- Not opposed to gas tax increase as long as they have assurance that things will get done
- Skeptical about giving more money to the government
- Most are interested in the “pay as you go” alternative to the gas tax; would like to see more information

The Future:

- The system will look much like it does today 20 years from now
- In favor of wider and more lanes
- Rest areas are important, and there are not enough of them
- Call boxes are good where there is no cell phone coverage
- Concerned with privacy issues; do not want to be tracked

Brownsville

Six males and four females participated. Nine of the ten participants are lifelong residents of the area. Two are disabled, two are students, and five are employed full time.

Impressions of TxDOT:

- Construction projects take too long and, once finished, begin again
- Responsibilities include maintaining highways, frontage roads and farm roads
- Farm roads are very dangerous
- Need better coordination between schools and TxDOT; schools built on two-lane farm-to-market roads bring more traffic and increased crashes
- Should get the project done right the first time
- They do not plan for the future; it used to take 15 minutes to get to work, and now it is 35 minutes
- We do not know what is going on; more education and communication needed

Success Looks Like:

- Smooth traffic and clear signs and markings
- Need call boxes for emergencies; many people do not have cell phones
- Too many signs distract drivers
- Slower vehicles for safer crossing by foot
- Better safety for pedestrians and motorists; should study high crash locations and fix the problem
- Success means not having to worry about dying
- Need rail from San Antonio to Brownsville
- Trucks should be restricted to designated highways or at least truck restriction lanes
- Nice rest areas should be built in this area
- TxDOT is doing okay moving along with the generation, but there is room for improvement
- Better communication with the public
- Better maintenance of roadways, like mowing, debris sweeping and pothole repair
- Need more people to get the job done

The Funding Game:

- 3 of the 10 gave equal parts to maintenance and mobility, 3 gave more to maintenance, and 4 gave more to mobility

The Future:

- All recognize that more money is needed
- Mixed review on toll roads
- Flat gas tax fee should be a percentage
- Should not be any diversion of funds

- 3 say to raise the gas tax, 3 say not to raise the gas tax, and 1 says maybe; needs to know how much increase would be necessary to make a big difference
- Need more public transportation
- Do not like vehicle registration fee

Brownwood

Six females and four males participated. Four of the participants have lived in the area for more than 20 years. Five have lived in the area for 5-8 years, and one moved here 3 years ago. Three are unemployed.

Impressions of TxDOT:

- Help stranded motorists
- Repair the streets
- Ride around in the truck all day
- Construction takes a long time
- Workers sitting around

Success Looks Like:

- Get projects done quickly
- Safety is a priority; likes rumble strips
- Better planning for work force needs
- Nighttime safety
- Focus on one project at a time
- Use materials that last, and make sure they work

The Funding Game:

- No one knows how TxDOT is funded
- All participants put their money toward maintenance with most using a 70/30 split
- Agree that more money is needed, but gas prices are high enough
- Could increase registration fees
- Bring in other revenue sources like casinos, alcohol tax or something fun that also helps the government
- Public does not feel the gas tax as much; could have a small increase
- Have donations help fund TxDOT

The Future:

- More public transportation in Brownwood
- The future will see many more people in this area
- Everybody needs money; hard to not make people mad
- Develop a TxDOT lottery

El Paso

Four females and seven males participated. All participants have lived here all their lives or longer than 25 years. All are employed.

Impressions of TxDOT:

- Disorganized
- Construction workers not working
- Bottleneck problems on I-10 not being addressed, even though participant called on numerous occasions
- Highways look better in other cities around the state

Success Looks Like:

- Pass-through financing for the inner loop (Spur 61) was a success
- The loop and highways are good, but more markings and more lights needed
- Monorail system would be good
- Should not completely shut down roadways due to crashes; better warning system needed
- Better coordination between law enforcement and TxDOT needed
- Would like to see high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, dynamic traffic warning signs and improved entrance/exit ramps
- Should focus on repairs (example: complete the loop construction) and better communication with other agencies as well as better utilization of technology for providing information
- Ramp metering would be helpful here
- Need wider roads
- Information is needed on what the various agencies do like the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), TxDOT, etc.
- To solve the bickering that occurs at the local level, TxDOT should serve as the leader in transportation

The Funding Game:

- On the whole, participants do not know how transportation is funded
- TxDOT should increase the vehicle registration fees to help fund transportation
- No participants are aware that a portion of the gas tax goes to fund education
- Six of the participants are in favor of raising fuel taxes; one said that fuel tax is already too high
- Transportation should be a priority in the state
- If TxDOT were run more efficiently and effectively, the public would be more open to raising taxes
- Half of the participants said that TxDOT is doing a good job at roadway maintenance
- 6 of the 10 participants placed a higher priority on maintaining pavement and bridges, while the remaining four put more money toward mobility

The Future:

- Reduce truck traffic by being more self-sufficient in terms of producing goods locally; others say this approach is not possible, so TxDOT should focus on intercity mobility
- Six say they will buy a hybrid vehicle in the future
- Most agree with replacing the fuel tax with a fee based on miles driven

- Four say it is fine for TxDOT to spend money on advertising what the agency does

Houston

There were seven females and four males. Ten are employed, and one is a student.

Impressions of TxDOT:

- Right-of-way needs are huge; wants to be able to provide input before government takes land
- Hurricane evacuation – should have had a better plan; contra flow should have started sooner
- Since project is complete, I-10 is great now
- Toll road discussion – likes the EZ Pass but wants to have option to pay with cash too
- HOV lanes confusing – fear of getting lost
- Need better public education

Success Looks Like:

- Free-flowing traffic is success – example I-10 but took too long to update highway; US 290 needs updating but no money left after I-10
- Better planning (bad example is Sugarland)
- Maintenance
- Mass transit
- Safety – should be number one priority (rumble strips, big pavement symbols and No Truck lanes)

The Funding Game:

- Most participants put more dollars on the maintenance side rather than the congestion side
- Takes more dollars to effectively address congestion, so put most dollars on addressing maintenance
- Sees maintenance as a safety issue

The Future:

- More mass transit (rail on US 290 needed)
- TxDOT should fix congestion, but make sure roads are good quality
- Funding solutions – fines on speeding, tax the hybrids and emissions tests
- More toll roads and pay for use
- Increase gas tax
- Need to make roads safe

Killeen

Five participants were female, and four were male. Most have lived in the area for less than 3 years. There were three students, three were unemployed, one retired, and two were employed.

Impressions of TxDOT:

- Construction projects take too long
- Mass transit lacking in Killeen
- Good roads in Texas
- Toll roads need to have cash option
- Need more overpasses to make U-turns (do not like one-way frontage roads)

- Should consider options other than increased capacity
- Need smoother roads
- Better coordination needed between agencies (transit, TxDOT, etc.)

Success Looks Like:

- Construction projects done quickly
- Maintenance of roads
- Education about who they are
- Safety in terms of the condition of the road
- Create alternatives to big cars
- Nice rest areas

The Funding Game:

- Six participants put more dollars on maintenance, two put more on congestion/connectivity, one split money evenly, and the last did not understand
- People want everything for nothing
- Increase the vehicle registration fee (one-time fee)
- Weight of vehicle and number of miles should be factors into how much user spends

The Future:

- Pay at the pump instead of through invoice
- Do not want to pay for number of miles used
- Toll roads get mixed reviews here
- Raise gas prices, and then people would drive less and would ride mass transit
- Do not do a fixed price gas tax; instead, base it on a percentage
- Educate us through public service announcements

Lufkin

Six females and four males participated. Most have lived in the area for more than 10 years, and most are employed.

Impressions of TxDOT:

- Road maintenance sometimes not needed
- Impressive organization, but also a big bureaucracy; controlled by governor
- Very good roads as compared to Louisiana
- Not planning for big changes, like when gas is \$20/gallon; need to plan for transit instead of only being interested in pouring concrete
- Too many people watching people work
- Construction has made a mess of the intersection at the loop near the mall

Success Looks Like:

- Nice highways, good safety and good signs
- Mass transit – partner with the city
- Need alternatives to driving on the road
- Bad seal coat job near Lufkin High School – rocks coming up too soon

- No consistency in pavement material quality
- Use the right-of-way for good; harvest the grass and hay; cut less often

The Funding Game:

- No one knows how TxDOT is funded
- Six people put higher priority on maintenance with most using a 60/40 split; three put equal priority on maintenance and mobility; one put higher priority on mobility
- Roads are designed to travel too fast

The Future:

- More mass transit
- Train to big cities
- No new highways needed; use roads differently
- More dedicated lanes for slower traffic like bicycle lanes
- Cars will be smaller
- Dedicated truck lanes on the rural roads
- Need to manage what funds we do have instead of asking for more
- Place a higher tax on big fuel consumers
- Instead of hiring out work, have TxDOT build and maintain roadways
- TxDOT should be more open with decisions and get more people's opinions
- We spread out because gas is cheap
- Most do not like mileage fees; driving is a necessity, not a recreational activity
- Have vehicle registration fee based on fuel efficiency
- Wary of getting more money for TxDOT; needs transparency and oversight
- Needs to educate but not with commercials; use the web or newspaper

APPENDIX B: ALLOCATION SURVEYS

Table 5. Amarillo Focus Group.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality	Dollar Value	Mobility and Connections to Other Cities
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Amarillo Boulevard between Hughes Street and Taylor Street.	0	Current roads only
10	10 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Amarillo Boulevard between Hughes Street and Taylor Street.	10	A few major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
20	20 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Amarillo Boulevard between Hughes Street and Taylor Street.	20	Half of the major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
30	30 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Amarillo Boulevard between Western Street and McMasters Street.	30	All major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
40	40 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Amarillo Boulevard between Western Street and McMasters Street.	40	All major and a few minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
50	50 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Amarillo Boulevard between Western Street and McMasters Street.	50	All major and many minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
60	60 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Amarillo Boulevard between Western Street and McMasters Street.	60	All major and most minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
70	70 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like I-40 between South Grand Street and Eastern Street.	70	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
80	Three-fourths of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like I-40 between South Grand Street and Eastern Street.	80	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. One major congested street is widened.
90	83 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. This is close to the current condition. Average road is “good” – like I-40 between South Grand Street and Eastern Street.	90	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened.
100	90 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” – like I-40 between West Loop 335 and South Tyler Street.	100	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened, and one major congested rural road is widened.

Table 6. Arlington Focus Group.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality	Dollar Value	Congestion
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like SH 360 Freeway between Park Row and Division Street or Pioneer Parkway between Center and Collins.	0	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 60 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
10	5 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like SH 360 Freeway between Park Row and Division Street or Pioneer Parkway between Center and Collins.	10	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 58 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
20	10 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like SH 360 Freeway between Park Row and Division Street or Pioneer Parkway between Center and Collins.	20	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 56 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
30	20 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Cooper Street between Park Row and Abrams.	30	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 54 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8 hours each weekday.
40	30 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Cooper Street between Park Row and Abrams.	40	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 52 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8 hours each weekday.
50	40 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Cooper Street between Park Row and Abrams.	50	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 50 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
60	50 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Cooper Street between Park Row and Abrams.	60	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 48 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
70	60 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like the SH 360 frontage roads north of I-30 Freeway.	70	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 46 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
80	70 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like the SH 360 frontage roads north of I-30 Freeway.	80	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 44 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.
90	Three-fourths of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” – like the SH 360 frontage roads north of I-30 Freeway.	90	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 42 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.
100	85 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” – like SH 360 Freeway south of I-20 Freeway.	100	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 40 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.

Table 7. Brownsville Focus Group.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality	Dollar Value	Mobility and Connections to Other Cities
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “very poor” – like Elizabeth and Washington Streets between Palm and International Boulevard.	0	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 40 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 6 hours each weekday.
10	10 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Boca Chica Boulevard near US 77.	10	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 39 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 6 hours each weekday.
20	20 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Boca Chica Boulevard near US 77.	20	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 38 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5.5 hours each weekday.
30	30 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Military Highway (US 281) between Camino del Rey and Russell Drive.	30	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 37 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5.5 hours each weekday.
40	40 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Military Highway (US 281) between Camino del Rey and Russell Drive.	40	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 36 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5 hours each weekday.
50	50 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Military Highway (US 281) between Camino del Rey and Russell Drive.	50	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 35 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5 hours each weekday.
60	60 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Military Highway (US 281) between Camino del Rey and Russell Drive.	60	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 34 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5 hours each weekday.
70	70 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Military Highway (US 281) between Alton Gloor Boulevard (FM 3248) and Camino del Rey.	70	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 33 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 4.5 hours each weekday.
80	Three-fourths of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Military Highway (US 281) between Alton Gloor Boulevard (FM 3248) and Camino del Rey.	80	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 32 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 4.5 hours each weekday.
90	83 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” – like Military Highway (US 281) between Alton Gloor Boulevard (FM 3248) and Camino del Rey.	90	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 31 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 4 hours each weekday.
100	90 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” – like US 77 Freeway between Morrison and East 18 th Street.	100	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 30 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 4 hours each weekday.

Table 8. Brownwood Focus Group.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Austin Avenue between Melwood Avenue and Brady Avenue.
10	15 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Austin Avenue between Melwood Avenue and Brady Avenue.
20	25 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Austin Avenue between Melwood Avenue and Brady Avenue.
30	35 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Main Avenue between Austin Avenue and Commerce Street.
40	45 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Main Avenue between Austin Avenue and Commerce Street.
50	55 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Main Avenue between Austin Avenue and Commerce Street.
60	65 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Main Avenue between Austin Avenue and Commerce Street.
70	75 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Austin Avenue between Brady Avenue and Parkway Street.
80	80 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Austin Avenue between Brady Avenue and Parkway Street.
90	88 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” – like Austin Avenue between Brady Avenue and Parkway Street.
100	95 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” – like US 183 between County Road 368 and Early Boulevard.

Dollar Value	Mobility and Connections to Other Cities
0	Current roads only
10	A few major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
20	Half of the major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
30	All major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
40	All major and a few minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
50	All major and many minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
60	All major and most minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
70	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
80	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. One major congested street is widened.
90	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened.
100	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened, and one major congested rural road is widened.

Table 9. El Paso Focus Group.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality	Dollar Value	Mobility and Connections to Other Cities
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Paisano between Corona and Chamizal Memorial.	0	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 40 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 6 hours each weekday.
10	10 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Paisano between Corona and Chamizal Memorial.	10	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 39 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 6 hours each weekday.
20	20 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Paisano between Corona and Chamizal Memorial.	20	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 38 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5.5 hours each weekday.
30	30 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like I-10 between Copia and US 54 Patriot Freeway.	30	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 37 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5.5 hours each weekday.
40	40 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like I-10 between Copia and US 54 Patriot Freeway.	40	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 36 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5 hours each weekday.
50	50 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like I-10 between Copia and US 54 Patriot Freeway.	50	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 35 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5 hours each weekday.
60	60 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like I-10 between Copia and US 54 Patriot Freeway.	60	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 34 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 5 hours each weekday.
70	70 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Paisano between Stanton and Cotton.	70	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 33 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 4.5 hours each weekday.
80	Three-fourths of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Paisano between Stanton and Cotton.	80	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 32 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 4.5 hours each weekday.
90	83 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” – like Paisano between Stanton and Cotton.	90	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 31 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 4 hours each weekday.
100	90 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” – like I-10 from US 54 Patriot Freeway to Paisano.	100	A trip that takes 22 minutes now will take 30 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 4 hours each weekday.

Table 10. Houston Focus Group.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality	Congestion
0	None of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very poor” – like North Loop near I-45 or Cullen near South Loop.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 60 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
10	5 percent of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very poor” – like North Loop near I-45 or Cullen near South Loop.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 58 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
20	10 percent of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very poor” – like North Loop near I-45 or Cullen near South Loop.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 56 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8.5 hours each weekday.
30	20 percent of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like I-45 near downtown.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 54 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8 hours each weekday.
40	30 percent of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like I-45 near downtown.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 52 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 8 hours each weekday.
50	40 percent of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like I-45 near downtown.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 50 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
60	50 percent of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Westheimer between Hillcroft and Chimney Rock or North Shepherd north of the North Loop.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 48 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
70	60 percent of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Westheimer between Hillcroft and Chimney Rock or North Shepherd north of the North Loop.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 46 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7.5 hours each weekday.
80	70 percent of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Westheimer between West Loop and Chimney Rock or Southwest Freeway between West Loop and Hillcroft.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 44 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.
90	Three-fourths of the roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” – like Westheimer between West Loop and Chimney Rock or Southwest Freeway between West Loop and Hillcroft.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 42 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.
100	85 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Westheimer between West Loop and Chimney Rock or Southwest Freeway between West Loop and Hillcroft.	A trip that takes 25 minutes now will take 40 minutes; stop-and-go traffic on many roads and freeways for 7 hours each weekday.

Table 11. Killeen Focus Group.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality	Mobility and Connections to Other Cities
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Buffalo Trail Road (FM 3219).	Current roads only
10	15 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Buffalo Trail Road (FM 3219).	A few major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
20	25 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” – like Buffalo Trail Road (FM 3219).	Half of the major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
30	35 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Veteran’s Memorial from Roy Reynolds to US 190 Highway.	All major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
40	45 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Veteran’s Memorial from Roy Reynolds to US 190 Highway.	All major and a few minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
50	55 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Veteran’s Memorial from Roy Reynolds to US 190 Highway.	All major and many minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
60	65 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Veteran’s Memorial from Roy Reynolds to US 190 Highway.	All major and most minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
70	75 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Veteran’s Memorial from MLK to S. Gray Street or Stan Schlueter (FM 3470) from Trimmer to Elms Road.	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
80	80 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” – like Veteran’s Memorial from MLK to S. Gray Street or Stan Schlueter (FM 3470) from Trimmer to Elms Road.	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. One major congested street is widened.
90	88 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” – like Veteran’s Memorial from MLK to S. Gray Street or Stan Schlueter (FM 3470) from Trimmer to Elms Road.	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened.
100	95 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” – like MLK from US 190 Highway to Veteran’s Memorial Boulevard.	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened, and one major congested rural road is widened.

Table 12. Lufkin Focus Group.

Dollar Value	Pavement and Bridge Quality
0	None of the roads have “good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” - like 1 st Street between Abney and Lufkin.
10	10 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” - like 1 st Street between Abney and Lufkin.
20	20 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “poor” - like 1 st Street between Abney and Lufkin.
30	30 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Raguet Street between Henderson and Thompson or Frank Ave (SH 94) between Bynum and Herndon.
40	40 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” - like Raguet Street between Henderson and Thompson or Frank Ave (SH 94) between Bynum and Herndon.
50	50 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” – like Raguet Street between Henderson and Thompson or Frank Ave (SH 94) between Bynum and Herndon.
60	60 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “fair” - like Raguet Street between Henderson and Thompson or Frank Ave (SH 94) between Bynum and Herndon.
70	70 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” - like 1 st Street between Lufkin and Timberland.
80	80 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “good” - like 1 st Street between Lufkin and Timberland.
90	88 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. <i>This is close to the current condition.</i> Average road is “good” - like 1 st Street between Lufkin and Timberland.
100	93 percent of all roads have “good” or “very good” pavement quality. Average road is “very good” - like John Redditt Dr (US 69) between Raguet Street and Frank Ave (SH 94).

Dollar Value	Mobility & Connections to Other Cities
0	Current roads only
10	A few major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided
20	Half of the major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided
30	All major four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided
40	All major and a few minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided
50	All major and many minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided
60	All major and most minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
70	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided.
80	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. One major congested street is widened.
90	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened.
100	All major and minor four-lane roads that do not have a median are divided. A few major congested streets are widened and one major congested rural road is widened.

APPENDIX C: FUNDING ALLOCATION SURVEY RESULTS

Table 13. Focus Group Allocations for Each Region.

Values represent percentage of funding for two categories in first attempt (1st) and after review and group discussion (2nd):

- pavement and bridge quality and
- mobility and rural connectivity.

Person	Amarillo				Brownsville				Brownwood				El Paso			
	Pavement		Mobility		Pavement		Mobility		Pavement		Mobility		Pavement		Mobility	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
1	70	90	30	10	30	30	70	70	40	70	60	30	70	50	30	50
2	70	90	30	10	70	70	30	30	80	70	20	30	40	30	60	70
3	80	90	20	10	40	40	60	60	70	70	30	30	70	80	30	20
4	70	90	30	10	10	10	90	90	70	70	30	30	60	80	40	20
5	60	90	40	10	50	50	50	50	70	70	30	30	70	30	30	70
6	70	60	30	40	80	80	20	20	70	70	30	30	90	70	10	30
7	50	90	50	10	70	70	30	30	70	70	30	30	20	30	80	70
8	80	80	20	20	50	50	50	50	90	90	10	10	40	40	60	60
9	70	70	30	30	50	50	50	50	70	70	30	30	0	0	100	100
10	70	70	30	30	10	10	90	90	70	70	30	30	90	90	10	10
11													90	90	10	10
12													70	70	30	30
Average	69	82	31	18	46	46	54	54	70	72	30	28	59	55	41	45
Std.																
Deviation	9	11	9	11	24	24	24	24	12	6	12	6	29	29	29	29
Change		13				0				2				-4		

Table 13. Focus Group Allocations for Each Region (Continued).

Person	Houston				Killeen				Lufkin				Arlington			
	Pavement		Mobility		Pavement		Mobility		Pavement		Mobility		Pavement		Mobility	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd										
1	60	80	40	20	30	50	70	50	70	50	30	50	50	30	50	70
2	70	80	30	20	30	40	70	60	40	40	60	60	20	20	80	80
3	70	100	30	0	70	50	30	50	50	50	50	50	60	60	40	40
4	75	85	25	15	50	90	50	10	60	60	40	40	60	60	40	40
5	50	70	50	30	70	60	30	40	60	60	40	40	70	70	30	30
6	70	70	30	30	40	40	60	60	60	60	40	40	50	50	50	50
7	70	70	30	30	80	80	20	20	60	60	40	40	30	30	70	70
8	60	60	40	40	100	100	0	0	60	60	40	40				
9	40	40	60	60	60	60	40	40	90	90	10	10				
10	80	80	20	20					50	50	50	50				
11	40	40	60	60												
12																
Average	62	70	38	30	59	63	41	37	60	58	40	42	49	46	51	54
Std. Deviation	14	18	14	18	24	22	24	22	13	13	13	13	18	19	18	19
Change		8				4				-2				-3		

APPENDIX D: FUNDING ALLOCATION COMMENTS

Focus Group Comments on Funding Allocation

Amarillo

1. Quality of road/pavement is much more important to me than changing lane configuration. Potholes and guardrail quality is more important than adding lanes.
2. Chose 90/10 in order to keep current conditions from deteriorating even though I feel current conditions could be improved upon.
3. Think the current conditions are met closest. And happy with current road conditions in Amarillo. I think the roads I-40/I-27 are maintained well.
4. Like the roads in current condition. Would not want pavement and bridge quality to go down to improve mobility.
5. Want to keep status quo on roads. Another priority would be to improve on-ramps and off-ramps along I-27. Some are too short (e.g., Georgia southbound), and some are dangerous (e.g., Hillside southbound – hill by off-ramp makes it hard to judge traffic if you are on access road).
6. Conditions in Amarillo are great. Sacrificing condition for mobility and ease of use seems acceptable to me.
7. I appreciate the TxDOT roads that we currently have in Amarillo. I see no major problems.
8. I like the current conditions. I think we could readjust our focus slightly, but would again like to bring it back to the 90/10 mix in the future.
9. I think our road and mobility conditions are good where they're at, and I don't want them to change.
10. I'm happy with the pavement quality at this time.

Brownsville

None

Brownwood

1. Busy residential areas really need to be four lanes like TxDOT is doing. For example, Austin Avenue.
3. The roads that are traveled on regularly need to be maintained, but the minor four-lane roads do not need dividers.
4. Initially, I chose 60/40. With a second look, before our discussion – I noticed that for \$10 more my average road condition goes from “fair” to “good.” In deciding whether I wanted to spare \$10 from my Column B, the fact that all of my major four-lane roads are divided was good enough for me. In all honesty, I feel that a division of any sort on minor four-lane roads is more of a hindrance.
5. I chose this because the average road is good versus fair, so both categories benefit to a great extent.
6. Not as important to have four lanes divided as it is to have good quality of roads to avoid accidents and car repairs.
7. Make roads safer for even safe, good drivers and for vehicle safety as well (less broken shocks for example or flats).
9. All four-lanes need to at least have a divider to help cut down accidents. If the roads are at least of good quality, there won't be as many accidents.
10. All the roads should be in good condition and wider for better traffic flow.

El Paso

1. Changed to incorporate more funding for mass transit and commuter transit (i.e., light rail, commuter trains).
2. Mobility is key for other forms of transportation.
4. If these areas are already doing well, they need to continue to be maintained. Time is relative, and without alternate routes, I'd be OK with 20 minutes and the increased time to travel.
5. Good point made on time versus upkeep. By 2030, gas will be even closer to running out; mass transit will be imperative, including for movement of goods. So – why maintain roads for types of transport that are not sustainable? Use funds for mobility planning.
6. Try to make mobility a little better.
8. I feel mobility and connection to other cities is important. Congestion needs to be reduced.

Houston

8. Safety.

Killeen

2. I guess to be fairer to the citizens of Texas, and not only me, pavement should be taken into greater consideration. If pavement and bridges were to be divided into their own separate pools, I would have given less to pavement. To me, congestion and traffic are more frustrating and annoying.
3. I changed due to the fact that as I'm driving on these roads, my number one concern is safety. I didn't consider congestion, but after hearing other viewpoints, congestion and pavement quality are equally important to me.
4. I changed my mind in order to prioritize the funding so that 88 percent of the roads have "good" or "very good" pavement quality because it's important for safety of bridges and road quality for vehicle maintenance. Maintenance is important for major roads.
5. Sacrificing road and bridge quality for congestion is difficult to achieve. Reduction in congestion requires 80 percent to go to the mobility column. This would reduce the average pavement and bridge quality to fair.
6. TxDOT should have increased funding.
7. Need more money for mobility and connections to other cities.
8. More money for expansion on major congested roads.

Lufkin

4. Opinion unchanged after discussion.
5. Keep up condition of roads at 60 percent but work to divide for safety.
10. Slower speed limits.

APPENDIX E: DEMOGRAPHICS OF FOCUS GROUPS

Table 14: Demographics of Focus Groups.

Location	Gender		Age									Education							
	Male	Female	18-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+	Unk	Less than high school	Some high school	High school diploma	Vocational / Tech School	Some college	College degree	Post grad	Unk
Amarillo	3	7		5		3					2			1		4	3		2
Arlington	3	4		1	1	3	1	1							5	2			
Brownsville	6	4		3	2	1	4					1	3	1	4	1			
Brownwood	4	6		3	2	3	1				1		4		3	2			1
El Paso	7	5		2	4	1	2	1	1		1			1	5	3	2	1	
Houston	4	7	1	3	4	1	2								4	7			
Killeen	4	5	1	3	2			2		1			2	1	4	2	1		
Lufkin	4	6		4		2	1	2			1				4		5	1	
Total	35	44	2	24	15	14	11	6	1	1	5	0	1	10	3	33	20	8	5

APPENDIX F: VIDEO QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Table 15. Video Questionnaire Results.

	El Paso	Amarillo	Brownsville	Brownwood	Lufkin	Arlington	Totals
Did this video provide new information for you about future transportation issues?							
Yes	10	8	8	7	5	4	42
No	2	2	2	3	5	2	16
Was there any information that surprised you?							
Yes	6	3	6	3	2	3	23
No	6	7	3	6	8	3	33
Was there too much information or not enough?							
Too much	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Not enough	5	7	5	8	7	2	34
Just enough	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Do you have a smart phone?							
Yes	5	9	3	7	7	5	36
No	7	1	7	3	3	2	23
Do you use it to plan your travel?							
Yes	2	2	2	2	5	3	16
No	3	7	3	6	2	4	25
Do you know about intelligent transportation systems?							
Yes	9	4	1	2	3	1	20
No	3	6	9	8	7	5	38
Are you in favor of them?							
Yes	10	9	6	3	7	2	37
No	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Maybe	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Do you think that state population will dramatically increase?							
Yes	10	10	10	10	8	7	55
No	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Do you think we will run out of oil?							
Yes	10	7	7	7	6	1	38
No	2	2	3	3	3	6	19
Do you plan to buy a hybrid or alternative fuel vehicle in the next few years?							
Yes	7	2	6	3	2	3	23
No	3	8	4	7	6	4	32
Maybe	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Where do you live?							
Urban	3	3	2	2	0	2	12
Suburban	6	5	6	3	1	3	24
Rural	2	1	2	5	8	0	18
How do you primarily travel?							
Car	10	10	9	10	9	7	55
Bus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Train	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Motorcycle	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
How regularly do you use the transportation system?							
Daily	5	6	5	7	5	2	30
Almost daily	0	0	1	1	2	3	7
Several time a week	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Once or twice a month	0	0	2	0	0	1	3
Less than once a month	3	1	1	0	1	1	7

Comments Received on the Video Questionnaire

Was there any information in the video that surprised you?

El Paso

Charging fees based on use

Yes, the damage of road structure due to less gas taxes

Surprised to see we had taken all aspects of transit into consideration

Renting a vehicle by the hour

Seeing the desolation of the areas – L.A. freeways and abandoned gas stations along with alternative options of train and ride share made me think twice

The idea of self-driving vehicle

These are all ideas that are being presently used

Amarillo

cars that talked to roads/highways; that's awesome

paying per mile; doubt it would work

mileage-based user fees – this seems like it would be very expensive to initiate and difficult to enforce

shopping in the car didn't seem feasible because someone has to deliver; mileage tax – nasty thought! Unfair

Brownsville

rechargeable electric car was great; communities where everything was accessible

what if we run out of oil

less gas consumption means less money, and there would be a need to get money from other sources like

charging to use the highway

roads talking to cars

communication

teleworking

surprised by the idea of being charged for the amount of miles you drive similar to a phone bill

Brownwood

some solutions to the issues were surprising

roads that talk to cars and shopping while you drive – scary

roads that talk to cars and shopping while you drive – they're both a little disheartening

Lufkin

organized ride-sharing – is it safe?; how do you know you're getting in the car with a sane person?

the implication that self-driven cars are a possibility

trains that could possibly talk to cars and the idea of teleworking

all these modes of transportation have been discussed for years

before "no" oil there will be very expensive oil; \$ 10.00/gallon will change behaviors dramatically

Arlington

it made me feel the future is dead

tomatoes at \$24.00

higher transportation for deliveries

What do you know about intelligent transportation systems (ITS)?

El Paso

digital signs with road condition updates
computer-guided vehicles programmed to enter and exit at specific points
carpool to and from work
tramways, charter buses, park and ride
highway alerts
ITS can support an efficient mass transportation system

Amarillo

computers in the car navigate you to your destination kind of like autopilot
it is a way to evaluate travel needs on a real-time basis using Internet access and then quickly fill the needs
cars driving in accord with other cars around them

Brownsville

sounds a little too futuristic and makes me uneasy because what if all the kinks aren't worked out
that you can have your car drive you

Brownwood

systems designed to work with smart cars to drive either more efficiently or independently

Lufkin

real-time traffic conditions are very nice
could help drivers change their habits concerning daily driving

Arlington

I believe it is tracking your car with GPS or something like On Star
Mercedes is using smart cars to keep you awake, brakes for you and keeps in your lane
GPS – use it for trips

How would a big population boom affect you?

El Paso

short term: roads more congested; takes longer to travel; long term: gasoline used up sooner; radically
changes all transport for work, commerce and personal travel would all be curtailed
my ability to drive from A to B would significantly deteriorate; confine me to a smaller area
more congestion on the road
it would encourage me to spend my time more wisely
unknown – things may get worse before they start to improve
congestion and wait time on just about everything
minimally
it would affect me tremendously because this causes an increased strain on resources and infrastructure
streets/highways will be more congested, causing longer travel times and less personal travel

Amarillo

would only increase current conditions and problems
roads would have to be expanded; tax would have to be raised for more work on highways

take longer to get places
more congestion on roads future comments between home and work
increased congestion on the roads
besides traffic and Texas, probably not very directly
it would help the economy; make roads more congested
probably not dramatically; most growth will occur in Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin, Waco, etc.
more congestion on highways and interstates, delays in arrival to locations

Brownville

it affects the way you plan your day and/or recreational activities
traffic congestion/accidents
more taxes
jobs, more time on the road
higher population = more traffic congestions = more commute time
more people on the road would mean having to leave earlier to get to work
smoke fumes
it will affect the larger cities more because that were live to have a better lifestyle
make it even harder to find work, which would lean to even more poverty, which would mean less traveling
and less money available for repairing our roads

Brownwood

take long to get to work and places
have to deal with more people on the street; I left the big city of Houston because of crowds
we live in the country, and I can see our country road and area being a subdivision
more traffic; more time spend in daily commutes
more traffic; more risk
heavy increase in traffic
more crime, more traffic, cost of living will increase
in every little aspect of my whole life
I would expect it to at least double in 50 years

Lufkin

more traffic
more traffic and more pollution
might make jobs and goods even harder to come by
crowded streets and stores
it would most definitely affect my career choice and if I choose to relocate
more congestion on roads; cost increases due to shortages
larger cities will spread out, creating more congestion outside our metropolitan areas
negatively; being in a rural community in a large boom would have limited effect; however, in a big city longer
transit times
maybe there would be accompanying mass transit

Arlington

more cars on the highway, which mean more deterioration; more congestion on the highways, more
businesses going up in growing areas
more people = more automobiles and congestion
traffic, pollution
more traffic, crime, cost of living will go up

traffic, commuting issues

more congestion on highways; less food

How would a big population boom affect your local transportation systems?

El Paso

they would crash since they are stressed already

it would definitely overwhelm the systems; less mobility would affect consumer buying habits

more traffic lights

overcrowding/congestion

mass transit or monorail would be priority

jam it up more

big time – our freeway, I-10, wouldn't support it at the already existing bottleneck areas

I believe public transportation will increase

force them to be smarter and more efficient

even the slightest increase would affect it

more vehicles on the roadways

time and money; crowding

Amarillo

cost and demand

it would take longer to build, fix or repairs roads

longer to get places

more necessary to develop public transportation

have a negative impact; already congested in some areas

we have very poorer public transportation to begin with, so hopefully it would improve as need increased

on Highway 287S from Amarillo to Wichita Falls would probably have to be widened; roads and traffic lights

would flow less smoothly

we would not get as much funding in Amarillo for roads and bridges due to the increased needs in larger cities

I'm sure it would be a negative effect but not overwhelming

Congestion

Brownsville

more traffic; time getting to and from

slower

more traffic, more driving time

the roads are ill equipped to handle a sharp increase in population

hopefully it would increase local transportation so that we would be less dependent on our cars and maybe

ease up gas dependency

very little; the commute in the RGV is not that hectic compared to metro cities

we would need wider roads to fill the need

crowded streets

more traffic

it already seems impossible to imagine them getting any worse, so I can't even comprehend the trouble it would bring on us

Brownwood

could not get to A and B safely and on time

more congestion on the streets

I can see traffic backed up

more people driving as we do not have mass communication
it would overwhelm it
none
more road expansion and construction and maintenance
more congestion on the streets, streets deteriorating more quickly, more accidents
nobody would ever get anywhere in a timely manner
more cars = more wrecks and deterioration; more time for daily travel

Lufkin

more traffic, so it would take longer to get somewhere
it will make them regret not thinking further ahead about the what-ifs
what local system?; it's every person for himself
more street traffic
we would actually need to create one
none, we have a very small system
increase in demand requires more money to provide; users cannot cover the costs of their use if current
system for financing is not modified
more cars moving into rural areas
longer transit times
if mass transit was available, there would be no problem

Arlington

again more money from taxpayers because more drivers who are tearing up barriers, deteriorating freeways,
causing transportation system to spend more on employees to make repairs
I would have to figure out an alternative way such as public transportation
we would like a bigger transportation system
take longer to get anywhere
it will tax the transportation system
probably be forced to improve them
more cars on road unless they convert to smaller cars

How do you think the state should prepare to deal with resulting transportation demands?

El Paso

in conjunction with local, county and federal agencies
innovate with new technologies
lower the percentage cost of repairing roads
inform the public with education
think, get organized, reduce waste and plan projects and funding
start talking with local city government and MPO; involve the public; begin doing county-wide surveys allowing
for suggestions as a precursor for updated changes
how to find funding without hindering or causing higher taxes
coordination of transportation with public and private section
population will continue to grow, state needs to find ways to generate revenue for projects
be apprised of the needs of the community
take action now

Amarillo

research and public relations to find solutions

find ways to increase other issues that affect TxDOT
make bigger roads
raise taxes, develop additional public transportation, give incentives to conserve energy
must increase funding, perhaps by increasing the flat tax currently being used
increase gas tax gradually; possible registration cost increase
civil engineers need to be hired to help plan and to forecast how demands will be made upon the transportation systems
using technology
keep roads in good condition/encourage deployment of affordable mass transit
possibly widen highways; maybe other modes of transportation to reduce maintenance cost

Brownsville

in-state gas and oil production
more focus meetings; inform public
when building roads, bigger is better; while it may cost more in beginning, the fruits will be reaped
more taxes to accommodate the demand
they will have to find the funds to deal with any and all transportation issues
survey
build more highways, evacuation systems and increase public transportation
it seems like our only option is to increase taxes or in a very desperate attempt reach out to the people and try to raise money

Brownwood

find out what is best way, work to get traffic moving safely
better planning, fewer projects at one time to get them done quicker
do fund raisers; ask some of the more fortunate people for generous donations
the governor is going to have to be more involved, and the people in transportation work field need to be more connected with each other
plan ahead for additional funding and multiple streams of funding
more tax on vehicle registration
find ways to save budget dollars while planning and constructing more roads
better funding, better planning, one job at a time
planning, funding ideas, anticipating problems before they arise
more mass transportation, buses and transit

Lufkin

think public transportation
commuter rail infrastructure
come up with innovative ideas from the public and gather different opinions
improve existing roads
more mass transit and ways to fund it
road maintenance should be maintained
research into population behavior and options for revenue once oil is obsolete
mass transit – coordinate city planning; rail is a must, provide the backbone

Arlington

build more highways and attach freeways to unexpected areas of travel
we need to increase our research in order to come up with a plan to avoid congestion before it gets out of control

transit, wider roads
fix roads, widen, new roads, carpool lanes
start expanding now
find new ways to increase funding
not sure

How will running out of oil affect you?

El Paso

the same way it will affect everyone; completely revamp daily work and personal life
will need to replace vehicle and will probably do less traveling
clean the air and create an increase in the need for travel; therefore, we will need to find other ways to get revenue for our roads
I will have to find different methods of transportation
I believe technology is evolving as well, I feel we will have no use for oil in our vehicles in the future
it will alter the modes of transportation available
will need to find alternatives for transportation
cost

Amarillo

unless an alternative is provided, it would change many aspects of daily life
no oil, then no vehicle; we need different ways of traveling other than gasoline
take forever to get to work on a bike
will need to find alternative transportation, fuels, etc.
a complete transportation overhaul would be necessary, which would affect everyone
we will eventually be forced to drill inside our own borders
it will affect every aspect of my life
unless an alternative is provided, it would be devastating

Brownsville

life as we know it would be totally altered, so alternative ways of reaching our destination would need to be explored
have to find new fuels
everything; transportation costs will go up, which will be passed on to the consumer
it would just set us back to old time when everyone rode horses
the cost of gas among our other everyday purchases would increase
it will increase gas prices
unless we're able to create a new standardized form of energy, I don't know how I'll be able to get to work or school

Brownwood

make transportation hard to get around
gas, food, all prices rising; change in transportation
will have to find other means of transportation
keep things like groceries going up and not be able to get out as much, example: church, movies, ball games
I can't even begin to fathom all the ways

Lufkin

no cars with gas engines

it won't happen in my lifetime
I better dust off my bike or learn to ride a horse
I believe another technology which will be better than fossil fuels will replace it
we won't run out overnight, so I guess I would have to invest in an electric vehicle
before we run out, it will be expensive and change behavior; less driving, concentrated living area, more fuel-efficient vehicles

Arlington

would have to carpool
have to get a new car
there are hidden reserves tied up in politics

What is the main purpose of your regular use of the transportation system?

El Paso

commuting to work
commute to work
to and from work
work/errands
work/errands
commuting to work
work/errands
commute
commute
work

Amarillo

work/errands
work
work
work/errands
work/errands
errands
errands
work
work/errands

Brownsville

commuting to work
doctor visits/grocery shopping
work
errands
work/errands
work
work
school
work/school

Brownwood

work/errands
work/errands
work/errands
work/errands
business/errands
work/errands
work
commute to work
work/errands
work

Lufkin

work/school
commuting to work
commuting/errands
shopping trips
work/errands
work/errands
work/errands
work/errands

Arlington

work
work/errands
work
work
work/errands
commute to work/errands

What transportation solutions should we focus on?**El Paso**

mass transportation options
communication and coordination of various levels of bureaucracy
create another highway or expand the highway that runs from east side to west side of El Paso
mass transit
funding roads getting away from oil
cooperate with counties and cities to plan overall solutions; not act individually
mass transit train development above freeway and toll freeway
the funding of better roads
light rail and high-speed rail
mass transit and reduce environmental impacts
mass transit
efficient transportation

Amarillo

pavement conditions, safety conditions and awareness

funding/safety

how to better use the money you have, such as don't give as much to public education; they have plenty of resources

develop or assist with public transportation; railroads, magnetic highways

maintenance of roads and safety

future need and future funding – always

sufficient number of lanes on state roads and highways; synchronize traffic lights

anything we can do to stop using oil

maintain roads, encourage people to get fuel-efficient vehicles; develop mass transit for cities and between cities

expansion of highways in metro areas focusing on safety of small farm roads

Brownsville

more bus systems

public transportation

more, faster ways of traveling to certain main highways

general maintenance

bigger roads; in theory this would slow down congestion

how to tax smart cars/hybrids because without fuel tax there will be no roads

maintain road condition

better maintenance

safety and public transportation

Brownwood

cleaner and safer

more efficient planning; different areas than we already have for raising necessary funds

keep roads safe for drivers and finish projects in a timely manner; make roads better, not worse

fixing one area at a time

planning ahead and being open to new ideas

improve roads, focus on one project instead of 50

cost reduction; road planning

maintenance

safety now and planning for the future

higher-quality roads that last

Lufkin

more trains

more public ways to do things to cut down on oil

passenger and light railways

safety and cost management

better management of existing facilities

ways to lessen the need to travel for some purposes; cheaper, more cost-effective and less-polluting models

accountability; let the public know and understand decisions

interested in the micro transit systems in bigger cities via networking and ridesharing and automated vehicles

build the rails; privatize the trains

Arlington

highway expansion

more lane highways, better transportation system

transit
more lanes and more roads
expand
planning and expanding
wider highways, studies, aerial views

Please share other comments about the video.

El Paso

great idea to have focus groups; should give you input and gives the public an idea of what you do
maintaining roads is important to eliminate additional costs for auto repair
the video made great points; nothing is forever; people will always travel, and it is more important to get to your destination than how
cool
I enjoyed the presentation – thanks
I feel it opened my eyes to the future of transportation
the technology to improve the system is there, the public just needs to get involved and informed

Amarillo

video needs more info, more pros and cons
video had great teasers but lacked actual information – more facts would be very appreciated
fairly pointless – waste of state funds
in general it was a good video in that it promoted thought and a need to find more information
make another and promote it to the general public

Brownsville

video was very enlightening; offered ideas I was not aware of
very helpful
I liked the video; it touched on several topics I had never heard about, but it didn't go into detail
how does TxDOT tax the cars that use vegetable oil or are solar powered?
video had some good insight
wish it was more elaborated

Brownwood

if people were more friendly, trustworthy, carpooling is an awesome solution for cutting down on traffic
good; it said a lot in a short amount of time
video had a lot of neat ideas to solve transportation issues
very enjoyable
quite interesting, but I wish it were a bit longer and just a tad more informative
it didn't mention hovercrafts; accurate but not enough info or details about each subject

Lufkin

gas – wow
please give more concrete information; when are these technologies coming?
the video was an eye-opener; great video
I thought it might have been funded by oil interest because one part of it tried to make me feel scared about running out of oil
concise and to the point, maybe more could be conveyed about intelligent and alternative driving
plan, plan, plan – no more bulldozing new roads

Arlington

it was an advertising medium to make you aware of what to expect

too focused on liberal ideas!

higher costs for everything