

**From:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**To:** [Cecelia Hartley](#)  
**Subject:** FW: The Sunset Review of the Department of Transportation  
**Date:** Thursday, December 01, 2016 8:03:05 AM

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**From:** Compson, Tom J  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 30, 2016 6:38 PM  
**To:** Sunset Advisory Commission  
**Subject:** The Sunset Review of the Department of Transportation

I found out this afternoon that today is the deadline for submitting comments to the subject review, so they are necessarily brief, and based on a quick scan of the executive summary of the draft report. My primary, ongoing concern with TxDOT is that it continues to focus almost exclusively on highways, to the neglect and often detriment of other forms of transportation, such as rail, transit and bicycling. Given that much of its funding is restricted to highways, that is understandable, but there still should be room to provide some attention to those other forms. At minimum, do no harm. Here are a few suggestions:

- When designing new highways, work with local agencies and advocacy groups to ensure that they do not interfere with existing bike/ped infrastructure, including during the construction phase.
- When designing and building new or expanded highways, include wide shoulders to accommodate bicyclists (non-limited access roads, of course).
- Work with MPOs to develop commuter rail in conjunction with other projects, such as along the US 290/Hempstead Highway expansion in Houston.
- Give some consideration and support to expanded rail travel serving our major cities. It's sad that two of our nation's largest metropolitan regions, Houston and the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex, have such limited options for intercity rail travel. Houston is limited to three trains per week (plus a daily bus connection to the Texas Eagle). Other states work with Amtrak to provide increased service; Texas should, too.

Bottom line, Texans need and deserve mobility options beyond driving.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tom Compson  
Houston, TX