

June 8, 2018

The Honorable Tim Brown  
Chief Executive Officer  
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments  
300 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
Toledo, OH 43604

Dear Mr. Brown,

As autonomous vehicle technology races to the forefront of the transportation domain, the time has come for Northwest Ohio area transportation stakeholders to ensure they join in autonomous vehicle-related conversations, and that they have a seat at the table for discussions. Although no one can predict right now what the impact on society as a whole will be, we do know the technology will have an extraordinarily far-reaching impact on business and industry.

According to [DriveOhio](#), a collaboration between government, research and private industry partners to build Ohio's infrastructure for smart mobility, "*There's no better place than Ohio to design, test and deploy smart mobility technologies.*" On May 9th, Ohio Governor Kasich signed an executive order to open all Ohio roadways for autonomous vehicle testing. Projects across Ohio support the testing of autonomous and connected vehicles and the deployment of smart mobility technologies. Work has already begun here in [Northwest Ohio](#). The Ohio Turnpike is outfitted end-to-end with fiber-optic cable, and sensors will be installed along a 60-mile stretch, making it ideal for open-road testing. In addition, [Smart Mobility Summits](#) are being held across the state and Ohio recently awarded \$5 million for [Smart Mobility Infrastructure](#) project. **The DriveOhio tagline "We Accomplish More Together Than Alone" is one that should be embraced by Northwest Ohio transportation stakeholders.**

The overarching significance is the number of lives that will be saved through the prevention of car crashes. The National Safety Council estimated in 2017 automotive fatalities topped 40,000 for the second consecutive year. In addition, the economic and societal costs of collisions are a staggering \$836 billion every year. Advanced autonomous vehicle technology will result in fewer deaths, better traffic flow, improved fuel economy and allow us to achieve a higher level of road use efficiency.

Consumer trust is a critical component to the widespread acceptance of autonomous vehicle technology, and efforts to educate the public must be a priority. In 2017, AAA partnered with The University of Toledo to advance communications about autonomous vehicle technology in Northwest Ohio through a speaker series titled "*Technology Takes the Wheel.*" The first public seminar held on Feb. 7 offered a general overview about autonomous vehicle technology. The second seminar on April 13 focused on cybersecurity. The third seminar scheduled for June 21

will focus on public transportation. Attendance for the first two seminars exceeded 700 and reached a wide-ranging and diverse audience.

There is a critical need for local area transportation stakeholders to develop a master plan to prepare Northwest Ohio streets for the eventual deployment of autonomous vehicles. Through recent discussions, senior leaders with AAA, TARTA and The University of Toledo are requesting that TMACOG serve as the facilitator for an autonomous vehicle steering committee. We ask that the TMACOG board to take this into consideration. Should you have any questions please contact any of the signatories below.

Sincerely,



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