



Date : 11/28/2013

TO: Director of Project Development, TXDOT

P.O. Box 1386, Houston TX 77251

SUBJECT: Response to November 19, 2013 public meeting on North Houston Highway Improvement project – Segment 3

TXDOT and US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) failed to meet the purpose and intent of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). One of the expressed purposes of the National Environmental Act (NEPA) of 1969 (Sec 2) is “to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man” . . . and all agencies shall “utilize a systematic interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and in the decision making which may have an impact on man’s environment” (Title 1 Sec 102(A)).

TXDOT and the US Department of Transportation failed to meet the purpose and intent of an Environmental Impact Statement, when it prematurely and arbitrarily deleted the Tunnel Alternative. The Tunnel alternative was presented in the last public meeting because it improves air quality, protects human health and welfare of all residents and outdoor workers, adds green space, protects residential homes for all income levels, reduces surface storm water runoff, and was strongly supported by the community. I strongly object to its removal and advocate for its inclusion back into the planning process.

Secondly, improved City of Houston connectivity of local streets, timing of traffic lights, and completion of a rail line that lies in close proximity to I-45 do not get integrated into the vehicle transportation EIS planning process.

Finally, I still cannot imagine how Texas and federal agencies purport to plan and design transportation projects that protect public health and welfare when public health data and reports are inadmissible and the Texas Clean Air Act exempts roads from air monitoring.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Hrabar
Stephanie Hrabar, Ph.D.

Cc: Mayor Parker, HR148 J. Farrar, Senator Whitmire,

stephanie hrabar

From: "stephanie hrabar" <shrabar@wt.net>
To: "i TxDOT" <HOUpiowebmail@txdot.gov>
Cc: "coh mayor" <mayor@cityofhouston.net>; "i J Farrar HR 148" <Jessica.Farrar@House.State.TX.US>; "I-45 Coalition" <Jim@i-45coalition.org>; "15 john whitmire" <john.whitmire@senate.state.tx.us>
Sent: Thursday, November 28, 2013 2:00 PM
Subject: Response to November 19, 2013 public meeting on North Houston Highway Improvement project - Segment 3

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Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Hrabar, Ph.D.
5005 Georgi Ln #63
Houston, TX 77092
713-683-0638

Dixon Motors

7902 North Freeway
Houston, Texas 77037
(281) 931-1300
(281) 931-9516 Fax

December 3, 2013

Director of Project Development TxDOT
P O Box 1386
Houston, Texas 77251

Gentlemen:

I oppose the expansion of the I-45 North Freeway Alternative 5 and 7 on the east side of the freeway in Section 2.

We have a business, Dixon Motors, located at 7902 North Freeway. We are an independent use car dealer which has been in business for 50 years. If you expand to the east side of I-45 with either Alternative 5 or 7, my business will be totally eliminated. Our business is not such that it can be moved. If we moved our business, we would most likely not survive, and I would be forced to terminate the 15 employees currently on the payroll.

Several years ago, we had a second location that was about 5 miles from the 7902 North Freeway location and we had to close the location. The customers from the second location never followed to the main car lot at 7902 North Freeway. We had hundreds of customer from the second location which all went away over a very short two year period after their car was paid or we ended up repossessing their car because they would not drive the short distance to make their car payment.

As you know, most business's it is all about the location and your customers get to know you and do business with you because of your location. We have a great location with great freeway frontage. We have had customer who have been doing business with us for years and continue to do business with us because we are in their neighborhood. So with that, you are probably thinking that "If we have been in business that long your customers will follow". Well, I thought the same thing when we moved from our second location of 10 years to only find out 2 years later all of those customers had left and went elsewhere. Over those ten years, we had built up hundreds and hundreds of customers from our second location.

You probably frequent a drycleaners near where you live. If that drycleaners moved across town, would you go across town to do business with them? No. You would find another drycleaners to do business with in your neighborhood. The majority of our customers do business with us because we are here in the neighborhood. Our customers

who purchased their vehicles from us also receive financing from us as well (100% of them). The majority of these customers come in personally to make their car payments at the location where they purchased their car at 7902 North Freeway.

So, if we are forced to lose our location and move across town not only will we lose our customer base, but we will have substantial losses of the existing car loans on our books because people will not drive across town to make their payments. This loss will be in the multiples of millions of dollars. Our customer base does not use mail and will not pay over the phone. We have been trying for years to convince our customers to set automatic payment plans with their bank or with their debit cards. It has been a losing battle they still want to come in personally and pay their car payment.

Our business has grown such that we needed a larger building, A few years ago; we had plans drawn for a building, designed the building and had the steel fabricated and permits in hand ready to build. We have spent \$200,000 on the new building project between architectural, steel, engineering, plans and permits. Last year when we found out about the freeway expansion, we put the entire project on hold not knowing what the state was going to do on the freeway. The steel is sitting on the ground rusting, the building permits are in the file, and the plans and engineering are sitting rolled up collecting dust. Needless to say, even this has had a financial impact on our business.

So for us, it is not merely a piece of land for you to purchase along your path of expansion, it is 15 lives being changed and millions and millions of dollars being lost as well as a 50 year old business that cannot be replaced. Fifty year old businesses do not come around every day it is tough to survive in the marketplace today. The average tenure of our employees is 10 years. For you it may not seem like much, but to the 15 people and their family it is their life and for me as the owner it is my life and my family's life.

For your record and per transportation code 201.811 (a), we do not work for TxDOT, nor does our family or any of our employees nor their families, nor do we conduct any business with TxDOT, and we will not benefit monetarily from the expansion project.

Sincerely,

Greg Zak
President

00 6419827



NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

THIRD PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT FORM November 14 & 19, 2013

Thank you for attending this evening's public meeting. If you would like to provide written comments on the project you may use this form (feel free to include additional sheets of paper if necessary). Please submit this information in the comment box at this evening's meeting, or mail it to: Director of Project Development, Texas Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 1386, Houston, TX 77251. You may also email comments to: HOU-piowebmail@txdot.gov, or go to the project website: www.IH45northandmore.com and click on "Comments/Contact Us" tab. **For your comments to be included as part of the official record for this meeting, please email by Friday, December 6, 2013, or if mailing, have postmarked by this date.**

Overall, do you support or oppose the idea to improve highway transportation in the North Houston area?

Support _____ Oppose No Opinion _____

Please explain in the space provided below:

See attached

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

Name: Greg Zak
 Address: 7902 North Freeway
 Phone: 281-931-1300
 Email address: gzake@windstream.net



Director of Project Development
Texas Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1386
Houston, TX 77251

December 5, 2013

Dear Director:

I am writing on behalf of my company, Fiesta Mart, Inc., expressing our concerns and preferences relating to the TxDOT North Houston Highway Improvement Project.

Fiesta has a store at 4711 Airline, on the east side of Interstate Highway 45 immediately north of the Airline intersection. This sits in what is identified by the Improvement Project as Segment 1 between the 610 Loop and Beltway 8. Fiesta has been in this building, serving the surrounding community, since July of 1984. Our service to the community has been to provide a variety of quality food products at affordable prices, a myriad of courtesy booth services including check cashing, money orders, and wire transfer services, and a modest offering of general merchandise, clothing, and other soft goods items. Over the course of these 29 years, we've built a strong reputation with the community, and we continue to serve this community by offering a growing variety of quality, affordable products as we adjust to the changing tastes and needs of the residents in the community.

Currently, the alternatives for Segment 1 of the Improvement Project have been narrowed to three:

- #4 – expansion onto additional right-of-way on the west side of I-45
- #5 – expansion onto additional right-of-way on the east side of I-45
- #7 – expansion with additional right-of-way on both sides of I-45, to include elevated managed lanes above the expanded general purpose lanes

As we consider these alternatives, this is how we understand their impact on our ability to maintain a presence in this community:

- #4 – slight modifications to the right-of-way would allow Fiesta to maintain its presence in and service to this community
- #5 – right of way expansion presents substantial impact upon the parking lot and the building itself, forcing Fiesta to close this building
- #7 – right of way expansion impacts the available parking for this store, potentially taking so much as to render Fiesta unable to effectively handle the vehicular traffic necessary to sustain this store; this could be similar to the result of the I-10 expansion's impact upon the parking at Fiesta's Blalock store, rendering the situation to be untenable for business

In light of these impacts, it is our opinion that the one alternative that would allow Fiesta's current business to remain viable is Alternative #4 – additional right of way and freeway expansion on the west side of I-45. We ask that you consider Fiesta's important role in this community as you make your final determination.

Respectfully,

J. Barry Hart
Director, Research & Analysis
713-866-8300

Director of Project Development
Texas Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1386
Houston, TX 77251

December 7, 2013

Dear Director:

We employ over 200 employees at our store. These employees depend on their jobs to make a decent living. We also have 19 vendors that lease space from us with about 40 employees between them. There are 3 Housing complexes for the disabled and elderly within walking distance from the store totaling approximately 770 units. Most of these residents do not have vehicles, so they walk or ride their scooters to our store which is the closest supermarket to them. We also provide foods that these diversified individuals cannot get anywhere else. We are not just your usual grocery store. We serve a melting pot of customers from all over the world, and we carry foods from around the world that are not just found in any supermarket. There is also a bank inside our store which is important to our customers that do not have a vehicle.

Sincerely,

Oscar Trujillo
Store Manager
Fiesta #11
4711 Airline
Houston, TX 77022
713-869-5060

- 2470 RAYBURN
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-1688
 - 256 N. SAM HOUSTON PKWY. E.
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(281) 999-5879
 - 11811 I-10 EAST
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HOUSTON, TEXAS 77029
(713) 330-0761
- WWW.HOUSE.GOV/GREEN

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4329

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

- SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND POWER
- SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY
- SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
- SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

DEMOCRATIC SENIOR WHIP

December 17, 2013

Mr. Michael W. Alford, P.E.
District Engineer
Texas Department of Transportation
7600 Washington Ave
Houston, Texas 77007-1044

Dear Mr. Alford:

I am writing in support of Alternative 4 being utilized in Segment 1 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. With the influx of people moving to Houston due to our thriving economy, it has caused congestion in traffic to increase on IH 45. Expanding IH 45 with four lanes is direly needed to keep up with Houston's population growth and should be executed efficiently.

The west side of IH 45 would be more suitable as the expansion area primarily due to the numerous vacant lots and defunct buildings. Considering business is much less developed in the west side the impact of business and employee displacement won't be as high. The removal of Fiesta, Gallery Furniture, car dealerships, Culinary Institute LeNotre, and HCC Automotive Technology would be detrimental to the Greater Northside's economy. The east side has experienced many years of construction due to METRO's North line light Rail, which will ease the traffic on the east, and another developmental period may cause many more hardships.

Considering everyone will be busy or out of town for the holidays, the comment period should be extended so that the community may have the appropriate time needed to make an informed decision. Many residents and business owners recently became aware of the project and an extended comment period would be important for them to review the alternative plans. The expanded lanes should be free as oppose to toll lanes if the goal is to truly relieve congestion on IH 45. Free lanes will enable the flow of traffic to travel much quicker as oppose to toll lanes.



Please give serious consideration to all of the above mentioned. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Gene Green
Member of Congress

GG:JM



January 3, 2014

Mr. Patrick Henry, P.E.
Director of Project Development
Texas Department of Transportation – Houston District
P.O. Box 1386
Houston, TX 77251-1386

RE: North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP)

Dear Mr. Henry,

Please accept this letter and enclosure as the Houston Downtown Management District’s (HDMD) Participating Agency comments for Reasonable Alternatives presented during your November 2013 Agency and Public Meetings. We continue to have a high level of interest and excitement for NHHIP with its transformative potential for Houston, particularly Downtown. We continue to support your process, and offer our general and specific comments for Segment 3 – Alternatives 10, 11 and 12.


As with prior efforts in 2012-2013, HDMD intends to continue our work with Central Houston Inc. (CHI) and representatives from three working groups – *Priority Corridors*, *Downtown Access & Traffic*, and *Transit*. For 2014, we have engaged design and engineering consultants to work with HDMD staff and volunteers. As we continue our evaluation of the highway alternatives proposed for Downtown, we anticipate a more extensive design process. On an as needed basis during 2014, **HDMD requests periodic meetings with TXDOT staff and NHHIP consultants to evaluate our respective concepts and concerns for IH-45, IH-10, US-59 & SH-288 surrounding Downtown.** We will contact you to establish mutually convenient meeting dates for these regular agency meetings.

Along with the businesses and stakeholders we represent, our organizations consider NHHIP one of Downtown’s highest priorities. With this project, we have great opportunities to restore connections and access to Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods while creating a new image of urban infrastructure and mobility, one that integrates economic development and environmental stewardship. More than a “big and expensive” highway project, our position is that NHHIP offers a unique opportunity to invest wisely in Houston’s future, providing benefits to all for decades and generations to come.

Based on the efforts to date, NHHIP promises to be one of TXDOT’s most challenging and impressive projects. In coming months and years, we appreciate the opportunity to continue working with you.

Regards,


Robert M. Eury
Executive Director
Houston Downtown Management District


John Hawkins
Chair
CHI Priority Corridor Working Group

Enclosure

I. Goals & Opportunities.

NHHIP provides an important opportunity to do more than convey vehicles. It provides an opportunity to have a positive impact on the travel experience, the public realm, and the surrounding urban environment, with opportunities to enhance and improve the following:

- A. **Regional access and mobility.**
- B. **Legibility of highway access to Downtown.**
- C. **Connections** between Downtown and adjacent districts and neighborhoods;
- D. **Access to and utilization of green spaces and public lands**, including natural, built and cultural amenities;
- E. **Economic development**; and
- F. **Multimodal connectivity** for vehicles, transit, freight, bicycles, and pedestrians.

II. Downtown District status as TXDOT “Participating Agency.”

- A. HDMD appreciates TXDOT giving serious consideration to the four schemes advanced in July 2013, and is generally pleased to see their influence on three current “Reasonable Alternatives.” Key elements of the July 2013 schemes deserve further evaluation and design analysis by TXDOT prior to advancing a “Preferred Alternative.”
- B. HDMD acknowledges the monumental challenge before TXDOT to convey nearly 1,000,000 vehicles per day through the central city via Downtown highways. Specific to Downtown destinations, approximately 12-15% of vehicles access central city surface streets. HDMD supports the higher TXDOT objective to more efficiently convey the through traffic of nearly 850,000 vehicles per day in order to improve a broader base of regional transportation access.
- C. HDMD supports TXDOT general strategies to separate through traffic from local street connectivity. Particularly with “Reasonable Alternatives 11 & 12,” TXDOT has selected compelling design solutions that achieve the TXDOT highway objectives and the HDMD goals for enhanced neighborhood connectivity.
- D. As a participating agency for the NHHIP, HDMD appreciates the working relationship established with TXDOT during 2012-2013 and looks forward to continued collaboration in the coming years.

III. GENERAL COMMENTS.

- A. As issued by TXDOT during the November 2013 public and agency meetings, insufficient information has been provided on which to base a decision for one “Preferred Alternative.” To meaningfully evaluate the “Reasonable Alternatives,” additional information is requested.
 - 1. **Western side of Downtown:** No sections or details provided. HDMD primary concerns for IH-45 are for TXDOT to fully address Buffalo Bayou, at-grade freight rail, light rail bridge and infrastructure, Memorial Drive, Allen Parkway, and surface street ingress and egress ramps.



North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP)
Houston Downtown Management District (HDMD) – Comments – January 3, 2014

2. **Interchanges:** No analysis, plans, profiles or sections provided between IH-45, IH-10 and US-59. HDMD primary concerns regard highway design standards for clearances – over both surface streets, highways and freight rail – from which we infer tall sections for new interchanges. To evaluate alternatives, interchanges need to be designed and rendered as three-dimensional models. Segment 3 has no "typical" sections since nearly half the length is highway interchanges or arterial connections. We cannot fully evaluate the Downtown highway alternatives without understanding interchange configuration.
 3. **Ingress / egress ramps and anti-weaving lanes:** No plans, profiles or sections provided. HDMD primary concerns are for ramps that serve destinations into and out of Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.
 4. **Right of way (ROW) requirements:** No analysis or detail provided. HDMD primary concern is the total ROW needed for each of the "Reasonable Alternatives." While highway limits are schematically indicated, total property acquisition to achieve the ROW is not indicated. The associated ROW requirements for storm water detention for each Downtown alternative have not been presented.
 5. **US-59 / SH-288 south of Downtown:** Area is within the NHHIP scope, but TXDOT has not presented any information in this round; in fact, area is excluded from November 2013 segment maps. US-59 & SH-288 southward from Downtown involves inter-related decision-making for required ROW, highway sections – elevated or depressed, interchange connectivity, ingress / egress ramps, etc., none of which can be processed by HDMD due to insufficient information.
- B. As a federally funded project, incorporating the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) mission – "To Improve Mobility on our Nation's Highways" – at this planning phase is paramount, including highway system performance for safety, reliability, effectiveness and sustainability. However, with the current NHHIP alternatives, limited information has been provided that directly addresses the mission.
1. Per the website <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/>, FHWA "conducts research and provides technical assistance to state and local agencies in an effort to improve safety, mobility and livability, and to encourage innovation." (emphasis added)
 2. Per the Office of Planning, Environment and Realty, the following six principles guide the FHWA's "Livability Initiative" for transportation planning projects:
 - a. Provide more transportation choices.
 - b. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
 - c. Enhance economic competitiveness.
 - d. Support existing communities.
 - e. Coordinate policies and leverage investment.
 - f. Value communities and neighborhoods.



- C. **IH-10 Expressway:** as indicated on Segment 3, Alternatives 10, 11 & 12, HDMD initially supports an express lane for east-west through traffic, so long as these lanes are not at the detriment of HOV lanes or improved connectivity to Downtown.
- D. **Public mass transit serving Downtown:** Per Central Houston 2013 survey data, more than 40% of Downtown workforce chooses alternative transportation for daily commute, including commuter buses, park-and-rides, and carpool / vanpool. These trips are enabled by an extensive network of limited-access HOV lanes. For example, in excess of 25,000 commuters per day use IH-45 HOV facilities. These trips are enabled by HOV lanes which provide direct access from park-and-ride lots, offer reliable high levels of service, and connect directly into Downtown streets. These key aspects should not only be preserved in NHHIP but enhanced.
1. TXDOT provided insufficient information to determine if mass transit on existing HOV lanes is maintained with NHHIP "Reasonable Alternatives."
 2. HDMD requests clarification of expression "managed lanes," where those lanes originate and terminate, and the intended management policies for these lanes.
 3. HDMD primary concern is that HOV lanes be enhanced or expanded as part of NHHIP.
 4. TXDOT must preserve and improve park-and-ride transit access and performance in the IH-45 corridor.
 5. TXDOT should give specific attention and provide for direct connector ingress / egress between park-and-ride lots and bi-directional managed lanes.
 6. NHHIP presents larger opportunities to enhance or add other park-and-ride lots and transit services, perhaps at Greenspoint.
 7. TXDOT must preserve, improve and extend westward the IH-10 bi-directional HOV lanes between Downtown and 610 Loop. The gap in the HOV system between Taylor and Washington is adversely impacting the speed and reliability of transit service in that corridor and disincentivizing the use of carpools and vanpools.
- E. **Freight rail and intercity passenger service:** In general, highway design coordination with existing freight rail corridors lacks sufficient information to evaluate options for elevated or depressed sections of NHHIP, particularly Alternatives 11 & 12 with parkways.
1. TXDOT to provide design information that indicates the freight rail corridor will be preserved and enhanced or relocated as part of NHHIP.
 2. Respective of existing rail access into and through Downtown, HDMD recognizes the importance of TxDOT's reconstruction of the IH-45 & IH-10 interchange adjacent to White Oak and Buffalo Bayous. Union Pacific owns and operates two freight rail lines across northern Downtown, functioning in tandem as the Terminal Subdivision. Train volumes and lengths are steadily increasing on these lines which transport a significant share of freight, removing freight vehicles from highways. Capacity constraints on freight rail could ultimately drive more freight to trucks, worsening highway traffic congestion.



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3. With sufficient consideration given to future freight rail expansion, HDMD requests TXDOT evaluate future freight (rail and truck) volumes and operations in terms of inter-related impacts on rail, highways, arterials and local streets.
 4. In addition to the existing AMTRAK passenger rail, future potential for inter-city rail corridor(s) should be incorporated into NHHIP design alternatives. The existing USPS Post Office on Franklin presents the most likely site for an inter-city rail station. NHHIP cannot impair either the at-grade rail serving the Post Office or related transportation modes serving passengers to and from the site. Potential highway connections to this facility should be analyzed, evaluated and incorporated into the design alternatives.
 5. For the above reasons, TXDOT should more fully evaluate the consolidation of the Freight Main and the Passenger Main into a single grade-separated line in conjunction with NHHIP.
 - a. In terms of restored connectivity, the potential for rail consolidation and realignment would likely benefit several neighborhoods, including Downtown, the Greater Northside, and First Ward.
 - b. Consolidation and realignment of rail facilities presents an opportunity to improve the highway ingress and egress connections with Smith, Louisiana, Milam and Travis currently below-grade separated and within the flood plain. Similarly, North San Jacinto's connection with IH-10 could be improved by the removal of the existing at-grade rail and street crossing.
 6. TXDOT should proactively engage its rail division and partner with the private railroad (Union Pacific) and the Gulf Coast Rail District to fully coordinate rail and highway infrastructure.
- F. Right of Way (ROW):** TXDOT to clarify with COH-PWE and HDMD the capacity and proposed modifications of surface streets within areas indicated as existing or proposed TXDOT ROW.
1. Surface streets that fall within TXDOT ROW are critical facilities for Downtown traffic and development potential. A significant portion of the surface street intersections are controlled by traffic signals. These surface streets pre-date highway ownership and infrastructure, and neighborhood connectivity is not expendable to highway prioritization. Regardless of current ROW boundary and ownership, it is important for COH-PWE and HDMD to have a role with TXDOT in determining the future functionality of these streets: Pierce, Chartres, southern portion of Hamilton, Heiner, Providence and Rothwell.
 2. Pierce Street, in particular, is a key transit street and requires interagency coordination with METRO relative to bus service and access at the Downtown Transit Center.
- G. Highway design and geometry:** Significant design opportunities exist to restore street level connectivity or to generally enhance the highway infrastructure.



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1. Based on highway alignment and design, replace existing left-lane ingress / egress ramps with new right-lane ramps. Clarify ROW requirements for new ramping geometry with area-specific plans.
2. Incorporate anti-weaving lanes and longer, safer tapers at entrance and exit ramps.
3. Noise mitigation: incorporate state-of-the-art noise abatement technology including depressed sections, on-structure barriers for elevated sections, and “quiet pavement.”
4. Sustainable design standards: incorporate “Green Road” or Institute of Sustainable Infrastructure standards into the design and engineering process, including those area enhancements required for storm water detention and run-off water quality for which no information has been provided.
5. Maintain or enhance and restore connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. These connections could remove some short trips from the highways and reduce highway congestion.
 - a. Northern Downtown: include design accommodations for potential North San Jacinto extension and required clearances for Elysian Viaduct reconstruction.
 - b. Northern Downtown: consider potential to connect northwest surface street of Bagby across White Oak Bayou to Burnett Street or an extension of Fletcher / Naylor, in vicinity of UH-Downtown.
 - c. Northern Downtown: consider potential of rail realignment and improvements to flood-prone arterial underpasses at Smith, Louisiana, Milam and Travis.
 - d. Eastern Downtown: US-59 and re-aligned IH-45 must maintain and enhance all 12 of the original 20 east-west street connections that currently exist between Downtown and East Downtown. These surface streets include the following: Commerce, Franklin, Congress, Texas (light rail), Capitol, Rusk, Polk, Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph Parkway, and Pierce.
 - e. Eastern Downtown: As proposed in July 2013 HDMD schemes, restoring southbound Hamilton as a couplet with Chartres on the east side of GRB Convention Center is a priority, without limiting access to GRBCC loading docks.
 - f. Southwestern Downtown: IH-45 – no information provided. Rebuilt as an elevated structure or converted to a parkway could restore connections between Downtown and Midtown / 4th Ward via Andrews Street or Jefferson to Cleveland or continuation of St. Joseph Parkway.
 - g. Southwestern Downtown: IH-45 – no information provided. Rebuilt as an elevated structure or converted to a parkway will improve the pedestrian connectivity and at-grade experience.
 - h. Western Downtown: IH-45 – no information provided. Rebuilt as an elevated structure or converted to a parkway should maintain thoroughfare connections with Allen Parkway and Memorial Drive as well as the surface streets they serve.



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- i. Northwestern Downtown: IH-45 and IH-10 interchange – no information provided. Sixth Ward and First Ward connectivity by surface streets and direct access to White Oak trails should be evaluated and incorporated to the greatest extent possible.
- H. **Project Phasing:** Respective of the proposal for additional lanes and increased capacity in Segments 1 and 2, HDMD urges TXDOT to design, engineer and construct Segment 3 improvements in and around Downtown prior to implementing other phases of NHHIP. The primary concern is that the additional capacity generated in northern segments will overload Downtown highway construction and operation if Segment 3 is final phase. Downtown needs to be “up and running” before construction of northern segments commences.
- I. **Construction:** TXDOT and HDMD must jointly consider the impacts of the project during construction. Access to Downtown from main lanes, HOV lanes, and arterials must not be interrupted. Similarly, the operations of major facilities must not be adversely impacted; these facilities include but are not limited to George R Brown Convention Center, Minute Maid Ball Park, METRO’s Downtown Transit Center and light rail facilities, City Hall and City Hall Annex, Houston Police Department and Municipal Courts Campus, CenterPoint Energy substations, the University of Houston Downtown Campus and various public facilities in the Theater District.
- J. **Related projects:** Public and private entities are planning and implementing several significant projects immediately adjacent to the NHHIP boundaries. It is vital that TXDOT consult with these entities prior to advancing a “Preferred Alternative.” Entities and Projects include:
 - 1. City of Houston: new Houston Police Department Campus between Washington and Memorial, west of IH-45.
 - 2. Houston First Corporation: new Nau Center for Texas Cultural Heritage and GRB Convention Center Parking Garage between Rusk and Texas, west of US-59.
 - 3. Houston First Corporation: loading ramp reconstruction for upper levels of GRB Convention Center, between future garage and US-59, extending northward from Rusk to Texas.
 - 4. Houston First Corporation: future expansion of the GRB Convention Center southward between Polk, Hamilton, Bell and Jackson, west of US-59.
 - 5. Redevelopment of the current USPS Post Office site between Franklin and rail road tracks, east of IH-45.
 - 6. Brookfield: new office tower development between West Dallas and Clay, east of IH-45.
 - 7. City of Houston & Houston Parks Board: Bayou Greenway parks and hike-and-bike trails.



IV. COMMENTS ON THE “REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES” FOR SEGMENT 3

A. Alternative 10 – Widen-45 Pierce Elevated.

1. Concern over reducing at-grade local-access capacity along Pierce Street which serves as a vital transit facility providing access to the Downtown Transit Center for hundreds of local buses connecting with the Main Street light rail line.
2. Insufficient information provided for the US-59 segment from IH-10 interchange to SH-288 interchange, including the IH-45 interchange.
3. In its current form, the Pierce Elevated has significant negative impacts on Downtown and Midtown, discouraging pedestrian and bicycle trips, reducing (or stagnating) property values, and inhibiting economic development. Widening the structure would exacerbate these problems.
4. Generally, HDMD does not support this alternative.

B. Alternative 11 – Realign IH-45 north- and southbound lanes to US-59 and IH-10 corridors; replace Pierce Elevated with west side parkway, Pierce / St. Joseph couplet, and Chartres / Hamilton couplet.

1. The existing US-59 structures are perceived as a physical and visual barrier, significantly limiting pedestrian and bicycle crossing between Downtown and East Downtown. Similarly, the IH-45 structures are a barrier between Downtown and Midtown and Fourth Ward. These highway structures are cited as impediments for journey-to-work survey data, particularly for pedestrian and bicycle mode splits.
2. HDMD supports this alternative if the proposed structures between Downtown and East Downtown minimize adverse physical and environmental impacts and equitably improve connectivity between the adjacent neighborhoods.
3. Downtown, East Downtown and East End neighborhoods and their leaders are more likely to support this alignment so long as the existing US-59 structure is removed, the corridor depressed (cut and cover), and extended southward to the SH-288 interchange. Similarly, the proposed IH-45 structures should be minimal columns and set at a vertical elevation that allows daylight to access the crossing surface streets.
4. Based on the July 2013 HDMD Participating Agency meeting with TXDOT, HDMD requests that the proposed horizontal expansion of US-59 and IH-45 be re-evaluated and designed as vertically stacked infrastructure within the existing ROW, with US-59 depressed and IH-45 elevated. A priority opportunity to restore Hamilton as an at-grade couplet with Chartres is to be further evaluated and developed by TXDOT.
5. HDMD supports removal of the existing Pierce Elevated in order to strengthen and improve the southern and western edges of Downtown with enhanced connections to Midtown and Fourth Ward. Done properly, removal of the Pierce Elevated also provides additional half-block development sites from Louisiana to Hamilton Streets.



6. Based on the July 2013 HDMD schemes, the concept for an at-grade “parkway” was visualized as increasing utilization of the existing street grid, primarily the Pierce & St. Joseph couplet, with additional capacity on Jefferson & Pease couplet (Downtown) and perhaps on Gray & Webster couplet (Midtown). The TXDOT section and rendering for the parkway concept appears to disregard the existing street couplets, altering directional flow within Pierce Street alignment (from east- to westbound) and installing new eastbound lanes in place of existing Pierce Elevated. HDMD requests review of the parkway concept with TXDOT to confirm the ROW utilization. Further, HDMD suggests that “parkway” or “boulevard” terminology is better understood as existing “street couplets” for southern Downtown.
 7. Relative to parkway or couplet street capacity, intersections between parkway and existing surface streets will necessarily be a significant design and operation issue. Signalized intersections accommodate approximately 600 turns per hour and are most likely required for area of southern Downtown. Roundabout sections accommodate approximately 1200 turns per hour and should be considered as a design option for western Downtown parkway, respective of West Dallas, Allen Parkway, Memorial Drive and possibly Washington.
 8. Pedestrian and bicycle access to Buffalo Bayou Park and new METRO LRT facilities at the Capitol & Rusk bridge will require design coordination for an at-grade parkway concept on the western side of Downtown. Provision must be made for the future westward extension of the light rail line as called for in the 2003 METRO referendum.
 9. HDMD questions the proposed height of elevated IH-45 lanes relative to existing or proposed elevated structures, including highway interchanges, Elysian Viaduct or North San Jacinto Extension.
- C. Alternative 12 – Realign IH-45 northbound to US-59 and IH-10 corridor; reconstruct IH-45 southbound within existing IH-45 / Pierce Elevated corridor; west side parkway, Pierce / St. Joseph couplet and Hamilton / Chartres couplet.**
1. See item “V. B. 1-4 and 6-9” above, for Alternative 11 comments, with similar conditions for Alternative 12.
 2. HDMD supports removal of the existing Pierce Elevated and replacement with new IH-45 southbound structures within existing ROW. A narrower elevated structure reduces adverse impacts, real and perceived, of existing structure and can enhance the connectivity for all modes between Downtown, Midtown and Fourth Ward.

END OF HDMD COMMENTS





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JAN 23 2014

CFO

ARMANDO L. WALLE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

HOUSE DISTRICT 140

January 17, 2014

Mr. Phil Wilson
Executive Director
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2483

Dear Mr. Wilson,

Thank you for your diligent service to the State of Texas, working to improve our roads and ensure the safety of millions of drivers and passengers across the state. I write to you regarding the ongoing North Houston Highway Improvement Project along IH-45 North and Hardy Toll Road, between IH-610 to Beltway 8 in Harris County. Please accept this letter as a formal comment regarding this project.

I am pleased to see the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) prioritize improvements along these stretches of roadway, among the most congested in Houston. Drivers on IH-45 experience heavy traffic on nearly any day of the week. Many of the homes along this stretch of IH-45 and along Hardy Toll Road, between IH-610 to Beltway 8, are owned by hardworking individuals who deserve a reasonably quiet and low traffic environment. In considering various options for improving traffic and safety, I ask the agency to choose projects that ultimately improve or at least preserve these homeowners' standard of living while balancing considerations of area business. Ideally, selected projects would improve residential property values, reduce noise pollution and reduce traffic congestion within neighborhood streets.

Additionally, the needs of Aldine Ninth Grade School should be strongly considered in making decisions concerning this stretch of road. The grounds of the school are extremely close to the managed lanes so the safety of the students and teachers must be prioritized in selecting a given project or alternative.

As the current comment period comes to an end, I again respectfully urge the agency to consider the input and comments of the relevant local neighborhoods and businesses to select project plans or their alternatives. I appreciate TxDOT working with my concerned home and business owners by extending the comment period and allowing additional intimate meetings with public coalition groups. These outreach efforts ensure the impact of these projects is more positive for my constituents.

Again, thank you for your service to the state, and good luck in your next venture working at the Lower Colorado River Authority. I look forward to continuing to work with the agency to improve these roadways and I am available to provide assistance as needed. I appreciate your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of service to you, either by phone at (713) 694-8620 or by e-mail at Armando.Walle@house.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Armando Walle".

Armando Walle
State Representative, House District 140



Texas Department of Transportation[®]

DEWITT C. GREER STATE HIGHWAY BLDG. • 125 E. 11TH STREET • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 • (512) 463-8585

January 28, 2014

The Honorable Armando L. Walle
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Dear Representative Walle:

Thank you for your letter of January 17, 2014 to Phil Wilson providing formal comments on the ongoing North Houston Highway Improvement Project along IH-45 North and the Hardy Toll Road. I can certainly understand your support for a selection process that prioritizes projects that increase residential property values while reducing noise pollution and traffic congestion on neighborhood streets.

In keeping with your request, I have asked Mike Alford, District Engineer for the Texas Department of Transportation's Houston District, to ensure that your letter is included with other comments in the project's official record.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please call me at (512) 305-9515. If your staff has any questions, they should contact Jay Bond, Legislative Analyst, TxDOT State Legislative Affairs, at (512) 463-6089 or via email at jay.bond@txdot.gov.

Sincerely,

James M. Bass
Interim Executive Director

cc: Texas Transportation Commission
John A. Barton, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, TxDOT
Michael Alford, P.E., Houston District Engineer, TxDOT
Pat Henry, P.E., Advanced Project Development Director, Houston District, TxDOT
Jay Bond, State Legislative Affairs, TxDOT

TX Dot,

I am opposed to the proposed expansion in that residents in Segment 3 are forced to choose an alternative with absolutely no real data about how the expansion will occur adjacent to our Super Neighborhood 22. None of the presentation material presented or posted suggests alternative being considered in the area of expansion between I-10 and Downtown. Tx Dot's response is that they don't know yet till they figure out what is going on above and below. So basically the citizens of our neighborhood are left in the dark with absolutely no voice in alternative selection for our residential and commercial neighborhood. **It's a ridiculous process to have us comment with no information and perhaps that is the Tx Dot intent.** Tx Dot doesn't even seem to know where certain city buildings, historic structures etc are located. The freeway ***design process Tx Dot uses is an outdated non interactive process*** with the community. It is based upon engineering a roadway and formal factual environmental studies that really are not concerned with real quality of our environment in regards to inner city mobility, air, noise or urban livability standards and sustainability of communities. ***We need regular stakeholder meetings that would create an design interaction process with both the residential stakeholders and Downtown Management District*** addressing master planning.

I am opposed to any additional taking of right of way into residential communities. Tx Dot noted they are not even certain if the ROW lines on drawings are correct. First Ward has historical structures and a booming housing market of new townhomes adding to city tax base. The loop scheme would likely result in ramps destroying new construction and crating interruption to city buildings adjacent to the I-45. TX Dot can achieve this project without additional land acquisition in segment 3 adjacent to SN22 and Heights. Pierce should be taken down and downtown should have expansion potential. I support a route down the Hardy toll road which dramatically lessen the amount of land taken, and lowers project cost to taxpayers.

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Attached are pictures of historical buildings and areas in SN22 that should be preserved. It should be noted that there are also 2 historical districts adjacent to I-45 in Segment 2 and 3.

Because Tx Dot has not been able to promise that the expansion will not impact our neighborhoods and all material notes subject to change it was difficult for citizens to even participate in this process. I am forced to think no comment is what Tx Dot is hoping for. I was involved in many meetings and the views of the coalition below represent views of many Houstonians.

To: TxDOT

At Public Meeting #2, you presented Alternatives for us to choose from that included many options that the public wanted. Then at Public Meeting #3, I was very disappointed that TxDOT eliminated almost all of our preferred choices and substantially changed others.

Segment 1 (Beltway 8 to 610) – The public wanted Alternative 3 & 3C - By a 3 to 1 margin, people wanted to put the 4 managed lanes on Hardy – where there are already managed lanes. Additional construction would not affect traffic on I-45 and businesses and homes would be saved from condemnation. But TxDOT eliminated this Alternative!

The Public's 2nd choice was Alt 7 – 4 managed lanes on elevated structure in middle of I-45 .. only required 30' additional Right of Way (ROW) on both sides. TxDOT changed that 30' to up to 81' .. almost 3 times more ROW!

TxDOT changed Alt 4 & 5 from 150' ROW up to 225' .. a substantial increase of 50% more ROW.

Segment 2 (610 to I-10) – The Public's 1st choice was Alternative 14 – a bored tunnel - but TxDOT eliminated this Alternative!

The Public's 2nd choice – Alt 15 – Put the managed lanes on Hardy.. but TxDOT eliminated this Alternative!

The Public's 3rd choice – Alt 10 – On below-grade areas, covering roadway to create greenspace .. although this option is still available, the greenspace will not be included with this Alt. It will have to be done later with separate funding.

Segment 3 (Downtown 'Loop') – Ninty-nine (99%!) of the public wanted the bored tunnels! (Alts 4, 5 & 6) – but TxDOT eliminated all 3 Alternatives! Instead you added 2 new Alts (11 & 12).

SEGMENT 1

I still think that the 4 managed lanes need to be on Hardy Toll Road – on Segment 1, I want Alt 3 & 3C with Segment 2, Alt 15. This would reduce land acquisition and reduce costs and have the least economic effect. In fact, according to TxDOT, only 45 parcels would be impacted on Hardy vs 267 parcels with Alt 4 or 310 parcels with Alt 5. Hardy would also have the least effect on mobility during construction.

However, if TxDOT proceeds with their Alternatives, I am in favor of alternating between Alt 4 and Alt 5 – taking property from whatever side has vacant property. I want the least economic effect on businesses & residences. I do NOT support any double decked roadways due to increased noise levels and visual pollution.

SEGMENT 2

I think that Alt 15 – putting the managed lanes on Hardy is the best answer to help mobility and have the least negative effect on businesses and residences. However, if TxDOT proceeds with their Alternatives, I am in favor of Alt 10 – putting frontage roads over mainlanes and providing the supporting structure to cover the mainlanes and managed lanes to create greenspace. I want TxDOT to include putting green space over the below grade areas. I do NOT support any double decked roadways due to increased noise levels and visual pollution.

SEGMENT 3

I still think that bored tunnels in a highly developed area, like downtown, are the right answer for this project. Four tunnels were offered before and four tunnels were removed by TxDOT! I do not think there was adequate explanation of Alts 10, 11 or 12. I could not make informed decisions due to the lack of information available. The Alts do NOT address downtown bypass traffic separation from downtown traffic and do NOT provide sufficient cross section designs to determine how freeway exchanges would be designed.

I oppose any additional ROW acquisition downtown, especially near the Convention Center and Ballpark **and surrounding downtown neighborhoods**. I am in favor of **tunnels and depressed**/below grade sections of the freeway that create grade connectivity while enhancing inner city mobility. However, if TxDOT proceeds with their current Alternatives, I am in favor of Alt 11 – realign I-45 Northbound and Southbound lanes along 59, Pierce Elevated would be removed and a ground level Parkway would be created – **HOWEVER, I oppose additional ROW along 59** and I need additional information on what the Pierce Parkway would look like.



Tami Merrick, AIA
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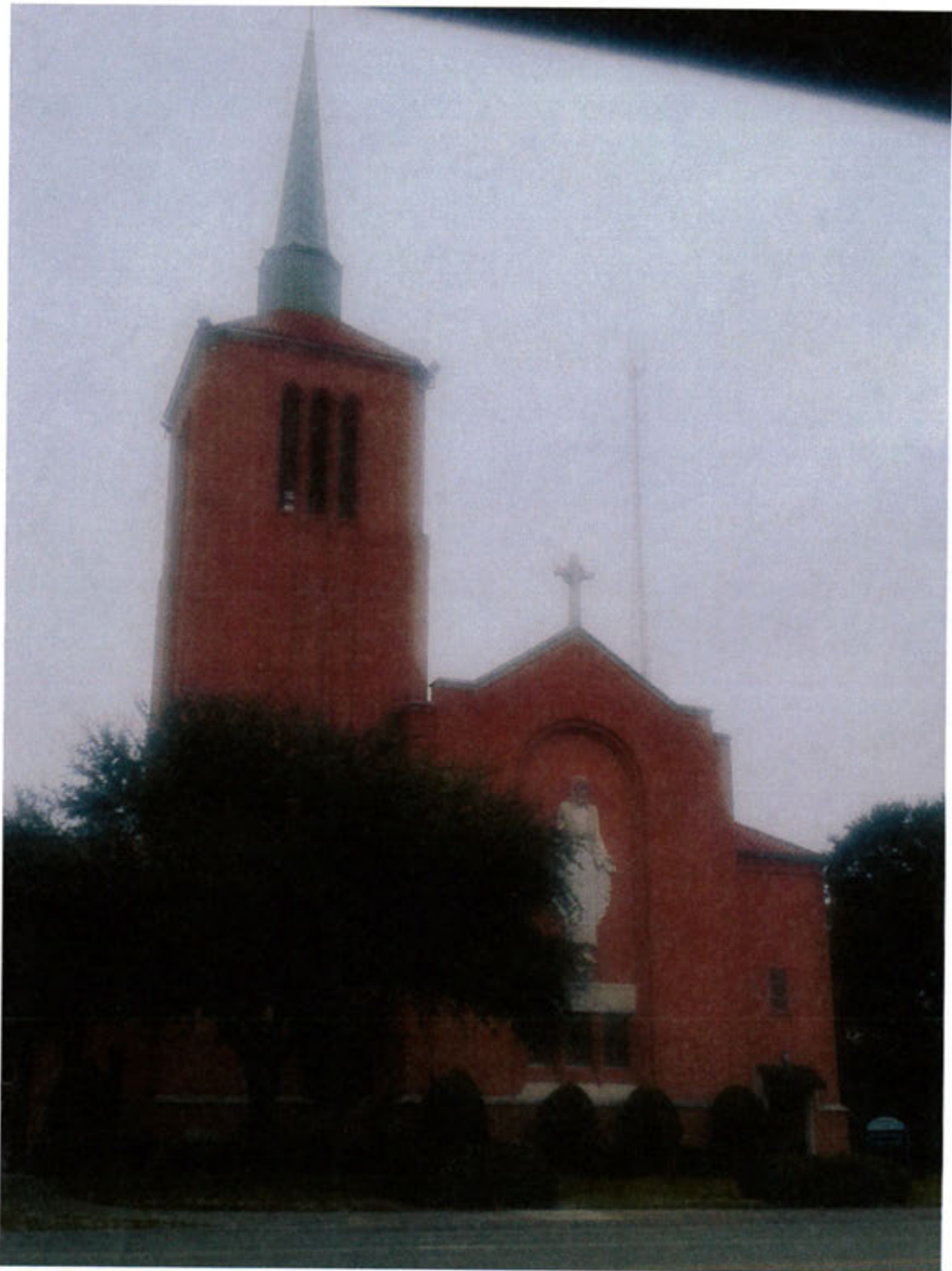












New townhomes in First ward



Tami Merrick, AIA
Senior Associate
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Page/

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I am a senior associate in design at an architecture firm Page in downtown Houston and active with Super Neighborhood 22 and the Avenue CDC. I live in First Ward a community adjacent to I-45. I urge elected representatives in Austin to require Tx Dot to raise standard design practice process to higher level appropriate for the fourth largest urban city Houston, Texas. Tx Dot should be leaders in urban freeway design practice that enables sustainability, economic, growth and promotes livability in our urban centers. Houstonians need a **freeway** that implements **urban planning practices**. I am asking for **more interactive stakeholder meetings** and Tx Dot to listen not just dictate design process. The intent of this document is to suggest contemporary urban planning concepts followed by real case studies.

Design Vision: As an architect, I am proposing concepts creating an opportunity to improve Houston rather than add to the noise, pollution and traffic congestion and loss of real estate in downtown.


Segment 1 and 2 the Pierce Elevated to Downtown: TX Dot could work with the Harris country Hardy Toll road expansion and develop the managed lanes along that route. They have not produced enough real explanation of why they can not team up and do the most economical approach for taxpayers. The expansion in these sections doesn't serve to expand lanes for regular drivers. It only addresses managed lanes that could be located with Hardy managed lanes. This is more sustainable, least cost approach. As noted by a state representative tolls could be shared. I must ask could a dedicated commuter train run the Hardy tracks to downtown in rush hour. There is an approach to move masses of people to work daily. Hardy when complete is direct connection for downtown to the IAH airport.

Segment 3) Downtown Expansion Concepts: Sky Bridge Park- Pierce Elevated - (removal and re-use sustainable design)

I suggest removal of some of Pierce elevated over Buffalo Bayou. The current freeway system strangles downtown and doesn't allow anywhere for downtown to grow without a freeway barrier. Implement design concepts to re-use some portions of the Pierce elevated for a **Sky Bridge Park- Pierce Park Bridge** similar to cap parks done in other cities. (Case studies on other cap park concepts are attached.) The sky bridge park could connect Buffalo Bayou Park hike and bike trails to existing trails at White Oak Park. This would connect Near North Side, Heights, First & Sixth Wards to downtown and Buffalo bayou via hike and bike. This gives residents an opportunity to travel further via bike safe from car traffic. It saves Tx Dot dollars in less demolition work to re-use parts of Pierce. Perhaps even the removed parts of Pierce Elevated might maintain columns which could become a frame work for rotating artist projects adding interest to Buffalo Bayou park and minimizing the destruction to a newly renovated park.

Buffalo Bayou Tunnel

Depress around the old post office or sooner if required to tunnel under Buffalo Bayou Park to facilitate construction the Pierce Park way lanes (slower traffic that could tie to Memorial Drive). The lanes could come out of the tunnel after the park. Leaving city services buildings as the court house, permit center, police headquarters in tact. Also

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not disturb other historical structures near the freeway. I suggest that the existing post office is a prime location for a **transit center** which previous studies support. Entertain rush hour commuter rail on existing Amtrack rail line that currently backs up directly to the rear of our main post office. Keep the HOV spur lane that currently is adjacent to the post office at grade and **dedicate it to bus only**. The existing light rail could have an additional spur connecting to the line just a few blocks from transit center. A tunnel under Buffalo Bayou serves Houston with cleaner air and noise pollution on the much used hike and bike trails. This adds to the health and welfare of our urban residents and furthers City of Houston goals to become more livable city..

Pierce at Midtown

Depress the freeway at Midtown with no additional right of way taken at grade level. This would allow for on grade streets in Midtown to flow traffic in and out during rush hour to other segments without adding to slow down traffic at the exchanges. Re-use or capping of depressed lanes could add new real estate at grade level in prime development area. This generates funds for the expansion project and stimulates Houston with potential economic growth.

East side Freeway 59

The existing section is really an ode to concrete and a very unpleasant entry for visitors to the convention center. We will see allot of visitor coming directly to this area from the airport. The convention center area and the East side is also experiencing economic growth and development potential. The east side needs to visually and physically reconnect to downtown. The freeway should be depressed in this area to achieve this goal. A small portion of the elevated could be renovated into a cap park connecting the the ball park, convention center and Discovery Green Park to the new east side developments and public area on Navigation. The sky park is a sustainable solution to recycle the old elevated portions saving demolition cost. Again working with Downtown Management District a cap developed could also suggest planning ahead for future convention center expansion. Rather than a sea of lanes I propose traffic be re-routed further away from the city center so the managed express lanes could avoid downtown completely and all the clogged exchanges created by running so many separate freeways into the heart of downtown. This moves cars faster that don't have a downtown destination and lessens traffic in downtown at rush hour.

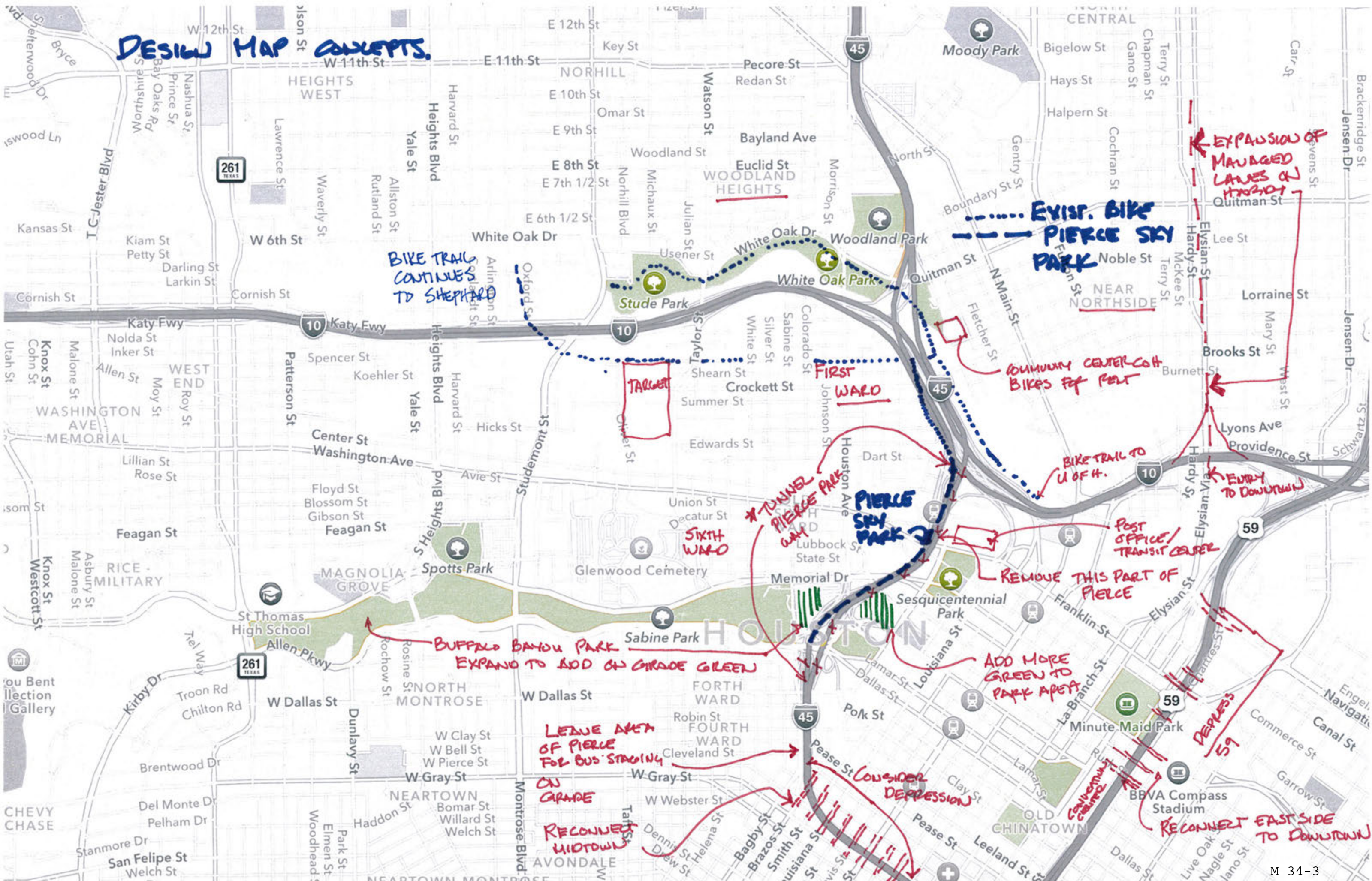
East side Freeway 59

Attached are very preliminary modeling studies that are not meant to be based upon engineering a freeway but are meant to show the potential of sky bridge park and adding green space to downtown. It would take more development to finalize these studies but I do think they communicate how Downtown could benefit from the expansion project rather than loose revenue and economic growth for the future. .

Tx Dot needs to think about Houston's future growth and multi-layered mobility moving people not cars.

Tami Merrick, AIA
Senior Associate
tmerrick@pagethink.com

DESIGN MAP CONCEPTS



BIKE TRAIL CONTINUES TO SHEPARD

EXIST. BIKE PIERCE SKY PARK

EXPANSION OF MAINTAINED LANES ON HIGHWAY

COMMUNITY CENTER COH. BIKES FOR PATH

BIKE TRAIL TO U OF H.

PIERCE SKY PARK

REMOVE THIS PART OF PIERCE

ADD MORE GREEN TO PARK AREA

RECONNECT EAST SIDE TO DOWNTOWN

LEAVE AREA OF PIERCE FOR BUS STOPPING ON GRADE

BUFFALO BAYOU PARK EXPAND TO ADD ON GRADE GREEN

TUNNEL PIERCE PARKWAY

FIRST WARD

SIXTH WARD

POST OFFICE / TRANSIT CENTER

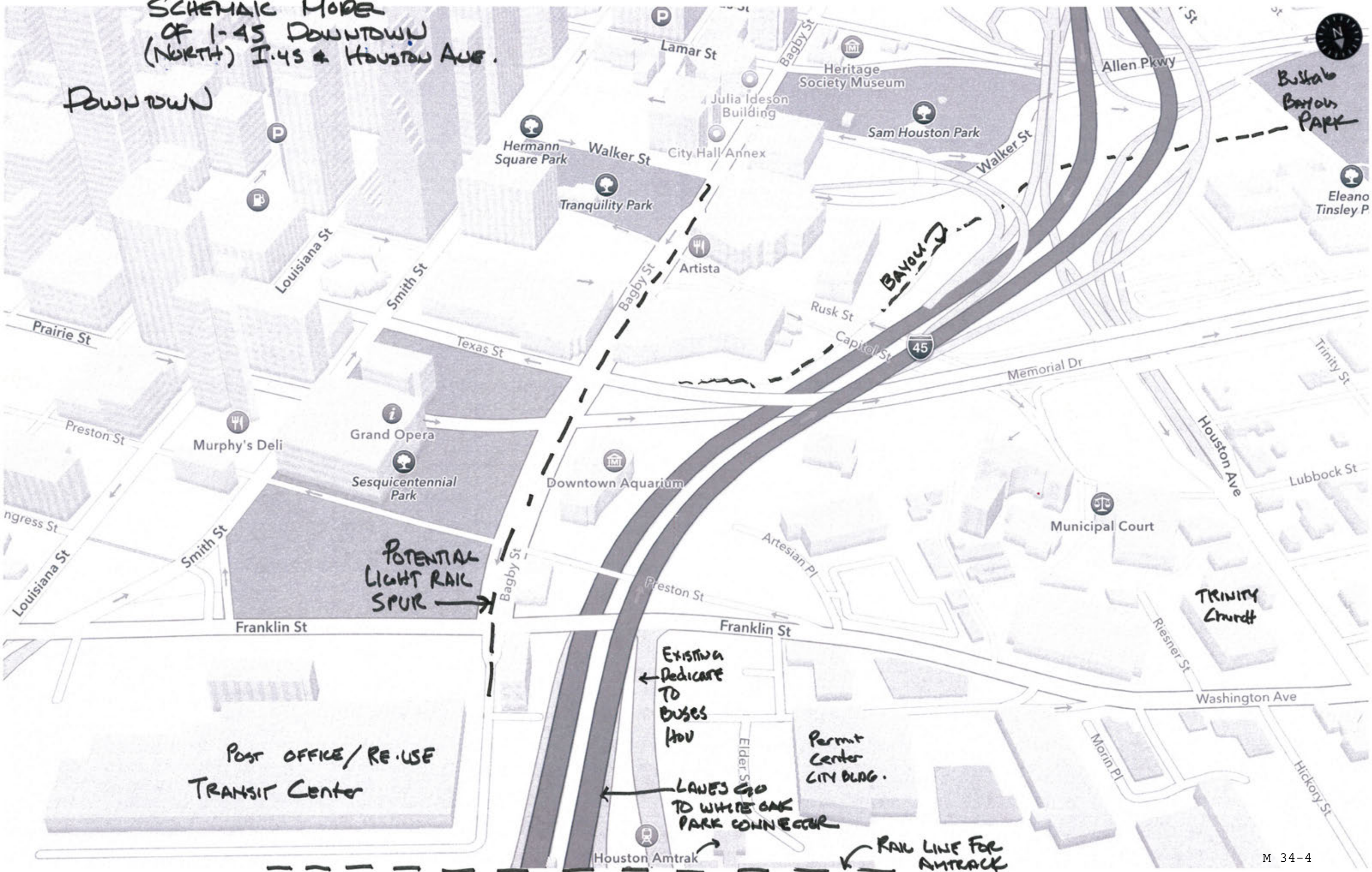
DEPRESS 59

CONSIDER DEPRESSION

RECONSTRUCT MIDTOWN

**SCHEMATIC MODEL
OF I-45 DOWNTOWN
(NORTH) I-45 & HOUSTON AVE.**

DOWNTOWN



**POTENTIAL
LIGHT RAIL
SPUR**

**POST OFFICE/RE-USE
TRANSIT CENTER**

**EXISTING
DEDICATED
TO BUSES
HOV**

**LANES GO
TO WHITE OAK
PARK CONNECTOR**

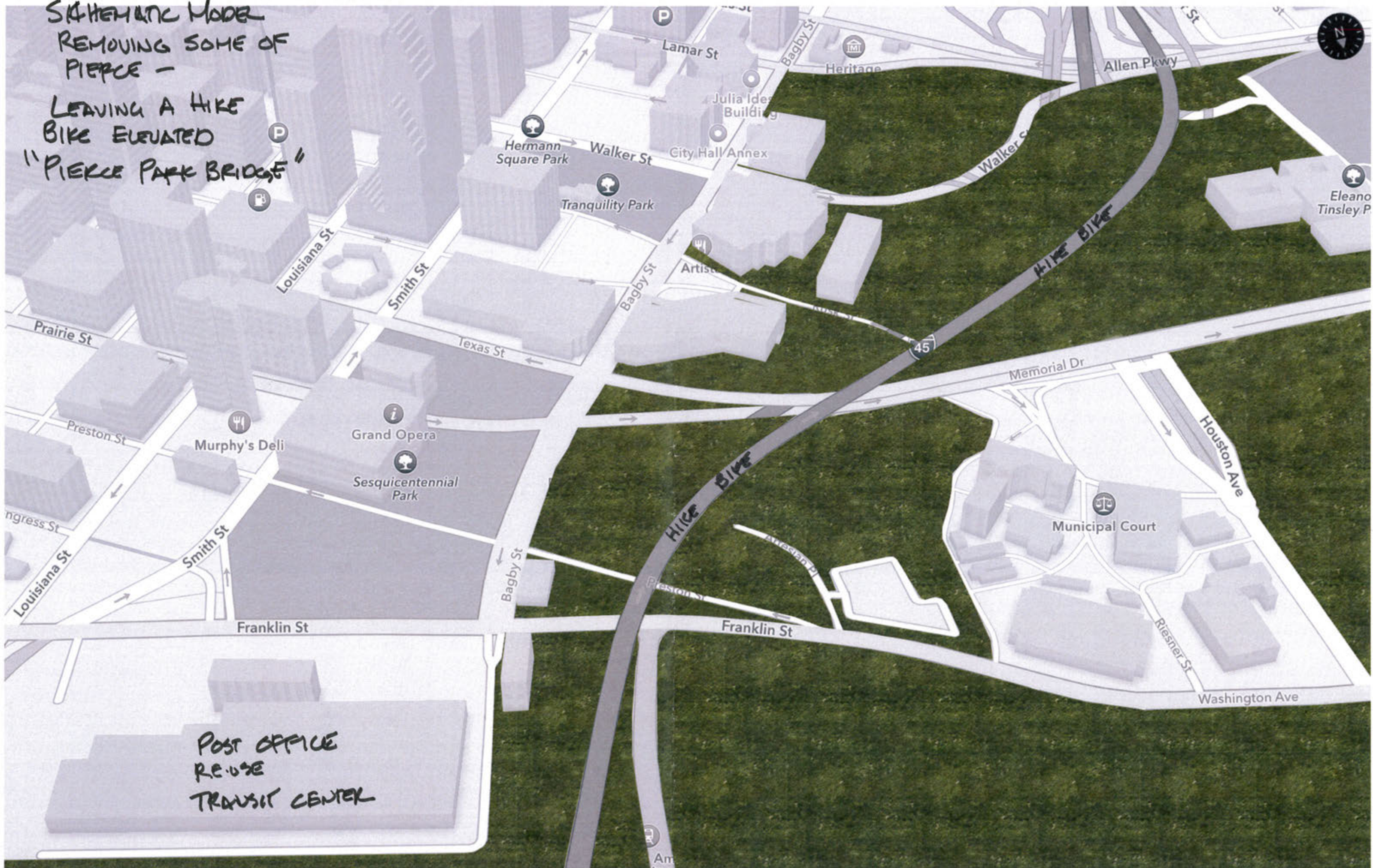
**RAIL LINE FOR
AMTRAK**

**PERMIT
CENTER
CITY BLDG.**

SCHEMATIC MODEL
REMOVING SOME OF
PIERCE -

LEAVING A HIKE
BIKE ELEVATED
"PIERCE PARK BRIDGE"

POST OFFICE
RE-USE
TRANSIT CENTER



EXISTING PIERCE LANES



DEPRESSION TO TUNNEL



MAIL CENTER

51 PE

Below article on Cap Park shown for case study 1:

Cap Parks Can Improve Infrastructure, Create Urban Green Space: A look at the proposed Hollywood Freeway Central Park

July 25, 2011 at 8:08am



This project evaluated the potential for a public park that would be built on a deck constructed over the below-grade portion of the Hollywood Freeway (US-101) from Bronson Avenue to Wilton Place. (Photo: Blue Compass Blueprint)

by Philip Hart and Laurie L. Goldman, *Urban Land* magazine

Though Hollywood, California, is arguably one of the most famous neighborhoods in the world, one thing it is not known for is its park space. Instead, it is known for the Hollywood Freeway, a busy expressway traversing the community as one segment of U.S. Route 101. Nearly a quarter of a century ago, Hollywood resident and landscape architect Edward V. Hunt envisioned a cap park over the 101 Freeway in Hollywood as a way to create badly needed park space. The idea lay dormant until 2006, when Donald Scott, a banker and Hollywood Chamber of Commerce board member, revived it and convinced the chamber to take the lead in pursuing it.

Cap parks are not a new phenomenon. One well-known cap park is Seattle's 5.2-acre (2.1-ha) Freeway Park, completed in 1976; Phoenix and Sacramento, as well as other cities, also have cap parks. A recent example of an urban cap park is the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway spanning Interstate 93, which was buried as part of Boston's Big Dig project.

In addition to creating often badly needed open space in urban areas, cap parks generally lead to infrastructure improvements as well. This would be the case with the proposed 44-acre (18-

ha) Hollywood Central Park, which would span the 101 Freeway between Santa Monica Boulevard and Hollywood Boulevard. In Los Angeles County alone there are currently four cap parks in various stages of planning, including two in Santa Monica and one in downtown Los Angeles ("A 'Central Park' for Los Angeles," August 2008, page 42). Of the four, the Hollywood Central Park is the furthest along in planning and design . .

Continue reading the entire *Urban Land* magazine story: <http://bit.ly/qkFseE>

Case Study 2

Eyes Above the Street: The High Line's Second Installment

Martin Filler



Photo by Iwan Baan/Courtesy Friends of the High Line

Rarely do additions to works of architecture or engineering by the same designers who created the originals attract as much comment as the initial installments. Thus there was some question as to just how much excitement could be generated by the debut this June of the second segment of the High Line, which runs between West 20th and West 30th streets.

Happily, the same elated reaction that greeted the [first segment](#) occurred again this summer, as the newly completed middle portion of the High Line revealed that rather than being simply more of the same, the park is evolving into a much more varied experience than many had anticipated. The newly completed half-mile stretch feels different from the first in that its route is straighter and narrower (two tracks wide as opposed to four in the southernmost section). It makes fewer jogs and lacks the extravagantly sweeping arc of the northern end of the viaduct, which will bring the High Line to a dramatic culmination when the entire project is finished.

Because all the park's components are being executed by the creative team comprised of two New York-based architectural and planning firms, James Corner Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro, along

with the Dutch landscape architect Piet Oudolf, the High Line feels wholly consistent and yet never repetitive throughout its entire mile-and-a-half length. For example, at West 26th Street, the design team has created the Viewing Spur, a bleacher-like observation perch that is a virtual cousin of Tenth Avenue Square, the much larger wooden amphitheater at the viaduct's widest point on West 17th Street. But the Viewing Spur differs from the Tenth Avenue Square because of a huge, empty oblong metal frame (the size of advertising billboards once mounted on the trestle's parapet) that playfully demarcates the vista onto the street below like the outline of a movie screen.



False Positives via FlickrThe High Line, June 27, 2011

Once again, Oudolf's selection of botanical material is superb. This summer it featured such flowering perennials as allium, catmint, coral bells, cranebill, rosemary, salvia, and yarrow, along with trees and shrubs including chokeberry, holly, magnolia, redbud, roses, sassafras, and shadblow. His random-looking (though deliberately composed) planting beds simultaneously pay homage to the wildness of the High Line in its gone-to-seed phase and seamlessly accommodate the many functional requirements of a heavily trafficked pedestrian concourse.

The new segment also remedies one of the few objections the first phase of the design raised among environmentalists: the use of ipê, a tropical wood that activists have deemed ecologically destructive and unsustainable. Since then, the designers have specified reclaimed teak, which possesses the same weather-resistant properties as the controversial earlier selection.

Particular areas of the High Line have been given evocative names reminiscent of the Romantic nomenclature that [Frederick Law Olmsted](#) and Calvert Vaux bestowed on Central Park's Belvedere Castle, Harlem Meer, Mineral Springs Pavilion, Rambles, and Sheep Meadow. Thus in the southernmost section of the High Line we find the Gansevoort Woodland and the Washington Grasslands, while in the newly opened center portion we now have the Chelsea Thicket, the Radial Bench, the Wildflower Field, and the Falcone Flyover—the latter a raised steel walkway that refers not to raptors on the wing but its donors (a high-flying hedge-fund manager and his wife).

The High Line's founders and prime movers, Joshua David and Robert Hammond, offer an absorbing account of their heroic undertaking's genesis and implementation in *High Line: The Inside Story of New York's Park in the Sky*. The pair met in 1999 at a local community board meeting and there discovered their shared fascination with the disused elevated railway spur, which was constructed between 1929 and 1934 to bring raw materials and wholesale goods to the third-story receiving docks of warehouses, manufacturers, and food-processing plants near Manhattan's Hudson shore.

The collaborators' decade-long evolution from amateurs—David had been a magazine writer, Hammond a consultant to start-up companies—into seasoned urban planners is an uplifting coming-of-professional-age story in which two somewhat naïve and comically inexperienced enthusiasts wise up and learn what it takes to get things done in the City That Never Sleeps. Throughout, these oft-thwarted civic crusaders remained cheerily undaunted as they and overcame opposition from every quarter—an obstructionist neighborhood group called Chelsea Property Owners that inveighed against their plan, and hostile city officials who tried to thwart it.

A turning point came in 2001-2002, when the photographer Joel Sternfeld took a [compelling series of images](#) of the picturesquely decrepit train bed—a veritable urban prairie lush with nodding wildflowers and shimmering grasses—that are to the High Line what the muckraking photojournalist Jacob Riis's depictions of New York City slum dwellings in the 1890s were to the cause of housing reform: strong artistic statements but also irresistible sales tools for agents of civic betterment.

The economic benefits New York City has reaped as a direct result of the High Line are significant. The first two of the project's three segments have cost \$133.6 million (\$112.2 million of which has come from public funds, with the balance donated by private and corporate sponsors) and, in a remarkable return on investment, have spurred some \$2 billion in ancillary development, primarily housing adjacent to the park, about 2,500 apartments thus far. Those units have been selling for an average \$2,000 per square foot, nearly twice the Manhattan median of \$1,028.

Prices in several of the new architect-designed apartment buildings near the High Line—which include designs by a roster of celebrated avant-garde figures including Neil Denari, Jean Nouvel, Lindy Roy, and Annabelle Selldorf—have lately rivaled the most expensive residential real-estate transactions in any other part of the city. For example, the penthouse atop Shigeru Ban's eleven-story Metal Shutter Houses condominium of 2008-2011 on West 19th Street sold this summer for somewhere in the range of \$13 million.

In addition, about a half-million square feet of new office space (the finest being Frank Gehry's iceberg-like IAC building of 2003-2007 on West 18th Street) and a thousand hotel rooms (the best of which are in the Mexican architect Enrique Norten's HotelAmericano of 2008-2011) have been added to the surrounding neighborhood. The High Line thus far has drawn more than five million visitors (about half from the New York metropolitan region, the rest domestic and foreign tourists), greatly benefiting local restaurants and retail businesses, and creating 12,000 jobs since 2009, an impressive figure during a period of soaring unemployment nationwide.



Marcin Wichary via FlickrThe High Line, July 16, 2011

The "park in the sky" has also had a salutary effect on the local crime rate, with not a single serious offense reported on the High Line since it opened. That is largely attributable to Parks Enforcement Patrol officers who issue one quality-of-life summons every other day on average, mainly for drinking, but also for bicycles and dogs, which are prohibited atop the structure.

Another, less quantifiable means of crime control on the High Line is what the influential urbanologist [Jane Jacobs](#) termed "eyes-on-the-street": day-and-night pedestrian traffic and a healthy contingent of neighborhood busybodies lead to fewer opportunistic offenses, both minor and major. Because the transformed viaduct threads its way through such a densely populated district, with many apartments and hotel rooms overlooking the walkway, Jacobs's principle of informal but effective civilian surveillance is confirmed yet again.

This phenomenon's flip side has been experienced by nonplussed High Line visitors who have been treated to exhibitionistic displays by guests at Ennead Architects' Standard Hotel of 2005-2008, which straddles the walkway near the park's southern terminus. One assumes that some residents in the many new apartments that face directly onto the viaduct's midsection will follow suit.

Understandably, several American cities are attempting to replicate the High Line's enormous success, an analog to the so-called Bilbao Effect after the sensation caused by Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao of 1991-1997. In Seattle, James Corner Field Operations has been asked to replace a tumbledown elevated highway on the city's waterfront with a sequence of parks and recreation facilities, while in Atlanta the firm is undertaking a \$2.8-billion conversion of the 22-mile-long railway loop that surrounds the city. But as James Corner himself has cautioned, "The High Line is not easily replicable in other cities. It's not just 'Build a cool park and they will come.' It's 'Build a cool park and connect it to a framework.'"

Other communities have realized that it can cost less to recycle defunct infrastructure than to rip it out. A Philadelphia business improvement coalition has estimated that the city's old Reading Viaduct could be rehabilitated for \$14 million less than the \$50 million it would take to knock it down. Those plans are tied to the recycling of an adjacent office tower into apartments, anticipating a real estate ripple effect of the sort experienced not only in the environs of the High Line, but also along New York's Fifth Avenue a century and a half ago after the creation of Central Park.

David and Hammond's *High Line* is above all an inspiring case study of how major city planning initiatives can be realized without either the authoritarian methods of Robert Moses—New York's mid-twentieth-century public works czar, whose pursuit of vast infrastructure and urban clearance projects often ran roughshod over democratic procedures and working-class neighborhoods—or today's characteristic commercially driven redevelopment schemes. The new book's pictorial second half includes frightening images of the Metropolitan Transit Authority's abortive 2007 attempt to redevelop the old Hudson Rail Yards—the largest remaining open parcel on the island—directly north of the High Line's upper terminus. The byzantine Hudson Yards boondoggle, which would have resulted in yet another unneeded enclave of high-end office space and luxury housing, was everything that the High Line is not: inhuman in its colossal scale, undemocratic in its exclusivity, and geared to private profit rather than public benefit.

The sports stadium component of that controversial scheme was halted by an unlikely coalition of entrenched real-estate interests—for whom this speculation by a group of insiders went beyond even their compromised notions of transparency—and community activists who see this as a corporate land grab, but the project is far from dead. Without any unnecessary editorializing, Joshua David and Robert Hammond offer the image of that postmillennial Alphaville as a clear choice between two very different visions of their city, whose strength resides in its constant self-reinvention as an Isle of Joy for all.

August 25, 2011, 4:23 p.m.

CASE STUDY 3:

Taking Down a Freeway to Reconnect a Neighborhood

Three big urban planning moves that could transform San Francisco.

Article

June 6, 2013



After the Embarcadero and Central freeways were severely damaged in the Loma Prieta earthquake, San Francisco took a tragic situation and turned it into a great urban planning success story: the creation of the Embarcadero and Octavia boulevards. Taking down these freeways and replacing them with surface boulevards created enormous positive land use changes in the surrounding neighborhoods. This enabled San Francisco to reconnect with its waterfront and supported the creation of the Market and Octavia Neighborhood Plan.

San Francisco now has another opportunity to take down a freeway while creating major transportation infrastructure improvements in an important area of the city. Currently, the stub end of Interstate 280 creates a barrier between the developing Mission Bay neighborhood and Potrero Hill. At the same time, the Caltrain railyard — 19 acres stretching from Fourth Street to Seventh Street between King and Townsend — forms a barrier between Mission Bay and SoMa. The obstruction will only get worse if current plans for high-speed rail proceed, forcing 16th Street and Mission Bay Boulevard into depressed trenches beneath the tracks and the elevated freeway.

SPUR believes that these challenges can be addressed with a few dramatic urban planning and transportation infrastructure moves that could transform this divided part of the city while also generating funding for several

key regionally important transit projects — namely, the electrification of Caltrain, the extension of Caltrain into the Transbay Terminal and putting high-speed rail underground, as opposed to having it travel at street level through Potrero Hill and Mission Bay, which would require crossing streets to go below grade. While the path to making these changes will be a challenging one, SPUR believes that it is worth developing this vision further to see if it can be made into reality.



Figure 1

Replacing I-280 with a surface boulevard would create many opportunities for improvement, including the creation of new green spaces that would help to link many neighborhoods together.

Big Move #1:

Put high-speed rail and Caltrain underground

Today, Caltrain runs from the 22nd Street Station through a tunnel under Potrero Hill, proceeding at street level from Mariposa Street into the Fourth and King railyard, where it currently terminates. As described above, Caltrain is expected to run underground, together with high-speed rail, from Fourth and King to the Transbay Terminal as part of the Downtown Extension.

However, there are several issues with the current Downtown Extension plan. The new rail tunnel portal planned for Seventh and Townsend Streets would inhibit the development potential of the railyard. Also, this portal will include a tight track curve on a grade (slope), which will substantially limit train speeds. Furthermore, grade separation will be required for high-speed rail at both 16th and Seventh streets, which will create additional neighborhood barriers as described above.

There are several possible options for the Caltrain/ high-speed rail extension that would reduce its impact on Mission Bay and Potrero Hill, deliver a better urban design and create a superior technical alignment into Mission Bay and the new Transbay Transit Center. All of the options have advantages and disadvantages and require further study. However, all would begin track undergrounding north of Cesar Chavez Street, be run completely under Mission Bay, feature a Mission Bay Station and then proceed to the new Transbay Transit Center.

There are many benefits to these options, all of which would let 16th Street and Mission Bay Boulevard remain at the surface. The rail alignments could eliminate the tight curve at Seventh and Townsend, allowing the trains to run faster. The 22nd Street station could move to 16th Street, or perhaps Cesar Chavez, allowing for a connection to Mission Bay and linking 16th Street bus rapid transit (BRT) and Mission District buses. This underground option also allows the railyard to be developed and for the public to recapture some of the value of that development. Tradeoffs include revisiting the alignment options, and possibly additional costs.

Big Move #2:

Tear down I-280 and replace it with a surface boulevard

Currently, I-280 runs above street level along and above the existing Caltrain tracks, touching down just south of the Caltrain railyards at Fourth and King. What would happen if I-280 instead touched down between 17th and Mariposa Streets and the remainder of the freeway was replaced with a surface boulevard?

That would allow for radically improved connectivity between Mission Bay, Showplace Square and Potrero Hill, with crossings at 16th Street, Irwin Street, Hooper Street and Berry Street. Mission Creek Channel would become accessible to neighborhoods to the north and west. And parcels of land that previously were used for highway infrastructure could be redeveloped, and their value recaptured.

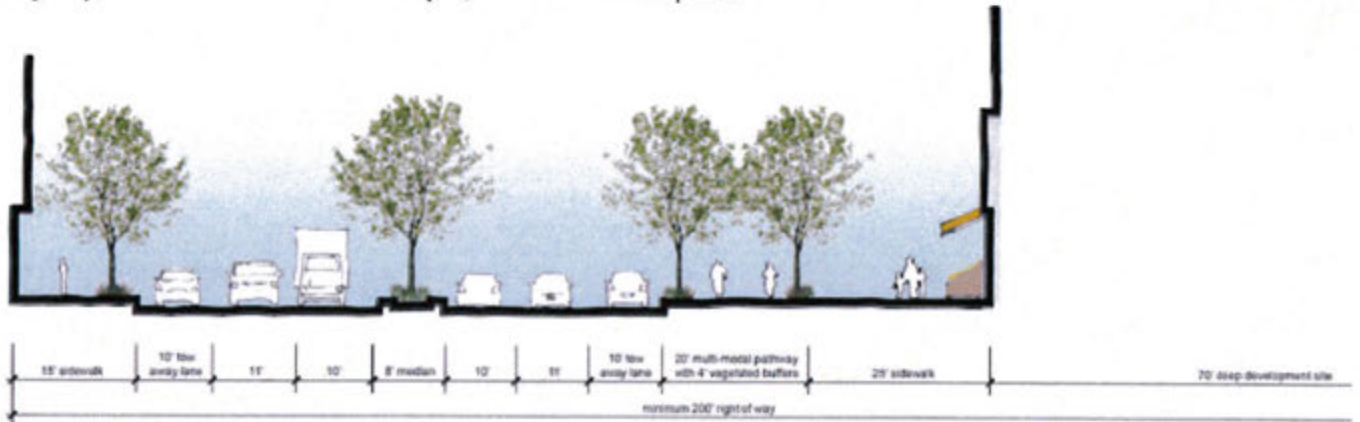


Figure 10

New Mission Bay Boulevard (section). In addition to accommodating cars, the boulevard could include a separated bike lane and graciously sized sidewalks.

The boulevard itself would allow for vastly improved bicycle access, including a separated bicycle path. The boulevard would also support an improved pedestrian experience, allowing for people to comfortably use the liberated street grid. Wide sidewalks could be added to either side of the boulevard to encourage pedestrian activity.

Many other possibilities for urban design improvements would be created as well. A new, greener Hubbell Street would link Mission Creek to Jackson Playground. A series of smaller pedestrian plazas and areas of widened sidewalks could sustain an active streetscape south of Mission Creek. San Francisco could have its own version of New York City's High Line if a segment of the freeway were repurposed as a raised park. And perhaps most important, the Showplace Square/Potrero street grid could be reconnected with Mission Bay.



Figures 11 and 12

Potential access to Mission Creek Park if the freeway is removed. Access to Mission Creek Park is currently obstructed by the freeway (top). If the freeway were removed, Mission Creek Park would become an asset to the entire area. The lower drawing shows a future view of Seventh Street to Mission Creek and beyond.

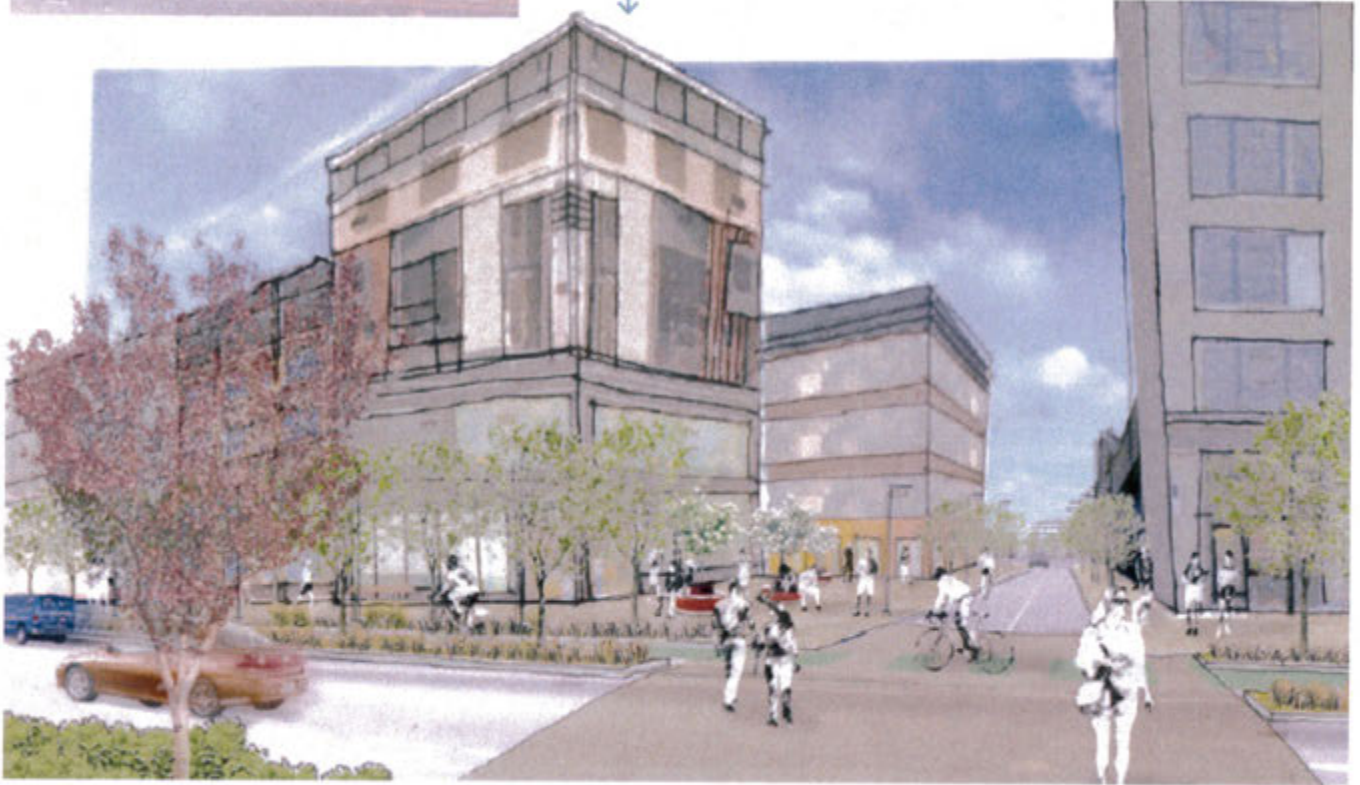


Figure 13 and 14

Potential future view from Daggett Street to Mission Bay. The freeway forms a barrier throughout Showplace Square/Potrero Hill. The top view looks east from Daggett Street to Mission Bay. Removing the freeway would greatly improve the connections between Showplace Square/Potrero Hill and Mission Bay.

The removal of the freeway and the undergrounding of high-speed rail and Caltrain offer another way of thinking about land use in the area. With these changes, 16th Street could become an important transit spine, especially when BRT is implemented along the corridor. The area at Seventh and Townsend could become a mixed-use gateway to the rest of the community, and the Fourth and King intersection could become a more successful commercial, transit-oriented development (TOD). Value generated from development in all these areas could be recaptured to fund further public improvements.

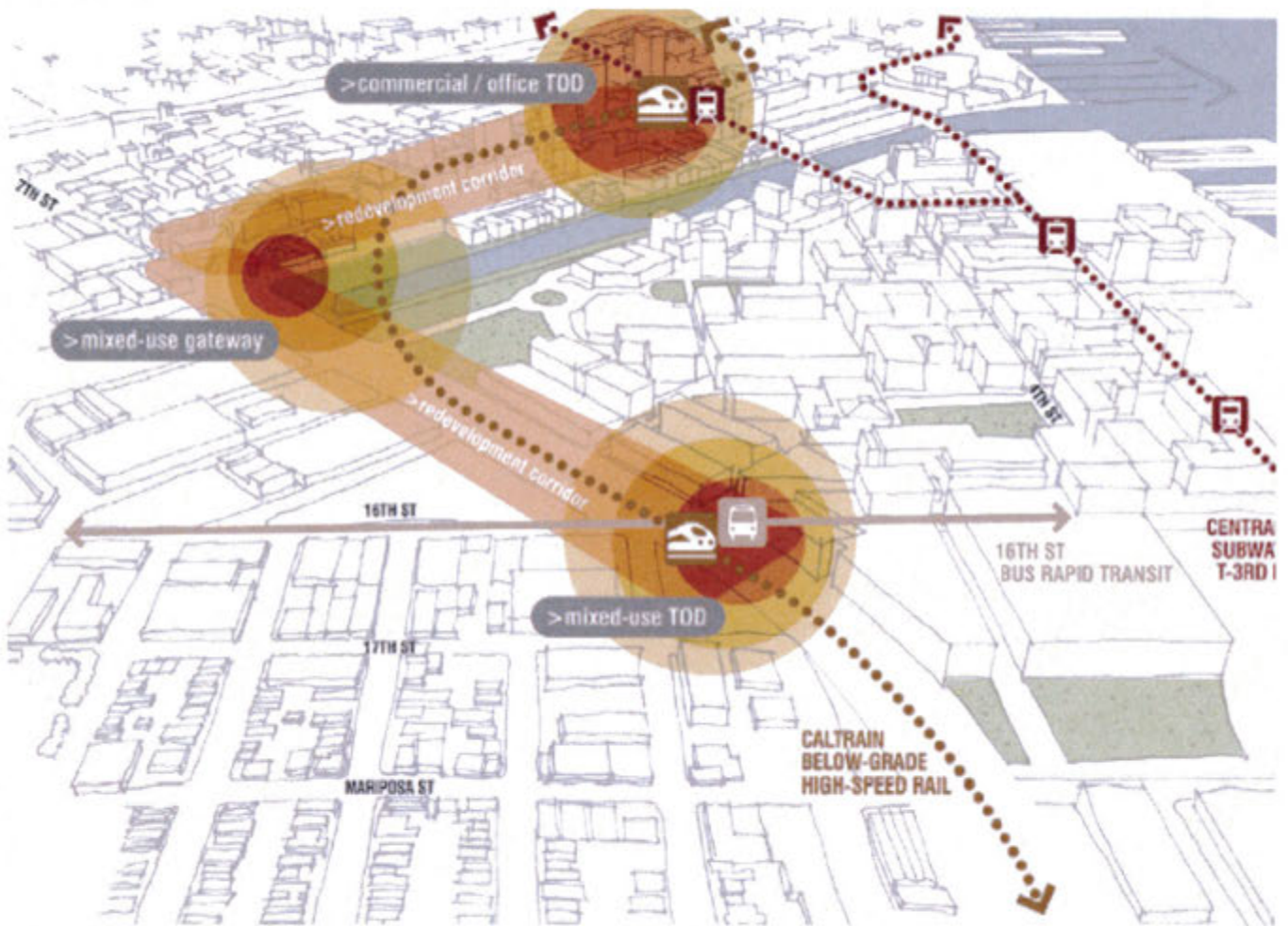


Figure 15

Replacing I-280 with a boulevard would create opportunities for new development, including a potential mixed-use, transit-oriented development node at 16th Street if the Caltrain stop were moved to that location.

Big Move #3:

Redevelop the Caltrain railyards

In our 2007 report *A New Transit First Neighborhood*, SPUR explored the opportunity to develop new buildings over the Fourth and King Caltrain station using air rights (the rights to develop over a piece of land or

infrastructure) as a means to pay for both electrifying Caltrain and bringing high-speed rail into the Transbay Transit Center. This study assumed that the railyard would stay in its current location and that any new development would need to be built above the railyards.

Fortunately, a recent San Francisco Planning Department study took this idea to the next level. In its “4th and King Street Railyards: Final Summary Memo,” the department explored two development scenarios for the site: one where the air rights above the railyard are developed while the railyard remains in use (which would require building above the railyard), and another where the railyard is relocated, allowing the entire site to be developed as a blank slate. The second scenario has two variations: one where only the railyard is moved, and another where the railyard is moved and I-280 is replaced with a surface boulevard.

This last scenario would provide the greatest benefits. It would allow for much better urban design, greater development capacity and greater opportunities for value recapture because the land would become more valuable when it is no longer adjacent to freeway ramps. The planning department’s study shows that the net potential value that could be created for the public sector ranges from \$148 million all the way to \$228 million if the railyard were moved and the Caltrain site redeveloped.

In order to redevelop the railyards, the complex ownership of the site will need to be addressed. As the planning department memo points out, the underlying railyards are owned by ProLogis/Catellus, the entity that owns Mission Bay. However, Caltrain owns an easement to the railyards. This easement is only to construct and operate a railroad, not to undertake other types of development. Any future development on the railyards will need to substantially benefit rail infrastructure and Caltrain operations in order to incentivize Caltrain to alter its footprint to allow development on the site.



Figure 17

This diagram of the development of the Caltrain railyard from a recent planning department study shows development at grade, allowing for the creation of a new linear park while also making the most of the replacement of I-280 with a surface boulevard. Image courtesy San Francisco Planning Department.

Conclusion

The three big moves discussed here have the potential for tremendous positive impact on many important San Francisco neighborhoods. While each can be completed independently of the other, the benefits are strongest when they are undertaken together.

In order to move this vision to reality, many steps will need to be taken, including completing further study, determining Caltrain's post-electrification storage needs, engaging in community outreach and education, and determining what resources will be needed to make these changes.

We hope that the City of San Francisco, with participation from regional partners and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), will take the first step and study the big moves outlined above. Studies should include a cost-benefit analysis of each step, as well as an analysis of what the impacts would be to projects that are already in advanced planning stages (such as Caltrain electrification and California high-speed rail). City staff estimate that the cost of completing these studies is roughly \$2 million.

We believe that this approach could be a regional and national model for how to use thoughtful development to retrofit past planning mistakes and pay for new infrastructure. We estimate that land value recapture from new development could cover a significant portion of the costs of the big infrastructure moves. Land value recapture won't work everywhere, but it is a strategy that could be used more broadly in American cities. San Francisco has the potential to bring all the pieces together — neighborhood place-making, environmental sustainability and economic development — by rethinking its transportation infrastructure in the I-280 corridor.

--

[1] CEMOF is a new 20-acre facility located to the north of Diridon Station in San Jose, replacing an old 22-acre yard formerly located on the same site and consolidating most of Caltrain's maintenance and operations in one location. CEMOF is Caltrain's central control facility, with water treatment and storage tracks, an on-site fueling facility, service pits and a machine to wash trains. About 150 people work at CEMOF performing maintenance, and roughly 120 Caltrain train crew members are based there.

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Special thanks to AECOM and the San Francisco Planning Department for their help and support in this effort.



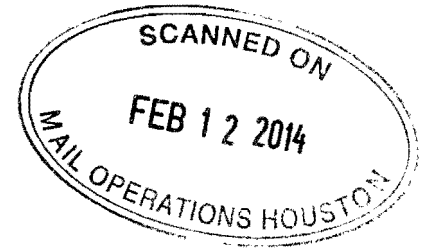
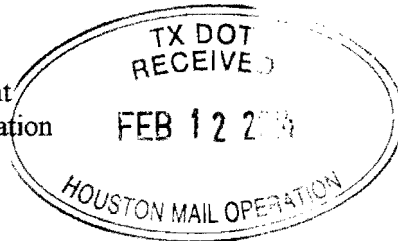
Greater Northside Management District

5305 Irvington Blvd., Houston, Texas 77009

(713) 229-0900 office (713) 695-6555 fax

January 31, 2014

Pat Henry, P.E.
Director of Project Development
Texas Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1386
Houston, TX 77251



RE: North Houston Highway Improvement Project

Dear Mr. Henry:

The Greater Northside Management District (GNMD) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Texas Department of Transportation's proposal for the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. The extension you afforded allowed us to hold a public meeting and collect stakeholder comments as a participating public agency.

Many of the comments we received at our January 23rd meeting concerned the economic impact caused not only during the construction phase of the project, but also as a direct result of the final alignment chosen. Stakeholders were also adamant in stating that regardless of the selected alignment, the preferred alternative should offer a cost effective mobility solution. Stakeholders also felt that the information available at this time is insufficient to provide a recommendation on a preferred alternative. Information specific to economic impact analysis, environmental assessments, traffic studies, and clearer maps displaying possible right-of-way acquisitions would be helpful in assisting stakeholders reach a consensus.

We would like TxDOT to keep in mind that the highway improvement project should not obstruct access, visibility, or mobility in the Greater Northside Area. It is essential that the highway improvements do not limit access for cyclists, pedestrians, or public transit users. The design alternative chosen should allow for greater connectivity within the area as well as to the North Corridor Light Rail System. The alternative chosen must be the one with the least negative impacts to residents and businesses in the area. Finally, we ask that all public comments are made public in real time and that the project continue to proceed with transparency.

We look forward to working with you to develop innovative, cost-effective, and practical solutions to enhance the social, environmental and economic well-being of our region.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Reyna
Executive Director
Greater Northside Management District

NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

SCANNED *SB*
DEC 31 2013
006424233
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

THIRD PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT FORM November 14 & 19, 2013

Thank you for attending this evening's public meeting. If you would like to provide written comments on the project you may use this form (feel free to include additional sheets of paper if necessary). Please submit this information in the comment box at this evening's meeting, or mail it to: Director of Project Development, Texas Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 1386, Houston, TX 77251. You may also email comments to: HOU-piowebmail@txdot.gov, or go to the project website: www.IH45northandmore.com and click on "Comments/Contact Us" tab. For your comments to be included as part of the official record for this meeting, please email by Friday, December 6, 2013, or if mailing, have postmarked by this date.

Overall, do you support or oppose the idea to improve highway transportation in the North Houston area?

Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be considered as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

I have been employed by BI-RITE Furniture for seven years. My family of 5 deeply depends on my income that I make working there. This Highway Improvement Project could have a huge impact on my life as well as many other employees by surrounding "major" business.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

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NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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Overall, do you support or oppose the idea to improve highway transportation in the North Houston area?

Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway, BECAUSE if they were to widen the freeway on the eastside it could cost me my job of eleven years.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

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Overall, do you support or oppose the idea to improve highway transportation in the North Houston area?

Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway. I have worked on the East side of 45 for 22 years. This job pays to feed my family and helps my grandkids also. I seems that MOVE business are on the east side and workers. I agree that work needs to be done on the north freeway, but this is for the feeders that flood, not the main lane on the freeway. Raise the feeders and move the traffic to the Hardy toll road for north bound travelers

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

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Email address: _____

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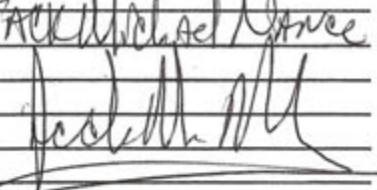
Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN;

The Majority of Retail Stores are on the EAST side of I45. The West Side would have less IMPACT on the Houston Economy ALSO the Taxes will NOT STAY in Houston City Limits.

Thanks,
JACK Michael Nance


Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

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Overall, do you support or oppose the idea to improve highway transportation in the North Houston area?

Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway. My reasons for my comments are I've HAVE worked at this location I-45 N FREEWAY For 23 YEARS. I HAVE My wife and two children to support. I Do not want to see the loss of our Business or Property. AND I Feel Taking the Property on the west side could be alot better Cherie considering most of Vacant Property is Available on the West side. All Successful Bishness on I-45 are on the EAST side of I-45.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

DO CONSTRUCTION ON THE SOUTH BOUND SIDE
(WORK ON THE NORTHSIDE BOUND AND CONSTRUCTION
WILL HURT OUR BUSINESS

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

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NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

THIRD PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT FORM

November 14 & 19, 2013

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Overall, do you support or oppose the idea to improve highway transportation in the North Houston area?

Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

yo no Quiero Que agan ese Proyecto por Que perderia mi trabajo y de eso depende el mantenimiento de mi familia

TRANSLATION BY PROJECT TEAM:

I do not want them to do this project because I would lose my job and my family depends on it.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the
only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

Yo no quiero k hagan este Plan Par k
Cerrarian Bite-Ri y pierdo mi trabajo
eso no esta bien de eso depende
mi familia so

TRANSLATION BY PROJECT TEAM:

I do not want them to
do this plan because
they would close
Bi-Rite and I would
lose my job. This is
not good, my family
depends on it.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

Name: JOSE Edgardo Orantos.
Address: 2150 Bentworth Dr # 348 Houston tx 77077
Phone: 832 379-9657
Email address: ORAN-Ed@hotmail.com

NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

THIRD PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT FORM November 14 & 19, 2013

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Overall, do you support or oppose the idea to improve highway transportation in the North Houston area?

Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

I BEEN AT BI-RITE FOR 14 YRS AND

I NEED THIS JOB. I HAVE CHILDREN TO TAKE CARE.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATON:

Name: MARIO RODRIGUEZ
Address: 9319 SUNDEW CT HOU. TX 77070
Phone: 713-545-2656
Email address: _____

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Support Oppose No Opinion

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- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATON:

Name: *Murphy Moya*
Address: *433 Meadows*
Phone: *832 641 40*
Email address: _____

NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.
por mi familia porque es la Compañia donde Trabaja
y es mi unico ingreso por el momento Gracias

TRANSLATION BY PROJECT TEAM:

For my family because it is the company where I work and it is my only income at the moment. Thank you.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATON:

Name: Mario S Lopez

Address: 7114 N. Freeway

Phone: 713 545 95-85

Email address: _____

NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the
only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

I Francisco Resendiz do not agree with Expanding
I 45 on the Bi Rite Furniture side, I just got this
job after being unemployed for a few months not by choice
I have bills to pay kids to take care of little sisters to
Raise Mother to help out and I cant afford to loose this job.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATON:

Name: Francisco Resendiz
Address: 6719 Lawood West Dr 77088
Phone: 832-745-4704
Email address: _____

NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

I will loose my job

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

Name: *Jose Gonzalez*
Address: *10750 Westhrop Pkwy Houston TX 77031*
Phone: *281-935-7527*
Email address: _____

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

This job pay for my school

I would be losing my pay and my school wont be paid anymore

Do not close it down

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

Name: *Kevin Selgado*

Address: _____

Phone: *832-566-9136*

Email address: _____

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

NEED WORK I NEED TO WORK TO support MY

Family pay BILLS

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATON:

Name: *VICTOR MEDINA*
Address: *11830 GOOD SPRING DR HOUSTON TX 77067*
Phone: *281-298-6252*
Email address: _____

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- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATON:

Name: Damiano Duebes
Address: 8911 Sunnywood Dr Houston TX 77088
Phone: 281 477 8897
Email address: _____

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Overall, do you support or oppose the idea to improve highway transportation in the North Houston area?

Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

I do not support this project cause i will be losing my job. My family depends on this job and my future. This is a good job and still looking to work for them for a while and a long time.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

OPTIONAL INFORMATON:

Name: Pablo Chavez
Address: 1605 Cano
Phone: 832-264-2376
Email address: _____

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

yo estoy en desacuerdo con este proyecto la rason es que terminaria perdiendo mi enpleo y eso no beneficia mi familia y otras banias Sircustancias

TRANSLATION BY PROJECT TEAM:

I am in disagreement with this project because I will end up loosing my job and that does not benefit my family and other circumstances

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item at

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

Name: Cipriano Rodriguez
Address: 2410 Corbett Dr Houston TX 77064
Phone: 832 692 34 92
Email address:

NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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Support Oppose No Opinion

Please explain in the space provided below:

I want Segment #1 Alternative #4 to be consider as the only option needed for the widen of the North Freeway.

NO ESTOY DE ACUERDO PARA LA AMPLIACION DEL FREWAY 45 NORT POR LA RAZON DE QUE HAY MAS TRABAJO DE ESTE LADO Y NO DESEO PERDER MI TRABAJO QUE TENGO DESDE HACE 16 AÑOS

TRANSLATION BY PROJECT TEAM:

I do not agree with the expansion of 45N because there are more jobs on this side and I don't wish to loose my job of 16 years

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5): check each of the following:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item ab

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

Name: NOE GARCIA
Address: 107 SOREN LN
Phone: 713 875 8730
Email address: _____