

Project Background

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), initiated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for highway improvements to the Interstate Highway 45 (I-45) corridor in the north Houston area. The proposed project and study limits begin at the interchange of United States Highway (US) 59, now officially known as Interstate Highway 69 (I-69), and State Highway (SH) 288 south of downtown Houston and follow northward along I-45 to the interchange of I-45 North and Beltway 8 North. The proposed study area also includes portions of I-10, I-610, and US 59/I-69 near downtown Houston; and the Hardy Toll Road corridor from downtown to Beltway 8 North.

Projected increases in population and employment in the Houston metropolitan area will contribute to additional traffic congestion on I-45, which is currently classified as serious to severe. The proposed project is needed to address the congestion and to accommodate existing and anticipated future traffic. Additionally, the project is needed to bring the roadway up to current design standards, which would improve safety and provide for more efficient movement of people and goods. Improved efficiency is also needed to aid in evacuation events.

The purpose of the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and improve mobility and operational efficiency. The costs and sources of funding for future project implementation have not been determined.

The proposed project would add four managed lanes to I-45 North from Beltway 8 North to I-10, and potentially realign sections of I-45, I-10, and US 59/I-69 in the downtown Houston area. The proposed project also includes improved connections to SH 288 and US 59/I-69 south of downtown.