I-45 NHHIP Segment 3
General Update

For additional information about the Project, visit us online at: www.txdot.gov/nhhip

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Segment 3 of the I-45 North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP) would reconstruct all existing interchanges in the downtown Houston loop system and reroute I-45 to be parallel to I-10 on the north side of downtown and parallel to US 59/I-69 on the east side of downtown. Access to the west side of downtown would be provided by a set of "Downtown Connectors" that would consist of entrance and exit ramps for various downtown streets. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of downtown would no longer serve a transportation function and could be removed. To improve safety and traffic flow in the north and east portions of Segment 3, portions of I-10 and US 59/I-69 would be straightened to eliminate the current roadway curvature.

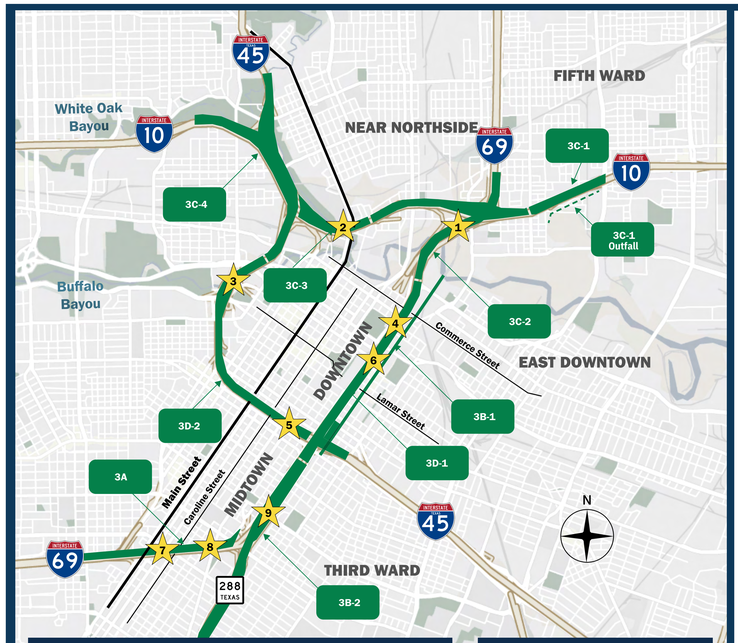
Segment 3 would provide enhancements beyond mobility improvements. Its construction would provide **flood mitigation** by adding capacity through the construction of **new drainage systems**, and **improve connectivity** on both the west and east sides of Downtown Houston. Work in this segment could also provide green space and beautification opportunities as well.

SEGMENT 3 STATUS

- The NHHIP Segment 3 project will ultimately reconstruct portions of I-10, I-45, I-69, and SH 288 around downtown Houston
- Segment 3B-1 construction began October 2024
- Segment 3B-2 construction began January 2025

Scan the QR code to view the Art of the Possible: Arch Bridges & Caps Brochure

SEGMENT 3 FOOTPRINT MAP



KEY INFORMATION

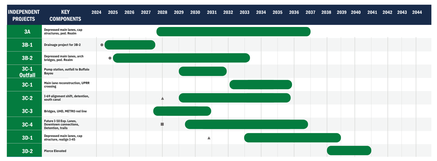
1. Straighten I-69 and widen from 8 to 10 or 12 lanes in each direction.
2. Straighten and add two express lanes in each direction that motorists can use to travel through Downtown.
3. Replace Pierce Elevated with Downtown Connectors.
4. Increase access between Downtown and East Downtown by construction of new southbound street between Commerce St. and Leeland St.
5. Pierce Elevated would no longer serve a transportation function and could be removed/repurposed.

CAPS & BRIDGES

6. Structural cap built over I-69 depressed section from Lamar St. to Commerce St., next to the George R. Brown Convention Center, could have amenities on top developed by others.
7. At the City of Houston's request, the proposed cap at the METRO Wheeler Transit Station to Austin Street, and the proposed cap between San Jacinto and Austin streets have been merged, making it a contiguous, longer cap.
8. At the City of Houston's request, a continuous structural cap is proposed between Cleburne Street and Almeda Road, amenities on top could be developed by others.
9. Cross street reconfiguration for arch bridges at Elgin, Tuam and McGowen.

*For details, refer to the Art of the Possible Brochure

CONSTRUCTION PHASING



● 3B-1 is phased to start before 3B-2 because drainage elements in 3B-1 need to be constructed and operational to receive drainage from 3B-2.
▲ 3C-2 is phased to start before 3D because proposed I-69 in 3C-2 needs to be constructed and operational to receive proposed I-69 in 3D. (Proposed I-69 in 3D is unable to be connected to existing I-69 in 3C-2)

PROJECT FUNDING

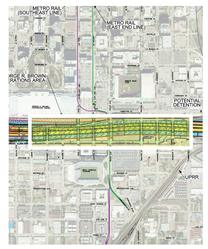
INDEPENDENT PROJECTS	ESTIMATED CONTRACT COST
3A	$850,600,000
3B-1	$121,800,000*
3B-2	$695,500,000*
3C-1 Outfall	$157,500,000
3C-1	$243,000,000
3C-2	$2,200,000,000
3C-3	$398,000,000
3C-4	$1,036,000,000
3D-1	$1,534,414,000
3D-2	$260,586,000

*Actual cost based on contract award

TOTAL=$7,497,400,000

All costs as of October 2026 and subject to change.

CAPS & BRIDGES

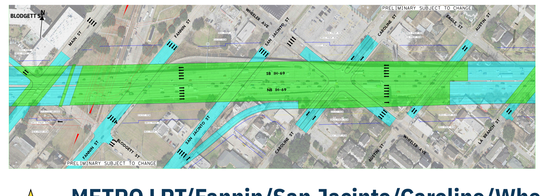




6 George R. Brown Convention Center/ East Downtown Cap

Lowering the highway near the George R. Brown effectively separates Downtown-bound traffic from through traffic. This strategic adjustment significantly diminishes the need for drivers to navigate complex lane changes, streamlining their journeys.

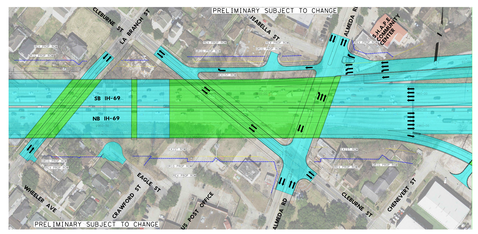
Beyond mere functionality, the lowered freeway introduces the potential for future development of amenities on this cap structure.





7 METRO LRT/Fannin/San Jacinto/Caroline/Wheeler/Austin Cap

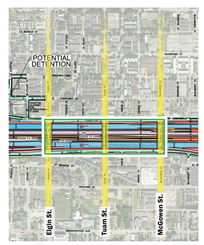
TxDOT and the City of Houston have agreed to a continuous structural cap from the METRO Wheeler Transit Station to Austin Street, amenities on top could be developed by others.





8 Almeda Road/Cleburne Street Cap

TxDOT and the City of Houston have also agreed to a continuous structural cap between Cleburne Street and Almeda Road, amenities on top could be developed by others.





9 Elgin Road/Tuam Street/McGowen Street Arch Bridges

The reconfiguration of the cross streets of I-69 at Elgin, Tuam and McGowen provides safe passage over the freeway and an opportunity to reconnect the urban core communities.

CAPS: THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE



WHAT IS A CAP?

A cap is the concrete infrastructure required to build a roadway at natural ground level over a highway that is below ground level. The cap also provides the opportunity for the "Art of The Possible." Through public and private funding partnerships, the cap can become an iconic destination for the community. The exhibits below demonstrate possible cap features that can be employed to define how the community can repurpose the space.

TxDOT is committed to funding the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the critical infrastructure. In a collaborative effort, TxDOT will engage with third parties regarding the potential caps. However, the realization of this destination place necessitates a combination of public and private funding.

POSSIBLE CAP FEATURES & AMENITIES

- WELCOME ENTRY
- PLAZA
- GREEN BUFFER
- FLEXIBLE LAWN
- PLAY GARDEN
- DOG PARK
- BUILDING
- BOTANICAL EXPERIENCE
- STREET PARKING
- PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION
- AQUAPONICS
- APIARIES
- FLEX SPACE
- PROMENADE

