



## I-45 North Houston Highway Improvement Project

# DESIGN SPECIFIC REQUESTS & RESPONSES BY NHHIP SEGMENT



Through more than 300 meetings with the public including project area residents, stakeholders, business owners, and other interested parties, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has listened carefully and gathered numerous ideas and requests regarding the project design. Each has been considered. Some received the green light and are now part of the plan. Others received the red light and could not be incorporated into the design for safety reasons or because they did not meet the project's Purpose and Need directives. The remaining received a yellow light and are still under consideration and require further study during the detailed design phase to follow.

The North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP) will continue to undergo changes and improvements once the detailed design phase begins. Ideas that improve this important project will always be taken into consideration and reviewed.

The project will be constructed starting with Segment 3 which reroutes I-45 around Downtown starting where it meets US 59/I-69. The new route follows US 59/I-69 past the George R. Brown Convention Center until it reaches I-10 and then follows I-10 westward until it reaches I-45 continuing northward. As the starting point in the project, this segment has received the most requests and suggestions that TxDOT has reviewed. Construction will continue with Segment 2 which extends from I-10 to I-610. Segment 3 follows I-45 from I-610 to Beltway 8. As the project progresses and final designs are created, the public will be encouraged to review the plans and provide further input.



# SEGMENT 3

*\*Unless otherwise noted, all requests came from the public and other interested parties during meetings.*

## REQUESTS

1. Replace San Jacinto Street ramp that was removed.
2. Replace eastbound exit to Jensen Drive along I-10 that was removed.
3. Accommodate City of Houston intersection improvement project for the intersection of Navigation Boulevard and Commerce Street.
4. Improve Downtown connectors including: sightlines, depress the connectors, and make Andrews Street pedestrian only across the connectors.
5. Remove the proposed SH 288 connection to Chenevert in Midtown.
6. Pedestrian realms not shown.
7. Garrott Street access from Main Street will affect the veterans apartment complex Midtown Terrace Suites.
8. SH 288 northbound will need to continue to the Blodgett Street intersection and then turn east toward Hutchins Street.
9. Hamilton Street does not connect to Stuart Street.
10. Elgin needs a left turn bay at Hamilton Street.
11. Driveway from Webster Street to Shell gas station not shown. Is the driveway removed or blocked?
12. Gaps of reconstruction along St. Emanuel.
13. Congress Street should be converted back to one-way only.
14. Connect Province Street to Main Street on the I-10 westbound frontage road
15. Move exit ramp from southbound Downtown connectors to Bagby Street to reduce noise in residential area.
16. Do not impact American Statesmen Park.
17. Do not close access to pedestrian trail from Spring Street to Hogan Street.
18. Revise connections to/from Wrightwood Street to southbound exit ramp.
19. Remove right of way near I-10 frontage road and Buck Street.

## RESPONSES

1. Revised design to include an entrance ramp from San Jacinto Street to northbound US 59/I-69..
2. The eastbound exit ramp to Jensen Drive was relocated west to McKee Street area to allow for I-10/I-69 interchanges improvements; added railroad underpasses between the relocated ramp and Jensen Drive to allow for continuous flow.
3. Realigned St. Emanuel Street to accommodate future City of Houston Navigation/Commerce railroad underpass project.
4. Revised Downtown Connector pavement elevations to pass under Dallas and Andrews Street. This not only improves the sightlines between Fourth Ward and Downtown, but allows Andrews Street to be reconnected to downtown as a dedicated bicycle/pedestrian facility. This included redesigning the Bagby Street exit from Downtown Connectors for noise reduction to adjacent Fourth Ward (COH/Downtown Management District/Fourth Ward request).
5. Revised SH 288 Managed Lanes connectors so they no longer connect directly to Chenevert Street (public request).
6. Added pedestrian realms (15 to 17 feet wide) at multiple street crossings throughout the project.
7. Revised Garrott Street and Main Street intersection to minimize impact to Midtown Terrace Suites (Veteran housing).
8. Added connection from SH 288 northbound frontage to Hutchins Street (public request).
9. Reconnected Stuart Street to Hamilton Street (public request).
10. Added left turn bay from Elgin Street to Hamilton Street (public request).
11. Driveway will not be impacted. Access is not blocked
12. Revised schematic to include reconstruction of St. Emanuel Street between W. Gray Street and Commerce to improve drainage system and allow the City of Houston to convert to one-way operations (COH request).
13. Reverted Congress Street back to one-way operations (COH request).
14. Reconnected Province Street to Main Street (public request).
15. Relocated northbound Heiner Street to west side of Downtown Connectors (COH/CHI request).
16. Revised right of way to avoid impact to American Statesmen Park.
17. Confirmed no impacts to existing Heights Bike Trail access between Spring and Hogan Streets Streets (Houston Parks Board request).
18. Redesigned I-45 southbound exit ramp to Quitman Street to restrict right turns onto Wrightwood Street from the ramp and added a second lane at Wrightwood to allow traffic to enter ramp from Wrightwood Street.
19. Removed right of way needs near I-10 eastbound frontage road and Buck Street.

REQUESTS

1. Add a Gregg Street eastbound exit ramp from I-10.
2. Close McKinney Street across the freeway (Councilmember Gallegos request).
3. Convert Walker Street into a pedestrian/bicycle only facility over freeway lanes (Councilmember Gallegos request).
4. Connect Cleburne Street across US 59/I-69.
5. Remove Montrose Bridge reconstruction from plan.
6. Remove impact to White Oak Park.

RESPONSES

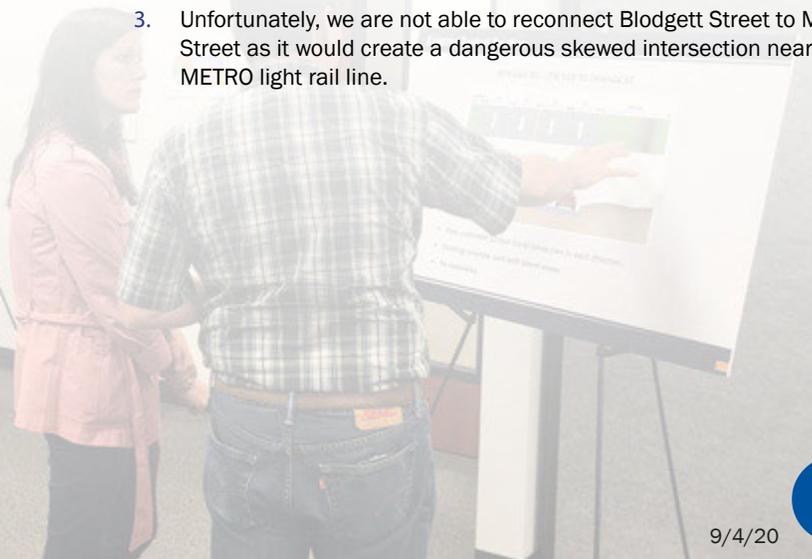
1. Adding this ramp appears to be feasible and will be further explored during the upcoming detailed design phase.
2. TxDOT has no objection to closing McKinney Street over the freeway, but the decision lies with the City of Houston. This can be decided after the ROD and incorporated during the detailed design phase.
3. TxDOT has no objection to converting Walker Street to a pedestrian/bicycle facility over the freeway, but the decision lies with the City of Houston. This can be decided after the ROD and incorporated during the detailed design phase.
4. We have completed a preliminary evaluation and re-establishing this connection appears to be feasible. We will study in more detail during the detailed design phase.
5. Montrose Bridge reconstruction removed from plan.
6. Revised design of the I-45 southbound to I-10 westbound direct connector to avoid the impact to Freed Art & Nature Park (noted in comments received as White Oak Park).

REQUESTS

1. Reconnect Polk Street across the freeway.
2. Reconnect Runnels Street across the freeway.
3. Blodgett Street shown as removed.

RESPONSES

1. One of the unfortunate outcomes of this was not being able to maintain Polk Street as a continuous street between EaDo/East Downtown and Downtown. To restore connectivity in this area, a continuous southbound city street (Hamilton Street) that was previously cut off when the George R. Brown Convention Center was built in 1987, is now restored with the NHHIP plan. Polk Street will connect to this restored Hamilton Street and will allow for continuous flow back to Polk Street by using the Lamar Street overpass.
2. A similar request to connect Runnels Street across the NHHIP near Buffalo Bayou could not be implemented because Runnels would need to be a tunnel to go under the freeway and was too close to Buffalo Bayou. This connection would also block access of Marquis Downtown Lofts to Runnels. The existing connection across the NHHIP will be through the Navigation Boulevard railroad underpass.
3. Unfortunately, we are not able to reconnect Blodgett Street to Main Street as it would create a dangerous skewed intersection near the METRO light rail line.



# SEGMENT 2

## REQUESTS

1. Replace existing westbound entrance ramp from Irvington Boulevard to I-610 and I-45 that was removed.
2. Make a connection from the existing Little White Oak Bayou pedestrian/bicycle trail to a new trail parallel to the west side of I-45 southbound frontage road.
3. Provide opportunity for trail connection under I-45 along Little White Oak Bayou between Moody Park and Woodland Park.

## RESPONSES

1. Added westbound entrance ramp from Irvington Boulevard to westbound I-610 and elevated this ramp over the METRO light rail tracks at Fulton Street to allow for uninterrupted flow to I-610.
2. Reconstructed section of existing Little White Oak Bayou pedestrian/bicycle trail adjacent to the I-45 southbound frontage road between Link Road and Cavalcade Street.
3. The proposed design includes the replacement of the Little White Oak Bayou culvert south of North Street with a bridge; this creates the opportunity to extend the Little White Oak Bayou pedestrian/bicycle trail under I-45 and connect Woodland Park and Moody Park (does not connect today).

## REQUESTS

1. Replace Southbound exit ramp to North Main Street that was removed.
2. Provide access from North Street to the new northbound frontage road.

## RESPONSES

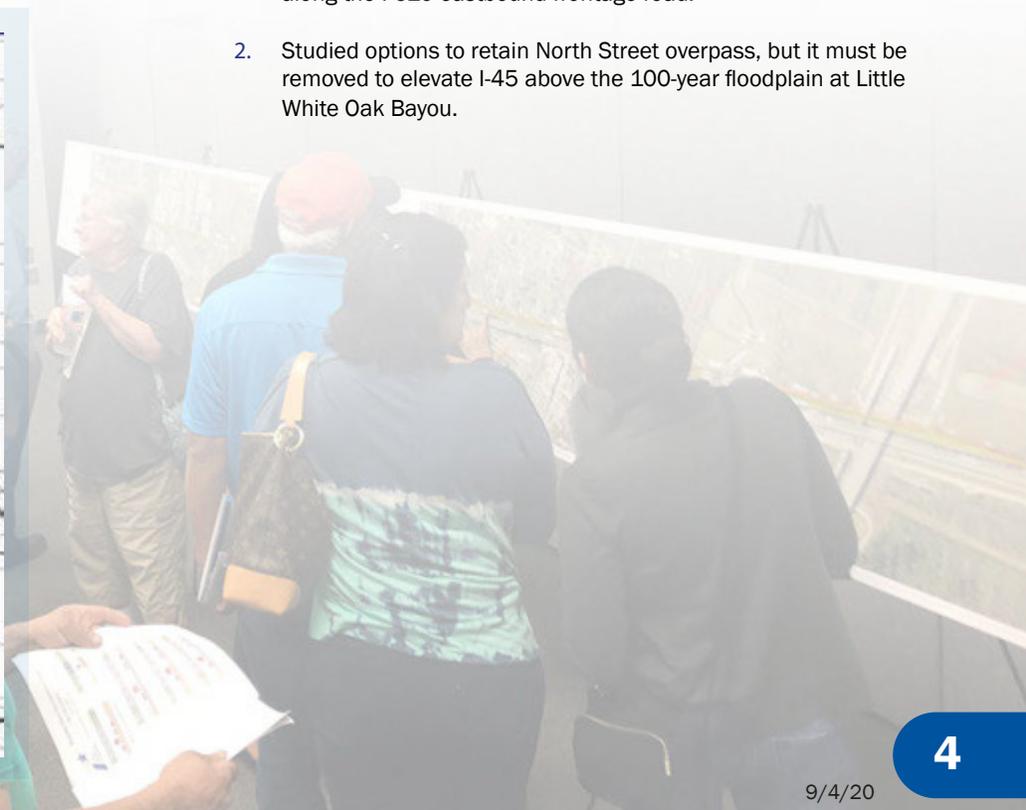
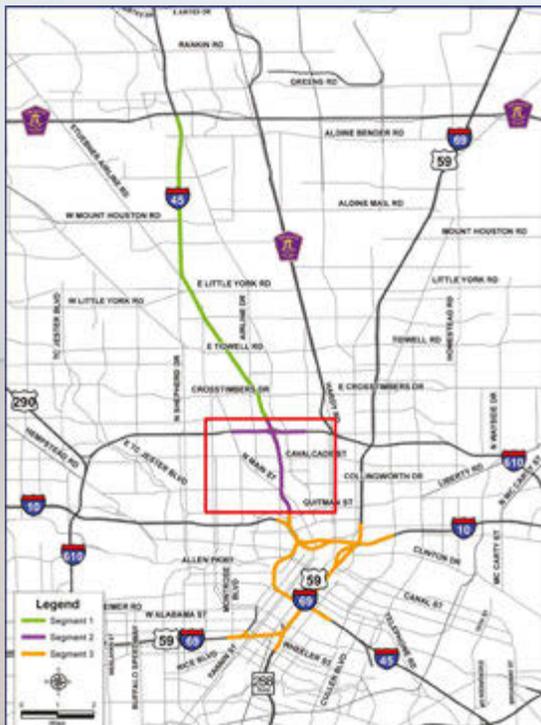
1. Existing southbound exit ramp to North Main Street could not be maintained without additional ROW and closure of Cottage Street to vehicular traffic across I-45. Preliminary design for a southbound exit ramp near Patton Street under review. Adding this ramp will be further explored during the detailed design phase.
2. Revised new I-45 NB frontage road to provide connection to North Street.

## REQUESTS

1. Replace the existing eastbound exit ramp to from I-610 to Irvington Boulevard that was removed.
2. Retain North Street across I-45.

## RESPONSES

1. The existing ramp needed to be relocated farther west as part of the I-45/I-610 interchange improvements. TxDOT studied adding an eastbound ramp overpass of the METRO light rail line on Fulton Street, but doing so would have major impacts to the residences along the I-610 eastbound frontage road.
2. Studied options to retain North Street overpass, but it must be removed to elevate I-45 above the 100-year floodplain at Little White Oak Bayou.



# SEGMENT 1

## REQUESTS

1. Reconnect Blue Bell Road across I-45.
2. Avoid impacts to Unity Spirit Missionary Worship Center.
3. For frontage roads in urban areas: focus on all road users with slow car speeds; use National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide as a reference; and conform to City of Houston's Infrastructure Design Manual and match the existing layout at both ends.
4. Reconfigure design of local network to the new frontage road along I-610 and I-45 on the northeast side of the exchange. Create a two-way T-intersection to Reid Road and extend Melbourne Street to I-45 northbound frontage road.

## RESPONSES

1. Reconnected Blue Bell Road across I-45 to allow for safer circulation from east to west side of I-45.
2. Revised design to avoid Unity Spirit Missionary Worship Center.
3. City streets that cross or connect to NHHIP will follow the City of Houston design standards and Context Sensitive guidelines. NACTO criteria was considered for this project, and as such, high comfort bicycle facilities (known as "pedestrian realms" for the NHHIP) are being implemented in the design where feasible. In addition, TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH.
4. Revised design of I-610/I-45 interchange frontage roads to maintain two-way access to Reid Road and a new connection to Melbourne Street.

## REQUESTS

1. All intersections should be designed for safe crossings and accessibility for pedestrians especially with regard to METRO bus stops.
2. All lanes on city streets and frontage roads should comply with City of Houston's 11' lane standards. Multiple streets have been shown with sweeping, large radius turns; project should minimize these issues.
3. Define which intersections are proposed with traffic signals and all-way stop control.

## RESPONSES

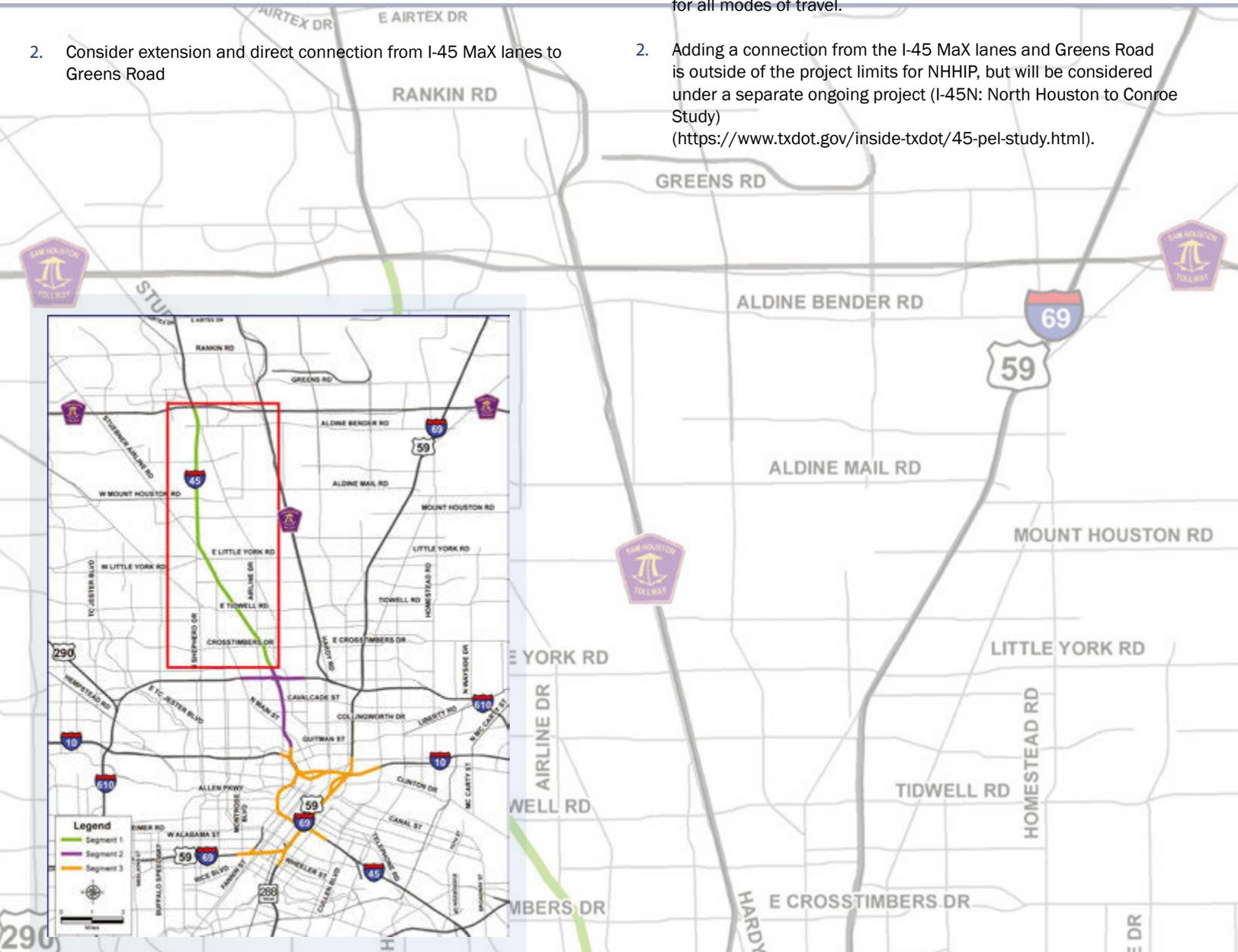
1. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT also coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH and METRO.
2. Frontage road design will accommodate large radius turns and intersections will avoid pedestrian islands. The streets parallel to the freeway in Segments 2 and 3 will follow the City of Houston standards and lanes will be 11' wide. The frontage roads in Segment 1 function as a transition between the freeway and the local businesses and need to retain TxDOT design standards of 12' lanes.
3. Frontage road intersection signalization will be determined during the final design phase.

REQUESTS

1. Airline Drive, Victoria Drive and northbound I-45 intersection should operate safely for people traveling in any mode of transportation.
2. Consider extension and direct connection from I-45 MaX lanes to Greens Road

RESPONSES

1. TxDOT studied the Airline Drive/Victoria Drive/I-45 intersection, but due to the complexity and severe angle of the intersection, it could not be revised without major impacts to adjacent businesses. TxDOT's focus when evaluating this intersection was to enhance safety, and maintain access. Sidewalk and bicycle facilities will be added to this intersection, and detailed during final design, along with the traffic signal design, to ensure safety for all modes of travel.
2. Adding a connection from the I-45 MaX lanes and Greens Road is outside of the project limits for NHHIP, but will be considered under a separate ongoing project (I-45N: North Houston to Conroe Study) (<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/45-pel-study.html>).



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To learn more about NHHIP,  
 scan or click the QR code and  
 watch the Change for the Better  
 video.



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