COMMENT RESPONSE MATRIX

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
1	Thomas	5/1/2017	Project Website	Concerns regarding the rebuild of the North Freeway from the North Loop northward to the North Belt. TxDOT is not resolving "the issue of having a five mile segment of the North Freeway with five through lanes sandwiched in between two segments of freeway that have four through lanes". Extend the five-lane design from FM 1960 south to the loop. If there are ROW constraints, "reduce the managed lanes from four lanes to two, allowing for a fifth main lane in both directions that will flow into and from the already existing five main lanes between 1960 and the Beltway." Every entrance ramp onto I-45 should "have its own auxiliary lane until the next exit; no more merging traffic onto the freeway without its own lane that will last until that lane becomes an exit lane for the next cross street".	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT will try to accommodate entrance ramp auxiliary lanes where feasible.
1	Thomas	5/1/2017	Project Website	Concern that "SH 249/W. Mt. Houston Road [is] becoming a superstreet from the Beltway southward to I-45 as proposed". There should be "one free direct connector from northbound 45 onto northbound 249, as well as one free direct connector from southbound 249 onto southbound 45". Mobility will be a "nightmare" if free-flowing traffic is required to exit and stop at frontage road lights to merge onto another free-flowing highway.	TxDOT is conducting a separate study for the SH 249 corridor.
1	Thomas	5/1/2017	Project Website	Use same pavement grading as used for North Loop West just east of 290 for the entire I-45 rebuild.	TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
2	Bayer, Katrina	5/4/2017	Project Website	The links to the Proposed Recommended Alternative Conceptual Roadway Layouts and Typical Sections May 2017) for Segment 2 bring up the following message Server Error 404 - File or directory not found. The resource you are looking for might have been removed, had its name changed, or is temporarily unavailable. Could you please fix these?	The link was repaired on 5/5/2017.
3	Lahti, Alex	5/4/2017	Project Website	the segment 2 documents listed on this page link to a 404 not found notice. Please repost the material or fix the link. Thank you. http://www.ih45northandmore.com/pub_hear_doc.aspx	The link was repaired on 5/5/2017.
4	Book, John	5/8/2017	Project Website	What will exactly happen to the Elysian St. overpass? It looks like it will be completely removed, but it doesn't state anything about regained ROW space like other roadway removals.	The proposed NHHIP would not impact the Elysian St. bridge reconstruction project.
5	Ray, Brian	5/9/2017	Verbal	So on the segment between downtown and the Beltway 8, why are we putting toll lanes in the middle of the freeway when we already have a tolled alternative that's always clear that we can use for buses? Why not have those lanes opened up to -- as regular lanes? Because, you know, for me as a small business owner, I can't afford a 300-dollar-per-month toll bill just to travel downtown quicker.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
5	Ray, Brian	5/9/2017	Verbal	How come we're -- the regular lanes are not being expanded past four lanes? Because if you look at the Katy Freeway, all the choke points where it's traffic all the time in the regular lanes are where it goes down to four lanes; but when it's above four lanes, to five lanes, the traffic seems to flow a lot better.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	I'm happy we're going to have some new roads. That's great.	Comment noted.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	I cannot understand why we're going to dump the brand-new Pierce Elevated. It hasn't even molded yet. There's no rust underneath it. I don't know what happened there. It could have been half the road.	TxDOT evaluated alternatives that utilized the Pierce Elevated portion of I-45. At various stages in alternatives development, the alternatives that included leaving Pierce Elevated as is or modifying it were Alternatives 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12. Section 2 of the Final EIS documents the analysis of the alternatives. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.

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6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	I don't know if anybody has considered what's going to happen if, during this construction, we do have a hurricane. The last time it didn't work out so well with the highways we have.	During construction, TxDOT will maintain a comparable number of travel lanes as currently exist for through-movements. Use of proposed depressed roadways will be contingent upon drainage improvements being installed and operational first. I-45 Northbound serves as an emergency evacuation route. TxDOT will cause the contractor to develop and submit an emergency evacuation plan for submittal and approval prior to each hurricane season. The plan will address how mainlane traffic of equivalent number of lanes can remain open during an emergency evacuation and how additional dynamic signage may be used to route traffic both through and around the construction limits with consideration how other regional construction projects may impact the published evacuation routes through and around downtown. The evacuation route plan will be updated prior to each hurricane season based on the applicable phasing for that period.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	I hope you-all are including a tremendous lot of pumping systems to keep the water pumped out of the lowered sections of the freeway. What we have now doesn't work very well. 59 doesn't work very well going through downtown. It floods nicely.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	And I -- the presentation of this -- of this business here bothers me that there's no political -- no local political input.	TxDOT has coordinated and continues to coordinate the project with state and local elected officials. TxDOT has facilitated involvement opportunities for the local officials and has addressed concerns and incorporated many of their suggestions into the project.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	Well -- and there's no consideration been given to the people here about, "Gee, wouldn't you like a bottle of water?" so you could be happy here while all this is going on.	Water was avaible at drinking fountains at several locations at the public hearing venue.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	An example of the way things are going right now is, if you live, like I do, out the Gulf Freeway to the south, there is no access to downtown; and you have to -- you know, if you want to try to come into downtown, you have to try to come in on surface streets, you know. It's just kind of, "Well, here it is. We're going to do this to you." You know, it's not -- it's not been done very well politically. I hope it works out fine in the end.	The proposed project will maintain and improve the existing access points from the Gulf Freeway to Downtown. The current project that is under construction to improve connectivity to I-69 from the Gulf Freeway will be integrated with the proposed NHHIP. This project will also improve access to Downtown.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	But I wish you would reconsider destroying that brand-new Pierce Elevated freeway. It's a beautiful piece of freeway, and it could take care of a great deal of your traffic going around downtown. It could be one way and, you know, it could be a divided highway around downtown and there's no reason to destroy that beautiful freeway. It's there. It's already there, and it's at least -- at least four lanes wide for, you know, going around downtown.	TxDOT evaluated alternatives that utilized the Pierce Elevated portion of I-45. At various stages in alternatives development, the alternatives that included leaving Pierce Elevated as is or modifying it were: Alternatives 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12. Section 2 of the Final EIS documents the analysis of the alternatives. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	And I notice somebody -- one of the presentations said it was -- it was a -- it would make a -- give a better view of downtown because that wouldn't be there but, realistically, we do need these roads that we already have and I don't know how -- you know, I know -- I think they said it's going to cost $7 billion. I don't know how much the Pierce Elevated cost, but it's brand-new. I wish you-all would reconsider destroying that. You know, we've already -- we had a brand-new way we could get into downtown and cut off off the elevated -- off the Gulf Freeway that went nicely into downtown and onto -- onto St. Joseph Parkway. That was great, and it was just a few years old. It's beautiful	TxDOT evaluated alternatives that utilized the Pierce Elevated portion of I-45. At various stages in alternatives development, the alternatives that included leaving Pierce Elevated as is or modifying it were Alternatives 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12. Section 2 of the Final EIS documents the analysis of the alternatives. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
6	Jordan, Mark	5/9/2017	Verbal	Well, my comments are -- is there should be a little bit more political influence on some of this stuff. Some of us actually have an input in this city, and right now our city is kind of destroyed.	TxDOT has coordinated and continues to coordinate the project with state and local elected officials. TxDOT has facilitated involvement opportunities for the local officials and has addressed concerns and incorporated many of their suggestions into the project.
7	Slotboom, Oscar	5/9/2017	Verbal	So when this plan was first announced a couple years ago, it had a lot of issues with it in terms of the highway features, so much so that it really couldn't justify the cost of construction; but to their credit, TxDOT and their consultant team has vastly improved the design. They've improved it to the point where it's now worthy of support, and I think it will deliver on what they're saying it's going to deliver. So I'd like to speak in support of the current schematic design, which is on display, not the design which is in the EIS, which is an older, obsolete design. So I certainly would encourage TxDOT and their consultants to continue refining the design. There are opportunities for improvement, which I'll submit separately.	Comment noted.
7	Slotboom, Oscar	5/9/2017	Verbal	As one gentleman mentioned, it would be nice to see this as a toll-free facility, including the express lanes. I just wanted to mention that.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
7	Slotboom, Oscar	5/9/2017	Verbal	Now, when you're spending $7 billion, you want everything to be as good as it possibly can; and there are a couple features of this overall process which were illogical and compromised the standards. One spot is on North Main at Interstate 45, across from the Hollywood Cemetery, where the right-of-way was constricted and the design's been compromised in terms of the shoulders and could also use the extra auxilliary lanes. To widen it there, you would displace an Exxon gasoline station, a McDonald's, and an R&R Jewelry. So it's unfortunate that anybody would be displaced, but the question in my mind is: Why are we compromising this part of a 7 billion-dollar project to save a gasoline station and a McDonald's? So I certainly would hope that could still be reviewed.	The proposed design meets current design criteria and provides an improved roadway facility while minimizing ROW acquisition. Analysis shows the proposed project will improve operations and safety. The proposed project balances needs for freeway mobility and local mobility.
7	Slotboom, Oscar	5/9/2017	Verbal	Also, I had a little issue with the Cheek-Neal Building. That building's a hundred years old. It was never viewed as being historic, until 2015, when it became clear that a deck park was going to be proposed, which, of course, would make that piece of property much more valuable because it would be next to a park. So in 2015, the savvy or opportunistic developer purchased it and also had it designated as a historical site. So now the project has to swerve around that building, also compromising the design standards.	The proposed project meets design standards and minimizes impacts to the property where the Cheek-Neal building is located.
7	Slotboom, Oscar	5/9/2017	Verbal	But, overall, I'd like to say they've done a great job improving the design. This project is worthy of support and to move forward.	Comment noted.
8	Braud, Tom	5/9/2017	Verbal	I'm representing the residents in the area around I-45 and I-10, the interchange that's a part of Segment 3. I would like to make sure that, as TxDOT's design -- or the engineers are designing this interchange, that they're using the latest in abatement -- noise abatement technology. I know parts of I-10 are being construct -- or were constructed using a noise-reduction groove in the pavement. Hopefully, rumble strips are not going to be used. That seems to echo throughout our neighborhood. So hopefully that is no longer a design consideration.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels. This pavement treatment will be placed on all non-elevated structures. Structures such as overpasses and elevated connectors will not have the longitudinal-tined pavement.

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8	Braud, Tom	5/9/2017	Verbal	I also want to bring up the point that I live on Wrightwood; and our residents on Wrightwood, we feel like we're a little too close to the exit on I-45. The traffic is coming off the freeway very fast. It doesn't look like any improvements are being made at the intersection right now, and I'd like to propose that that be considered along with the noise abatement.	The freeway segments cannot be depressed between I-45 and US 59 due to geometric constraints. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. The Near Northside neighborhood was evaluated for potential noise impacts as a result of the proposed design. A number of noise barriers are being proposed adjacent to I-45 along the east right of way to mitigate for noise impacts. Based on the project level air quality analyses, carbon monoxide traffic air quality analysis (CO TAQA) and mobile source air toxics (MSAT) analysis, as well as historical monitoring trends and future modeling projections, TxDOT does not anticipate an air quality impact for either criteria pollutants or mobile source air toxics because of this project. Please see the CO TAQA and Quantitative MSAT technical reports for more detail. Although there is no demonstration that air quality will exceed any health-based standard, there could be odors associated to certain construction activities. These would be expected to be both temporary and transient and construction contractors are required to abide by applicable regulatory requirements regarding such activities. TCEQ has a program to address potential odor complaints by the public (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/compliance/complaints/odor_complaint.html).
8	Braud, Tom	5/9/2017	Verbal	One other comment: The gentleman spoke of the Pierce Elevated. I can see the value of the visibility of taking down the freeway, but it does serve as an exit. I don't mind us rerouting I-45, but it should maybe be considered that we keep part of that. The other part of 45, the section that is now being designed as the entrance into the west side of town, is still elevated. If we're not doing anything to that to avoid the visibility of that, why are we doing something to the Pierce Elevated?	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
9	Houston First Corporation	5/9/2017	Verbal	I'm Peter McStravick, with Houston First Corporation. We represent the City of Houston's performance and convention venues in the city of Houston. First of all, I'd like to say that we support the project. We believe that it expands and improves the mobility for the downtown area and really for the entire region.	Comment noted.
9	Houston First Corporation	5/9/2017	Verbal	The project removes barriers that currently encircle downtown that we believe really restricts and prohibits development in and around the downtown area.	Comment noted.
9	Houston First Corporation	5/9/2017	Verbal	And I would say, fourthly, the project provides us with the opportunity to have a great green space right behind the George R. Brown and Minute Maid as well; and we feel that that is just a wonderful amenity for the region.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
9	Houston First Corporation	5/9/2017	Verbal	Given the project's impact on the George R. Brown Convention Center and also Bayou Place and also Hobby Center, we would like to request that a biweekly meeting be set up with stakeholders between Houston First, the mayor's office, TxDOT, as it relates to the design, as it relates to the sequencing, as well as it relates to the construction during the period of time.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements. TxDOT will continue to meet with and coordinate with the City of Houston and stakeholders during detailed design and construction. The Mayor of Houston has appointed a committee to oversee the potential designs and funding options for uses for the open space areas in Segment 3, and TxDOT will consider its recommendations.
10	Reynolds, Eric	5/9/2017	Verbal	I'm a representative for Faith Tabernacle Church. My question is: What is the forecasted date to start Phase 3, Crosstimbers to Gulf Bank?	The project area between Crosstimbers St. and W. Gulf Bank Rd. is in Segment 1. A construction schedule for Segment 1 cannot be determined until funding is identified.
10	Reynolds, Eric	5/9/2017	Verbal	Also, what is the compensation plan for the relocation of businesses that are leasing? How long would -- how long would relocation assistance be provided as well?	If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
11	Blascon, Francisco	5/9/2017	Verbal	I want to speak about the area between -- right around I-45 and 610. Right now, there's a bottleneck there; and there's about six things I'd like to bring to light.	Comment noted.
11	Blascon, Francisco	5/9/2017	Verbal	One, that I know that they're considering moving some of the exits, which will speed up traffic. Speed-up traffic would create -- raise the noise level, and so that's a concern right now.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
11	Blascon, Francisco	5/9/2017	Verbal	Of course, flooding is -- every time that we have a new addition, it seems to be increasing the footprint; and flooding has become a problem in lots of parts of our city.	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increased runoff associated with additional impervious surface. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies (Harris County Flood Control District and City of Houston) to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties.
11	Blascon, Francisco	5/9/2017	Verbal	I saw where there's bikeways and there's -- but I didn't see any forethought to maybe trains, maybe. I know that's a consideration in some parts of town. So, that, I don't see being addressed.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
11	Blascon, Francisco	5/9/2017	Verbal	And those of us who live there, is there going to be a toll for those -- for riding these new drive areas? Because if it is, some of us don't have much of a way to get out since we live right there.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
12	Leas, Penny	5/9/2017	Verbal	Other people have mentioned and I wanted to mention also: The -- all the talk about the depressed lanes and everything, Houston's 50 feet above sea level; and I can't imagine that they can have enough pumps to keep up with flooding. I mean, we can't keep up with flooding just on, you know, little underpasses and stuff; and if those -- those what look to me like now tunnels get filled with water or -- I don't know. It just seems unsafe.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.

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12	Leas, Penny	5/9/2017	Verbal	And also from a safety perspective, I don't know if this is part of the consideration but I had heard, when I first heard about this, removing the Pierce Elevated, that part of that was a safety concern, you know, if somebody really wanted to harm downtown Houston, but it also seems like they could harm downtown Houston from a tunnel as well.	The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The COH has designated the I-610 Loop as a hazardous materials route. Hazardous material vehicles transporting hazardous materials product must use the I-610 Loop route and not travel through the city.
12	Leas, Penny	5/9/2017	Verbal	Evidently this is not the type of thing that gets brought up for a vote with the citizens, but it seems like it would be something that would be appropriate to be handled that way.	Comment noted.
12	Leas, Penny	5/9/2017	Verbal	Back to the flooding, I mean, the area around Main and Quitman on 45 already floods; and you're talking about putting that underground and putting a pump in.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
12	Leas, Penny	5/9/2017	Verbal	So, I mean, I really like the green space idea, actually -- I think it's beautiful -- but not at the expense of, you know, cars getting flooded out or a whole section of freeway not being able to be used.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
13	Young, Susan	5/9/2017	Verbal	My name is Susan Young, and first I'd like to say how awesome the visualizations were. I serve on the board of the South Main Alliance. Our organization serves the area that includes the Texas Medical Center, NRG Park, Hermann Park, the Museum District, Rice University, and a number of neighborhoods, including Montrose and Museum Park. We are very excited about what we consider to be a visionary project that will make extraordinary improvements in the overall freeway system but also affords amazing opportunities for urban development and that -- some of which are already being well explored and I understand will require partnerships to fully accomplish	Comment noted.
13	Young, Susan	5/9/2017	Verbal	What we ask is something that's very similar to what Peter McStravick asked for; and that is high-level conversations among Metro, the City of Houston, TxDOT, management districts, for us to fully explore the long-range and comprehensive development opportunities that exist, particularly for the segment of I-69 that goes between Spur 527 and SH 288.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements. TxDOT has had several meetings with stakeholders focused on the I-69 section between Spur 527 and SH 288. TxDOT will continue to meet with and coordinate with the City of Houston, METRO, and management districts during detailed design and construction.
13	Young, Susan	5/9/2017	Verbal	That depressed section will be between Midtown and Museum Park, and it has a lot of very important multimodal transportation issues that need to be addressed: for instance, ped and bikeway on the bridges that will be crossing; the possibility of grates separating the redline, where it causes a lot of traffic problems crossing Fannin, San Jac, Main Street; ...	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
13	Young, Susan	5/9/2017	Verbal	... and that there be a cap or at least provision for the footings to provide for a cap that can help redevelopment and provide a great amenity for the area.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
14	Garcia-Beino, Liza	5/9/2017	Written	We really do not need more traffic/smog/pollutions in this city. We need progressive/mass transportation - we are the 4th largest city - we need to come up to times (Utilize our railroads as built). *Highways that were widened are already congested. How many lanes can be squeezed on a highway.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
15	Lowe, Joy	5/9/2017	Written	I am worried Tex DOT will take my union building. I.A.T.S.E Local 51	The facility owned by the local union - International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees - is at 3030 North Freeway. No new right-of-way is currently proposed in this area and the building would not be displaced.
16	Gibbard, Hiram	5/9/2017	Project Website	Is there a electronic format in which I can my opinion on the I-45 reroute? Not everyone can make those meetings. In any event, i will provide some input here.	Additional opportunity for review and comment is available on the project website (http://www.ih45northandmore.com/) .
16	Gibbard, Hiram	5/9/2017	Project Website	What a dumb *** idea. You guys really like to piss away money. In my opinion, one of the coolest views is through that Pierce elevated section of I-45. I can not fathom why a group of people would actually suggest this design. These are the decisions that so easily allow tax payers to hate government entities. You guys really need to abide by the "Less is more" rule. The only reason why you guys would decide to do this is to line some ones pockets and e=in turn get kick backs.	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
17	Goodloe, Greer	5/9/2017	Written	I represent the owner of St. Paul Fire & Marine Insurance Co, of 4555 Airline Drive. This building is currently in the proposed right-of-way expansion at I-45 and Airline. ... All of the fire equipment comes into the building on this side and will greatly affect all tenants and operations. Other major building systems may be affected as well depending upon the square footage required to complete this project.	When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion. TxDOT will utilize fair market value for the property and offer relocation assistance if eligible.
17	Goodloe, Greer	5/9/2017	Written	... We need more information on how the building will be affected and timing of this project.	The property at 4555 Airline Drive is in Segment 1 of the project area. A construction schedule for Segment 1 cannot be determined until funding is identified. TxDOT will notify impacted property owners during final design.
17	Goodloe, Greer	5/9/2017	Written	... Removing a portion or all of the building will also result in a loss of income, among other issues for the current owner. Lease renewals, new leases, etc. will be affected as well.	When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.
18	Kovacs, Sylvia	5/9/2017	Written	Do not need more freeways. We need better public transportation, more rails, etc. where people can leave vehicles at home or close to home. Houston has crappy public transportation. Use existing railroads, have metro rail go further in its transportation.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
19	Large, Monte	5/9/2017	Written	I strongly do not support the relocation to the north of I-10 between I-45 and US 59 and the addition of freeways to stack several on top of each other creating a super freeway as tall as 60' in some areas.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. Additionally, this will bring the freeways to current design standards.
19	Large, Monte	5/9/2017	Written	In 2017, it is a shame that we are adding freeways through the middle of our city, through our residential neighborhood. If the Near Northside were wealthier or more white, I have no doubt that the design would be much different - perhaps similar to the plan for the Pierce Elevated. Please reconsider and treat the Near Northside equally.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design will minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto St. The NHHIP is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
20	Luccia, Paul	5/9/2017	Written	Great Work!	Comment noted.
21	O'Reilly, Kathleen	5/9/2017	Written	We so appreciate the cap feature from Fannin - Le Branch	Comment noted. The structural cap limits in this area were revised after the public hearing to comply with updated federal ventilation requirements. There would also be a structural cap over the depressed lanes of US 59/69 between approximately Main Street and Fannin Street, and in the area of the Caroline Street/Wheeler Street intersection. The revised schematic shows the updated design.
21	O'Reilly, Kathleen	5/9/2017	Written	We would greatly appreciate the left hand turn lanes at Caroline and Wheeler not be added. It doesn't appear that the traffic volumes warrant this, it will require removing esplanade segments north and south of Wheeler. We really want to keep the esplanades intact for greenspace. Thank you for your hard work!	The esplanade will be replaced by a turn lane. Additionally, a highway cap is being planned over this section.
22	Ray, Brian	5/9/2017	Written	Why are there toll lanes being added to the freeway for bus service when there is already a tolled alternative (Hardy Toll Rd) in place that is clear of traffic? I don't want to have to pay extra to drive on 45. I can't $300-plus per month in tolls to avoid traffic for work.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.

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22	Ray, Brian	5/9/2017	Written	Why are no general purpose lanes being added? The current four general purpose lanes are already full capacity. I think we need to add more general purpose lanes capacity for those who can't afford tolls. If you look at the Katy Freeway, the areas with only 4 General Purpose lanes are always gridlocked. The areas of the Katy Freeway with 5-plus lanes always flow better.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
23	Widacki, A.J.	5/9/2017	Email	This project is necessary to improve congestion and replace aging infrastructure. It is also critical to attracting new business and jobs to Houston.	Comment noted.
24	Bradley, David	5/10/2017	Project Website	I was at the public hearing last night at St. Pius HS. Was told that the 3D graphics of the reconfigured highways was available on youtube. I can't find it. Can you please direct me. Thanks.	Information presented at the hearings is posted on the website under "North Houston Highway Improvement Project 3D Visualization of the Proposed Recommended Alternative" (dated May 10, 2017) and is on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUFK6KcBbGA.
25	Acevedo, Luis	5/11/2017	Written	Traveling South on IH-45 the exit on W. Cavalcade St must read: W Cavalcade St/N Main St. Need more exits	Comment noted. The design accommodates as many ramps/exits as is possible.
26	Lasell, Dan	5/11/2017	Verbal	Will I have noise protection at my location, because it's going to be awfully noisy? It looks as if the access leading off the freeway is going to run right in front of my house. It's bad enough now with it elevating further away, but it's going to be much closer.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. For residential areas near Eagle and Austin Streets along the north side of US 59/I-69, the noise analysis indicated that future traffic noise levels would decrease from current levels due to the proposed changes that would depress the main lanes. However, predicted noise levels were still considered a noise impact. Noise barriers (sound walls) were evaluated for this area, but did not meet the reasonable and feasible criteria required for inclusion in the project. Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
26	Lasell, Dan	5/11/2017	Verbal	And is there any reparations? What is the market value - how do they decide what they'll pay you if it's not livable anymore? That was retirement income. I live upstairs, rent the downstairs. But if it's that noisy, I don't know that I'll be able to rent it or want to even live there. So that is my main issue. What impact will it have on me, how close it will be and noisy, access, that sort of thing?	If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process. When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion. The property at 1401 Eagle St. is not within the area of proposed new ROW. Because US 59/I-69 would be depressed near this property (highway is currently elevated), future noise levels are predicted to decrease with the proposed project. Access to the property from Eagle St. and Austin St. would not change.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
27	McGuffey, Barbara	5/11/2017	Verbal	I live in Museum Park neighborhood and I would like to request that the traffic study be reviewed again for Caroline.	A detailed traffic study was conducted for the corridor and included the Caroline intersections. TxDOT coordinated with the City of Houston and Museum District regarding the desired footprint for Caroline St and it was requested that TxDOT maintain the existing median as proposed in the NHHP schematic.
27	McGuffey, Barbara	5/11/2017	Verbal	We would like not to have the esplanade narrowed for a left turn lane if the traffic -- if we can possibly avoid it. We think that for both pedestrian and our Livable Center Study, we would like to have the esplanade to stay the same width as it crosses over 59.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
28	Wang, Thomas	5/11/2017	Verbal	The 288 on ramp, the Toll HOV on ramp that's located -- will be proposed to be located on Chenevert right inside the middle of the neighborhood. I think it's a very bad idea, and it's because the on and off ramp is right next to a school as well. I mean, it just will attract all the downtown people during the rush hours and, yeah, morning and afternoon just to make their way from downtown through Midtown, which is heavily residential area. I think it's just a bad, bad, bad idea because the residents use -- and it's right next to a park so there's a lot of kids playing in the park. There's -- people walk their dogs. So it's just creating all this traffic, just in create -- just potential accidents to occur and create bottlenecks, and also in the daytime -- daylight saving hours in the winter, fall seasons where it gets dark by 5:00, 6:00 p.m., so it's a really bad idea.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
29	Ericksen, Chris	5/11/2017	Verbal	I live at the corner of Austin and Wheeler. And I would like to see the third lane done away with on Caroline and Wheeler. They -- I guess they want to make it a left turn lane to allow traffic to flow to Wheeler. I think only two lanes, as it is now, is appropriate. That way you could allow for more green space. Otherwise, I'm happy with everything else.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
30	Gallegos, Robert	5/11/2017	Verbal	I represent District I, which it's going to have a big impace in regards to EaDo on the East 10. Those are part of the areas that I represent. So it's very important that I hear comments from residents or of the individuals that are actually working these areas as well, so that way I and the City Council and the mayor, we can try to address these issues with TxDOT. So that's why I'm here this evening. And I want to thank y'all for being here this evening. I know after a busy day you would like to be somewhere else, but thank you for staying engaged. And I'm looking forward to hearing the comments.	Comment noted.
31	Mazoch, Dominic	5/11/2017	Verbal	I-45 is going to make three 90 degree bends to -- in this new arrangement. Even if it's up to standards, knowing Houston, those three areas I think are going to be perpetually areas where trucks are going to jackknife, especially if the road gets wet.	The proposed project meets current freeway design standards, straightens and improves some curves, and eliminates traffic weaving. Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
31	Mazoch, Dominic	5/11/2017	Verbal	On the MaX lanes from Quitman to the Beltway, you have a concrete K-wall or jersey barrier. I think you need to in the design process look at some of the ideas that's used on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco and I think Dallas on I-30 east where they use the zipper barrier, in other words, the barrier can move. In other words, in the morning you have more lanes going in, but you still have protection from oncoming traffic. And in the evening, you would have more space going out. And in case of evacuation, you would have more lanes going out. I think that's something that needs to be looked at.	The North-Hardy Planning Studies evaluated multiple combinations of HOV (now MaX) lanes. The result of the studies was that 2-way managed lanes provided the necessary capacity to address the congestion and safety needs in the corridor. More recent traffic studies also support the need for 2-way traffic.
31	Mazoch, Dominic	5/11/2017	Verbal	One point about the Max Lanes I do like is the new ramp proposal for the -- for North Shepard Park and Ride. At the present, to get on to the lane is a 40-year-old remnant of the contraflow lane that we had in the late '70s, and then that was converted into a barrier/HOV lane.	Comment noted.
31	Mazoch, Dominic	5/11/2017	Verbal	Lastly, in your presentation, there's one slide that's a mistake. On your slide, you have a bus in the HOV lane that's black and white. That bus is actually on the 290 HOV lane, not the I-45 HOV lane, so maybe that could be upgraded.	The photo was changed to an I-45 photo following receipt of this verbal comment.
31	Mazoch, Dominic	5/11/2017	Verbal	I still think the idea of keeping some sort of freeway along the pierce street elevated might be a good idea because it takes -- if one part of Downtown Loop gets slammed, you have an escape valve. If you do it, what you have now, you have no escape valve at all to detour traffic.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
31	Mazoch, Dominic	5/11/2017	Verbal	And lastly, where the connector comes into downtown, that's where I-45 used to end on the north end 50 years ago. Maybe -- that connector and then the two north-south streets that used to parallel the Pierce Street Elevated, maybe that should be designated Business 45 with green signs.	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
32	Honey, Jim	5/11/2017	Verbal	About every ten years we have a hurricane that blows through [Houston]. I've had the eyes of three hurricanes come over my house right here and we've got this huge retention pond already just blocks from here. It's called 288, we -- and 59. We total build basements in town. We don't put anything underground because it just fills with water. Flooding is only going to get worse in this town. There's no solution or relief for flooding anywhere in sight. We have a Flood Czar that finally got an office about a month or so ago. I just think what you're building is huge retention ponds. When you did I-10, as I recall, you put it five feet above grade. That was beautiful. That makes perfect sense. Putting all these freeways below grade, people don't evacuate when they're supposed to when hurricanes are coming here. All you're going to do is make death traps for them. All of a sudden they're going to try to get out of Galveston and there's not going to be anywhere to go.	The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation. Adding capacity to I 45, especially lanes that are flexible in operation, such as MaX lanes, would increase the carrying capacity of the roadway, thereby providing more efficient evacuation capabilities. Bringing I 45 up to current design standards would also improve operation and safety during normal and emergency operations. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
32	Honey, Jim	5/11/2017	Verbal	The other thing is this - the current configuration freeways is a ring around Downtown. And as the previous gentleman just stated, there's built-in redundancy to that. If I'm coming up 45 and I hear Pierce Elevated is blocked, hey, I know I can cut over on 59 North, hit 10, and go -- get around town. There's no redundancy in what you're doing now.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
32	Honey, Jim	5/11/2017	Verbal	You're going to have cognitive overload for drivers. Everybody in this room will be accustomed to that interchange, but travelers who are cutting across Texas on I-10, you're going through one single point of failure. You're going to have -- you're going to have to negotiate two major interstate interchanges all in one spot. Now there's a redundancy in time. If I'm coming on 10 first, if I figure out where -- what lane I've got to be in when I've got to go past I-45, and if I'm going to stay on 10, I've got like maybe three minutes before I've got to negotiate 59. Now I've got to do everything all at one time.	The intent of the proposed improvements is to separate the driver's decision points outside of the downtown freeway system, which will reduce the weaving movements and improve traffic flow into and around downtown. An element of this concept includes separating the local and through traffic along I-10. These I-10 Express Lanes will allow for traffic desiring to pass through downtown to do so without interacting with the local movements. This will be supplemented by a signing and driver communication plan to alert drivers of the decision points.
32	Honey, Jim	5/11/2017	Verbal	I think we need to be figuring how to live with less freeways, less vehicles. Smart cars, smart trucks should help us with this greatly. There's no reason for these big trucks to be cruising through our downtown during the day. They should be doing most of their inter -- their city travel at night, not during peak traffic. And that was an interesting point about jackknifed trucks. I think you're just going to frustrate travelers that aren't accustomed to our freeways.	Comment noted.
32	Honey, Jim	5/11/2017	Verbal	We're going to eliminate barriers between neighborhoods. Keeping freeways elevated are never barriers.	Comment noted.
32	Honey, Jim	5/11/2017	Verbal	And we don't need that Pierce Elevated Park. This is a real big spending of money that we just really need to be saving.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
33	Jordan, Mark	5/11/2017	Verbal	I wonder about exits off these freeways. The ones they're building now, are these going to be just fast through lanes to bypass Downtown Houston?	We believe you are referring to the ongoing construction on the southern approach to Downtown along I-45. This ongoing construction is a separate project from NHHIP that will improve the congestion related to the outdated I-45/I-69 interchange. Similar to the new US 290/I-10 interchange improvements that separate traffic destined to I-10 from traffic destined to I-610, this project will separate traffic destined to I-45 from traffic destined to I-69. This project will seamlessly weave into the NHHIP.
33	Jordan, Mark	5/11/2017	Verbal	What effect is that going to have on jobs in Downtown? And how long is Downtown going to be shut down where the jobs are not going to be available? We have a lot of companies that have been running out of Downtown, like Exxon and all that type, running up to the Woodlands and maybe other companies go to Sugar Land and stuff, but how many jobs are going to be affected by this?	The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. During detailed design, construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed. TxDOT will provide safe and efficient connections to and around neighborhoods, including Downtown, during construction for all modes of transportation, including bicycles and pedestrians. TxDOT will provide advanced notice of temporary road closures and traffic detours and will maintain access to properties during construction.
33	Jordan, Mark	5/11/2017	Verbal	And I wonder, who's going to own the toll roads? Who's getting the money? And I -- you know, I'm happy to have new roads, but I agree with the guy that talks about these things.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
33	Jordan, Mark	5/11/2017	Verbal	When you dig roads out that are underground here in this town, they flood. They do it every time. You don't have enough pumps. You might as well -- it's like trying to pump out New Orleans when the hurricanes come. It floods. We see that on I-10 on a regular basis. And they've got these walls where there is no escape. They put up concrete barrier walls so you cannot drive your car up the side of the freeway and get out. I assume you'll do the same kind of thing here.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
33	Jordan, Mark	5/11/2017	Verbal	And righ now I don't see how the southeast -- the Gulf Freeway side of town is going to be served where we can get into downtown easily.	The proposed project will maintain and improve the existing access points from the Gulf Freeway to Downtown. The current project that is under construction to improve connectivity to I-69 from the Gulf Freeway will be integrated with the proposed NHHIP. This project will also improve access to Downtown.
33	Jordan, Mark	5/11/2017	Verbal	And, of course, there's a bit about tearing up the Pierce Elevated, which is a relatively new freeway. It should have been good for another 20 years. They just rebuilt the thing within the last 10 years and it's not even moldy, it's not rusty. There's nothing wrong with it. It's four lanes of traffic, which could be -- you know, to take care of half of the construction for Interstate 45 on this side of town. I wish they would reconsider the deconstruction of the Pierce Elevated, which is a very important part of this town, and be sure that they have enough entrances and exits off of this freeway to allow Houstonians to get to the same places as we've always belonged to because I don't -- I don't see it in the real nice presentation.	TxDOT evaluated alternatives that utilized the Pierce Elevated portion of I-45. At various stages in alternatives development, the alternatives that included leaving Pierce Elevated as is or modifying it were Alternatives 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12. Section 2 of the Final EIS documents the analysis of the alternatives. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
34	Harbers, Scott	5/11/2017	Verbal	I'm a resident here at Midtown. Rather than oppose anything, I would like to endorse removing the Pierce Elevated and returning that property, what is being called excess right-of-way, to regular commercial real estate purposes.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
35	Slotboom, Oscar	5/11/2017	Verbal	I mainly want to speak about the access points in Midtown. But in terms of the overall project, I just want to mention that when this design was first released two years ago there were a large number of technical issues. I would like to thank TxDOT and their consultant team for continuously refining the design. What we have now is much better than the original design. In fact, it's deserving support. I would like to speak in support of the recent design, and it's actually good to move forward as is, but there are some opportunities for improvement	Comment noted.

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35	Slotboom, Oscar	5/11/2017	Verbal	One of [those opportunities] is the Midtown access points. The off ramp to Fannin and the on ramp for San Jacinto are very important access points for a large area. That includes everything in the Museum District, the Medical Center, Midtown and even points quite far west, Montrose over to Mandell. I live on Roseland Street near Montrose and Richmond, and that was where I got on the freeway, at Fannin, and then I got off at San Jacinto or the other way around. So when they refined the design, they had restored -- well, as you know, today they have the off ramp to Fannin and the on ramp to San Jacinto, which were removed in the originial design. And I would like to thank TxDOT for restoring the on ramp from San Jacinto, but we still don't have the off ramp to Fannin. Now, if you want to get to Fannin, you'll have to exit Almeda, go through about three traffic lights, then the road dead-ends at Caroline Street, then you have to go left, then you have to go right on Wheeler, which tends to be congested, and then you're going to have to make a left on Fannin where there's no dedicated left turn lane. This has the potential to disrupt traffic in the area and it will be very inconvenient for motorists. So I would just like to urge TxDOT and their consultants to do everything they possibly can to restor that exit ramp for Fannin going southbound since this will be a great help to traffic to flow in the area.	Thanks again for your thoughtful comments and support during the development of this project. As discussed with you in 2015, TxDOT understands the importance of this ramp and attempted to add the subject southbound Fannin St. ramp to the proposed design, but we cannot get it to fit and meet required design and safety criteria. Understanding the challenges, TxDOT will continue to work with the COH and stakeholders to optimize the traffic operations in the area between the Almeda exit and Fannin.
36	Wang, Thomas	5/11/2017	Verbal	The problem is that to turn past Chenevert and Elgin to turn into the HOV lane for 288 is a big mistake because instead of having the unintentional consequences of diverting traffic from the highway, now you're attracting all the downtown people going to work during the rush hours, going through the neighborhood of Midtown and trying to get on to 288 HOV lane that's located on Elgin and Chenever, and that is actually -- if you guys don't know, the east side of Midtown is 98 percent residents so the Chenevert main road -- you're talking about Chenevert main road is literally all residence area, and people walk their dogs. And then they're also talkin about -- and then right in front of this entrance is the Baldwin Park and then right next to this entrance is a -- is a national school. I believe it's one -- first grade to 12th. And so this is a heavily used facility, park by the residents, and you just get a lot of -- pedestrian use, traffic in that corner, and now you're building -- you're making us the on and off HOV ramp to 288. So what's going to happen is especially -- just imagine this, especially during the fall where you have daylight savings, which is -- you know, it gets dark by 5:00 or 6:00 o'clock and now all of the sudden you get this rush traffic hour going through these residential streets literally trying to flow through that one little entrance, and I think that is a bad, bad, bad idea. Those on and off ramps should be on the feeder of 288 and I-45 and not be put in the middle of a residential area.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
36	Wang, Thomas	5/11/2017	Verbal	And I also want to thank the City Council member that came and Commissioner Ellis' office. And I do -- I was hoping to see Boykins because what I'm talking about is actually in his district, so it would be very beneficial for him to hear this as well.	Comment noted.
37	Laxton, Charlene	5/11/2017	Verbal	And I'm concerned about the impact on quality of life in EaDo in the east end from this project. I think that it will in some ways isolate the east end and EaDo because every freeway now will isolate us from downtown and the rest of Houston. We have a lot of revitalization going on there now. In 2011, when this project began, there were not nearly as many people living there as live there now. And many of our businesses will be lost, our (inaudible). Other things will be lost.	Currently, the freeway in this section is elevated. The proposed recommended alternative would include I-45 and US 59/I-69 as depressed in this section, allowing for the addition of greenspace above portions of the roadways. TxDOT has worked closely with the City of Houston, HDMD, and EaDo to optimize the streets that would remain open. I-45 and US 59/I-69 would be depressed from Commerce Street to Lamar Street, which would remove an existing visual barrier (the elevated US 59/I-69) and help connect east Downtown to central Downtown. Bridges would be constructed across I-45 and US 59/I-69 at Commerce Street, Franklin Street, Congress Street, Preston Street, Texas Avenue, Capitol Street, Rusk Street, Walker Street, and McKinney Street. TxDOT will provide a highway cap over the proposed depressed lanes of I 45 and US 59/I 69 from approximately Commerce Street to Lamar Street. Future use of the highway cap area for another purpose would require additional development and funding by entities other than TxDOT. This configuration would create the opportunity for improved connectivity in the area of the depressed section of the freeway between east Downtown and central Downtown. TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.
37	Laxton, Charlene	5/11/2017	Verbal	As it is, we have the stadium, we have a lot of overflow parking from Reliant and from Dynamo. And so when there are games, we have a lack of parking. I think this will only exacerbate this problem when we have -- lose the parking that is being lost for this.	TxDOT has been coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the Houston Sports Authority (HSA), which owns the parking areas that would be impacted along US 59/I-69. TxDOT would purchase property from the HSA. HSA is considering options, including constructing a parking garage.
37	Laxton, Charlene	5/11/2017	Verbal	I also feel like it will contribute not only construction noise and congestion from that…	The project plans and specifications will include provisions requiring the construction contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems. TxDOT contractors and developers shall comply with local construction noise ordinances. Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of minimizing congestion.
37	Laxton, Charlene	5/11/2017	Verbal	…but I think we would also have problems with the final project, even though it will be recessed, which could have some -- you know, I'm assuming they're going to deal with the drainage, but still even the elevated portions going into that.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
37	Laxton, Charlene	5/11/2017	Verbal	It's -- you know, yes, 69 is -- or 59 is elevated right now, but that is much fewer lanes. You're talking about 20 lanes of traffic feeding in, as well as six lanes, three on each side. That's a tremendous amount of traffic.	Traffic studies for the proposed project showed that in 2011, travel speeds on I-45 (Pierce Elevated) and US 59/I-59 in the Downtown area were typically less than 30 mph. The Preferred Alternative would provide the greatest improvement to mobility by increasing travel speeds around the Downtown Loop System by 20 to 25 mph. The increased travel speeds would be achieved by means of reconfiguring the Downtown Loop System, which would allow through traffic to bypass Downtown via the I 10 express lanes and the I 45 general purpose lanes on the east side of Downtown. Local traffic would have improved access to Downtown.

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37	Laxton, Charlene	5/11/2017	Verbal	I did read something about emissions that said that the emissions would be addressed and would be lessened because cars on wheels are going to have to meet improved emissions standards, but I do think that we're going to have traffic from throughout the U.S. coming through here. And as it is now, we know that many people -- everybody's not going to go out and buy a new car so there's still going to be many trucks, many cars going through there, and you're going to have a high, high concentration of pollution and carbon monoxide and everything in that one area.	The air quality analyses do not assume every vehicle will be new but that vehicle ages in the future will follow similar trends with vehicles ages from the current available data. EPA vehicle and fuel regulations are expected to reduce air pollution based on the historical improvements demonstrated by air quality monitors. See appendix D of the CO TAQA Technical Report for a discussion of EPA Air Quality Trends based on actual monitored data, which demonstrate that between 1980 and 2017, even though vehicle miles travelled increased by 110%, the aggregate emissions of the criteria pollutants (including carbon monoxide) has been reduced by 67%. Federal emissions standards apply in Texas and throughout the country. In addition, the National Near-Road Monitoring Network discussion in Appendix D of the CO TAQA Technical Report indicates that near-road monitors in the proximity of high volume corridors in Houston and around the country are all very far below the applicable CO health-based standards. It is also important to note that the area is currently in attainment or unclassifiable for carbon monoxide and all other criteria pollutants, except ozone. High concentrations of air pollution and carbon monoxide are not expected in this area. See appendix D of the CO TAQA Technical Report for a discussion of TCEQ Trends modeling of CO into the future. Also see the EPA Air Quality Trends and the Air Quality Successes highlighted in this same appendix, which demonstrate the success of federal regulations and local measures in improving air quality.
37	Laxton, Charlene	5/11/2017	Verbal	And I think that the green space will be nice, but it's not funded by this project. They have beautiful artist renderings. They have a picture of what's done in Dallas, but I really prefer to see things in place before we spend $7 billion and really analyze the effect on especially the east end of Houston, what it's going to do to property values, to quality of life, not just the construction, the noise, how we're going to access downtown, how we're going to exit and get on the freeways while this construction is being -- going on.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
37	Laxton, Charlene	5/11/2017	Verbal	There's still a lot of questions that I think need to be answered.	The project website (http://www.ih45northandmore.com/) provides additional materials including maps and schematics.
38	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	5/11/2017	Verbal	I'm here tonight speaking for the Citizens' Transportation Coalition of Houston. I'm the advocacy chair of that group. We are a 501(c)3 all volunteer, non-profit, multimode transportation organization founded in 2004. We first worked on Segment 2 -- or what would be Segment 2 of this project in 2005. Since the project was resurrected since 2011, our organization has submitted extensive written comments for prior scoping meetings for this project, and we think it has been vastly improved since that time.	Comment noted.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	We generally support this very complex project, but we do have some issues that I'll list here. These aren't all of them, and we will support these in our written comments with more analysis.	Comment noted.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	A key position we consistently take is to rebuild the interchanges first. We vote to start with all the interchanges, not just those in Segment 3, and traffic models should be done as if the interchanges had been fixed. This may change the configuration of the lanes.	Comment noted
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	A clear description of source and destination traffic count, such as Bluetooth studies, would help prove up TxDOT's forecasted numbers.	The forecasted volumes are based on the H-GAC's Regional Travel Demand Model. Bluetooth technology was used to perform an origin destination study for the project to identify traffic patterns in the project area.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	The direct connectors into the downtown should be incorporated into the city's complete streets and inner loop traffic studies.	TxDOT has coordinated with COH regarding the design of connection of the direct connectors to city streets, and will continue to coordinate during detailed design. The direct connectors will be designed per TxDOT standards.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	Metering at most access points can improve congestion and safety. We suggest that all access and exit points and how they work be reviewed by the designers of the project.	Ramp metering can be an effective way to manage freeway congestion, but needs to be studied on a case by case basis. Metering at access points (ramp metering) will be determined during final design.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	Our chief concern is that drainage pumps and detention ponds should be financially committed and earmarked at the outset and not subject to diversion as necessary to support the extensive evacuation floodplain and congestion features of this project.	Drainage pumps and detention basins will be included in the cost of the project.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	A key feature of the plan is to foster new economic development. We do not support the destruction of existing economic development.	Comment noted.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	There are significant environmental justice concerns regarding stakeholders in Segment 1, i.e. the north segment.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	Next (inaudible) pavement surfaces should be used in areas adjacent to existing neighbor -- residential neighborhoods. Funds should be earmarked at the outset and not subject to diversion for the DEIS bike and pedestrian features.	TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	Air quality should be marked in accordance with the preferred alternative rather than waiting for the EFEIS.	The FEIS includes updated analyses based on the best information available that includes the preferred alternative.
38	Caul, Carol	5/11/2017	Verbal	Permits, such as the Army Corps of Engineer permits, should be obtained now rather than waiting for construction	TxDOT will obtain all necessary permits for the proposed project, including federal, state, and local permits. The Final EIS documents navigable waters, other streams, and wetlands within the project ROW. Many of these areas would be avoided, some would be bridged, and some would be impacted; however, the project design and drainage study are still preliminary and not to the level of detail needed for permitting. As detailed design is performed, including for drainage, specific impacts and permit requirements will be determined. TxDOT will apply for USACE permits during detailed design. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the regulatory and other resource agencies during permitting, and anticipates the USACE, USCG, and TCEQ would refer to the EIS during permitting processes.
39	Lasell, Dan	5/11/2017	Verbal	My concern is for those of us that are impacted, what will the Texas Department of Transportation do to accommodate us in terms of an adequate replacement value if we have to leave because it's untenable from noise or other circumstances caused by the construction?	Because US 59/I-69 would be depressed near the property (highway is currently elevated), future noise levels are predicted to decrease with the proposed project. Daily construction normally occurs during daylight hours when people tolerate occasional loud noises. The duration for individual receptors should be short; therefore, there are no anticipated disruptions of normal activities. However, the project plans and specifications include provisions requiring the contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work-hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems. TxDOT contractors and developers shall comply with local construction noise ordinances.
39	Lasell, Dan	5/11/2017	Verbal	I'm close enough as it is. And the house next door to me looks as if it's going to be impacted as well as the property across the street, and I don't think I'm the only one. But I really would like to know that TxDOT will help those of us that have to relocate.	If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
39	Lasell, Dan	5/11/2017	Verbal	And I've heard no one mention that, but it is an issue because I have a property that is going to be a hell of a lot harder to replace than what -- the tax value that it's listed at today with the various exemptions so.	When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.
39	Lasell, Dan	5/11/2017	Verbal	Also, Caroline street is just one block away from me. I do hope that they will maintain the esplanade	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
39	Lasell, Dan	5/11/2017	Verbal	… but, again, also the noise factor. Will we have the walls that will prevent the sounds from being so decibelly increased? It's high enough as it is.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. For residential areas near Eagle and Austin Streets along the north side of US 59/I-69, the noise analysis indicated that future traffic noise levels would decrease from current levels due to the proposed changes that would depress the main lanes. However, predicted noise levels were still considered a noise impact. Noise barriers (sound walls) were evaluated for this area, but did not meet the reasonable and feasible criteria required for inclusion in the project. Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
40	Hurgoiv, Jacqueline	5/11/2017	Verbal	We represent the complex at 1301 Chenevert Condominium. And we're just here to say we're a little disappointed of what we've heard today from the way that they're, being TxDOT, is handling the situation. As a family complex, you guys are going to be taking part of our parking. All of our parking is residential parking and it's assigned parking. So on top of that, you're putting us right next to an on and exit ramp. And this on and exit ramp is going to have people coming off of it at, what, 50, 60 miles per hour. Let's be realistic. And instead of doing an entire buyout of our complex, you guys are taking parking from our complex and the complex next to us. And it seems like you guys are trying to take the cheap way out, which is becoming hazardous to our complex.You're also taking our dumpster, which is the only trash service that we have.And you're affecting the entrance -- the only entrance that we have to our complex and our parking. Our 27-unit condos is very concerned with the parking, the garbage access, the safety as well as, the gentleman before me, the significant value and how it's going to be reduced.	The project design was revised to avoid impacts to the parking area and dumpster at this apartment complex.
40	Hurgoiv, Jacqueline	5/11/2017	Verbal	We're concerned about the compensation that we're going to be getting. We're concerned about the safety. And so far -- we look forward to you guys handling the situation better because so far this is not equitable, this is not fair and it's not safe.	The project design was revised to avoid impacts to the parking area and dumpster at this apartment complex.
41	Hernandez, Candy	5/11/2017	Verbal	And the biggest concern of course is the safety of our residents, 27 units. It is actually -- the ramp is actually coming off of 288 and Berry so it really -- it's a very tight ingress to our property. And we're looking at approximately 18 parking lots, including our only dumpster, that is actually entering the only way we've got going into our little complex. It is important not just for our residents but for the safety of our residents to know that we're going to lose that property if this proposal goes through. And I hope that all this proposal will not go through because we're not looking to relocate anytime soon.	The project design was revised to avoid impacts to the parking area and dumpster at this apartment complex.
41	Hernandez, Candy	5/11/2017	Verbal	And that's -- as a realtor, I don't think the property value that was presented from one of your TxDOT is anywhere close to the property value of the community itself. Again, it is the safety of our community and also the property value will depreciate, including the construction, the safety of our children that live in the complex.	The project design was revised to avoid impacts to the parking area and dumpster at this apartment complex.
41	Hernandez, Candy	5/11/2017	Verbal	And also, of course, we're looking at not so much of the construction, the impact of 18-wheelers or any kind of vehicles coming into our street. We are going to suffer if this proposal goes through.	The project design was revised to avoid impacts to the parking area and dumpster at this apartment complex.

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42	Aron, Don	5/11/2017	Verbal	I'm here representing myself. Also, additionally I serve on the Houston Parks Board. I want to thank the TxDOT for your cooperation for many years in regards to parks in Houston and what you're planning in this process as well towards green space. I came today because I'm a property owner that will be affected in what you're going to do on the 610 Loop near Interstate 45. I think this is an interesting process to give citizens, property owners and people that may have an interest or that are affected by what you're going to do.	Comment noted.
42	Aron, Don	5/11/2017	Verbal	I really came up, though, to ask a question, and that is, the part that you're going to take will in effect cut the piece of property that I have in half. I'm a developer. And my question relates to it's so far away in timing, the idea of developing, and then you're coming in five or six, potentially seven years from now to take the property. Is there any process to advance that or are we just to hold off in developing or to wait?	TxDOT considers advance acquisition on a parcel by parcel basis. You may contact the Director of Advanced Project Development, TxDOT Houston District to discuss your property.
43	Melott, Abby	5/11/2017	Verbal	I represent myself. I live in the North Lindale neighborhood, which is between 45 North, Hardy and 610. We're on the north side. And I'd like to tell you that your nice little connectors to avoid the -- where people are going to go from the feeder underneath and they're going to connect up underneath 45 are going to be a huge waste of money, and here's why. It's called the Red Line. Number one, I'm very familiar with how the Red Line works on the feeder. The first problem is the trains in terms of their frequency. They often do one and then another one will come and then the other side will come. Okay. So it's going to be one, one, and then you'll catch the other side. Okay. Rush hour, it's about every six minutes. Otherwise, it's about 15, but it's Metro. Its schedule is not -- it's close.	Light rail operations are the responsibility of METRO. TxDOT has been coordinating and will continue to coordinate with METRO. The design was revised to allow I-610 westbound traffic coming from Irvington St. to bypass light rail at Fulton St.
43	Melott, Abby	5/11/2017	Verbal	Number two, the cars in the right lane cannot turn right to -- on -- right on red. They have to wait for the gate. So the gate is often broken, so that screws up the whole system	Light rail operations are the responsibility of METRO. TxDOT has been coordinating and will continue to coordinate with METRO.
43	Melott, Abby	5/11/2017	Verbal	Number three, the human factor. The train engineer can manually control the traffic lights. So if he doesn't want to stop, that means he can blow through. What that means in terms of the light sequences, it's running north-south, north-south, and it goes through the whole sequence before it lets you go east-west, but remember your Problem No. 1 where you can have trains following and then coming on the other side. It means that you will wait like 10 minutes or more.	Light rail operations are the responsibility of METRO. TxDOT has been coordinating and will continue to coordinate with METRO.
43	Melott, Abby	5/11/2017	Verbal	You're going to have people that are going to do it once, twice if they have a flat learning curve. And so people aren't going to want to do this. So then they're going to start looking for other ways around and they're going to use -- you're going to see all the people migrating over to the Cochran entrance or they're going to switch over and they're going to take it from the other side and they're going to use that. Please put back the Irvington entrance and exits because they really do get used and there is a reason for this.	Revised design does not remove westbound Irvington entrance. The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
44	Nolan, Jacob	5/11/2017	Verbal	I represent a property owner in both the east end and the Fifth Ward. So I wanted to thank Councilman Gallegos for attending this evening. And I'd say that we are supportive of the overall project scope.	Comment noted.
44	Nolan, Jacob	5/11/2017	Verbal	I just wanted to reenforce we're not losing sight of what's happening with the connections to the existing highways in the northeast quadrant of the project to make sure that the connectivity is not diminished. And if it can be improved, that would be desirable.	TxDOT coordinated with the Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority and the East Bayou Civic Club regarding access for the Fifth Ward area. TxDOT developed a revised design to grade-separate Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. All access points to lower Fifth Ward will be maintained.
44	Nolan, Jacob	5/11/2017	Verbal	One idea that I hope will be considered is the addition of a connector from Canal Street to Ruiz in downtown. Currently the last connector over 59 is at Commerce Street. Commerce runs about one mile south and is about four lanes but quickly diminishes down to two. Canal Street is a five-mile-long major connector through the link of Houston down to Houston -- to the turning basin in the Port of Houston and is a major connector for the entire east end. Being able to take that across to downtown, connect to Ruiz Street would afford the east end and Fifth Ward improved access and virtually every on and off ramp as part of this project.	This connector is not feasible because of other existing connections that are being maintained. Additionally, this connection would not be feasible because the geometrics would not work with the new depressed sections of the freeway; would not be able to make the connection.
45	Romero, Bernie	5/11/2017	Verbal	I'd like to understand why are we building infrastructure like highways and expanding them for -- to manage high-density volumes of traffic and people, let's say population growth, over the next 10, 20, 30, 50 years? Why is it not integrated with mass transit? That's probably my question. And I'm sure you guys have thought about -- thought about it, talked about it, but I know in Portland like if I'm going to put a highway down I'm going to put a mass transit Metro line right next to it. They're embedded together. You can go to Germany. You can go in most western worlds and you'll see that they go side by side. And that's -- I mean, the cost maybe is substantively more, but I think thereturn on investment is greater.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
46	Bidgood, Merriann	5/11/2017	Written	Personally I think the proposed project only benefits people that live outside of the loop.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.
46	Bidgood, Merriann	5/11/2017	Written	The disregard and blatant segregation of the residents on the East Side of downtown is offensive! This is another wall to keep people out! All of our local connector streets, such as Runnels, keep getting closed off in the name of progress without a second thought for the people that live nearby.	Currently, the freeway in this section is elevated. The proposed project includes I-45 and US 59/I-69 as depressed in this section, allowing for the addition of greenspace above portions of the roadways. TxDOT has worked closely with the City of Houston, HDMD, and EaDo to optimize the streets that would remain open.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
47	Carpenter, Scott	5/11/2017	Written	The money devoted to this project should be diverted to a subway, train, or similar mass transit program.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
48	Dinn, Amy	5/11/2017	Written	There seems to be insufficient replacement for current downtown destinations exit off I-45 S (Pease/St. Joseph Parkway). These exits are now combined & stay I-45 main lanes which are completely congested. Travel times increase greatly if you have to stay in the main lanes only.	By separating the freeways, this area will have less congestion.
48	Dinn, Amy	5/11/2017	Written	Where is the environmental justice analysis? Is there anything in writing that analyzes displacement or makes allowances for comparable affordable housing in the same general area for these populations?	The 2017 Draft Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report and Section 3.2 of the Draft EIS included an analysis of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to environmental justice populations. The technical report was updated to include input from the continued outreach efforts to EJ communities, organizations, and businesses. The updated analysis is included in the Final EIS. The analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts was updated in the Final EIS (further evaluation of the Preferred Alternative).
48	Dinn, Amy	5/11/2017	Written	Why is the I-45 S approach not video modeled from Scott Street into Downtown? There are significant changes happening here that are not being adequately communicated to the affected communities.	The NHHIP videos prepared in 2017 focused primarily on the main corridors of the project and did not cover all of the extents of the project. The project schematics show the existing facilities and proposed project improvements. TxDOT has discussed the proposed project and answer questions at the public hearing and other meetings with communities. TxDOT has been and is available to provide information and answer questions, at in-person meetings, and by email and telephone.
48	Dinn, Amy	5/11/2017	Written	I like the open space development on the East Side of Downtown as long as it does not interfere with existing light rail lanes. I depend on green line to commute to downtown.	The light rail lines will not be impacted by the proposed NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during design and construction to minimize impacts to existing transit operations.
48	Dinn, Amy	5/11/2017	Written	Why aren't civic clubs included as part of your stakeholders? Have you reached out to impacted Super Neighborhoods?	TxDOT has coordinated with many civic clubs, HOAs, Super Neighborhoods, and other community associations. See Section 8 of the Final EIS for a detailed discussion of stakeholder outreach and public involvement. Notifications about the public meetings and hearings was sent to numerous civic clubs and other community organizations. For example, the mailing list for the public hearing included 61 civic clubs, associations, councils, leagues, and organizations; and 14 super neighborhoods, neighborhood associations, and councils.
49	Hernandez Canderlaria	5/11/2017	Written	As a homeowner TxDOT will be taking our 10 park spots and garbage including our only entrance way to our condo. I feel we are impact. If this project is pass. The traffic construction and speed of others will damage all residents (27). As a realtor and Paralegal(?) the value will depreciate every 27 Resident. There will be Attorney for our small community.	The project design was revised to avoid impacts to the parking area and dumpster at this apartment complex.
50	Hurgoiv, Jacqueline	5/11/2017	Written	We are very concerned w/the proposed planes. DOT is taking our only entrance to our complex and taking residential spots who have purchase those spots w/their condo. They are also effecting our only garbage area, with no solution of where to put it.The residents are concerned for their safety as there will be no parking on the street now and the on/off ramps will be right against our only entrance. As a complex we will be losing value, parking, garbage access, and safety. We would rather negotiate a whole buy out than destroying our property values and parking. If these plans continue we will have no choice but to sue due to massive effects on our complex's value, safety, and parking.	The project design was revised to avoid impacts to the parking area and dumpster at this apartment complex.
51	Johnson, Brian	5/11/2017	Email	The 45 project passing through downtown on the East side of 59.Will all those businesses be bought out between Jefferson and Navigation to make room for the new Freeway?	Yes, the proposed project would result in business displacements on the east side of US 59/I-69 between Jefferson St. and Navigation Blvd. TxDOT will utilize fair market value for the property and offer relocation assistance if eligible. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
51	Penā, Romero	5/11/2017	Written	All of the roads that are street level or under the overpasses that have a tendency to flood. How will we be guaranteed that flooding will not be a problem? What remedial methods will be in place? I have seen these problems in my native city of Monterrey, MX.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
52	Quijano, Nelly	5/11/2017	Written	Traveling South on I-45, the exit on Cavalcade must read: Cavalcade/N Main	Comment noted.
52	Quijano, Nelly	5/11/2017	Written	NOT ENOUGH EXITS on freeways, not conducive for businesses in the area.	Comment noted.
52	Manion, Laura	5/11/2017	Written	Please keep access from Downtown to the East End, otherwise the segment 3 will separate the east side worse than the Pierce currently does for midtown. Please keep the local traffic and communities in mind: please keep leeland or Polk a through street into downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
53	McCoy, Yuhayna	5/11/2017	Written	The elevations show a 15' lane shared between vehicles and bicycles. This creates a safety concern for bicyclists given the speeds on the frontage road. As a bicyclist I would prefer a narrower, but dedicated bike lane - there is no need for a 15' wide dedicated bike lane. If it is not a shared lane it could be 10'. 15' share frontage bike facility - safety concern.	TxDOT acknowledges the concern raised of bicycle safety and in response has coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. TxDOT would note, however, that both the City's executive order on Complete Streets ("Complete Streets do not mean that all streets are identical.") and Bike Plan provide a framework for improving the functioning of bicycle facilities. They do not mandate certain design standards for every street as they relate to bicycles. With respect to NHHIP, the operation of frontage roads is different from segment to segment, and so the incorporation of bicycle design standards will be different depending on location and operation of the frontage road. It should be noted however, that although the bicycle facilities may vary depending on location, TxDOT is no longer proposing an outside 15' shared use lane. Bicycle facilities will be dedicated facilities and will be detailed during design.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
53	McCoy, Yuhayna	5/11/2017	Written	Halls Bayou is one of the bayous where the Bayou Greenways project is planned to construct 10' trails. Space and sufficient clearance and flat structure is needed under this segment of I-45 to allow for future construction for 10' trails. Halls Bayou Trail - Bayou Greenways - allow space for trail to go under.	TxDOT will coordinate with COH during detailed design to accommodate an alternate route across I-45 in this area, if the proposed trail crossing proves to be not feasible.
54	Shilsen, Christopher	5/11/2017	Written	Very happy with current plans.	Comment noted.
54	Shilsen, Christopher	5/11/2017	Written	I would like to see only 2 lanes E Caroline & Wheeler. A 3rd left lane isn't needed.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
54	McGuffy, Barbara & Patrick	5/11/2017	Written	In our neighborhood of museum park, I would like the esplanades on the cap over Caroline & Wheeler north and south not to be narrowed for left turn lanes. Traffic volume do not warrant need for left turn lanes on a four lane street, the esplanades need to be kept at the same width in keeping with our livable center study for green space & pedestrian comfort.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
55	McWhorter, Thomas	5/11/2017	Written	The project, while thoughtfully planned in some ways, will destroy several historic buildings in its path, which could be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.	All historic-age resources in the project's Area of Potential Effects were surveyed, documented, and evaluated for NRHP eligibility. The NRHP eligibility determinations received concurrence from the Texas Historical Commission. The project would result in demolition of three NRHP-eligible properties: The Rossonian Cleaners (3921 Almeda Road), the Readers Distributors Warehouse (1201 Naylor Street), and the Carlisle Plastics Warehouse north building (1133 Providence Street). Section 3.15 of the Final EIS summarizes adverse direct effects, indirect effects, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project to historic resources. The September 2019 Historical Resources Survey Report — Update (appended to the Final EIS) contains a full discussion of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to all identified historic properties in the defined Area of Potential Effects. Adverse effects to historic resources as a result of this project have been minimized with careful planning and will be mitigated. Section 7.15 of the Final EIS discusses design refinements, design-build prescriptives, and mitigation for adverse effects to historic resources.
55	McWhorter, Thomas	5/11/2017	Written	Additionally, the project destroys an entire swath of new restaurants and places of entertainment, which have, after many years of economic downturn in the project area, developed into a vibrant entertainment district. Chenevert, St. Emanuel area.	Businesses that would be displaced may decide to relocate in the area. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
56	Smith, Edgar A.	5/11/2017	Written	I am glad that more lanes have been added to I-45 as it goes around downtown.	Comment noted.
56	Smith, Edgar A.	5/11/2017	Written	I am concerned about the possible removal of the Pierce Elevated. It provides northbound access to Memorial Drive, Houston Avenue, and Allen Parkway. Also, with the city's population growing, I think removal of any capacity or access is short sighted and a mistake. Perhaps the Pierce Elevated section could remain as tolled access lanes? This could provide continued revenue in the long term, unlike selling the right-of-way.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
56	Smith, Edgar A.	5/11/2017	Written	Perhaps the Pierce Elevated section could remain as tolled access lanes? This could provide continued revenue in the long term, unlike selling the right-of-way.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
57	Nolan, Jacob	5/11/2017	Written	Please add an elevated bridge crossing in Segment 3 to connect Canal Street in the East End, with Ruiz Street in downtown. Currently the last crossing is at Commerce Street, however Commerce St. is an inferior collector to Canal St., which is a major collector (5+ miles) for the greater East End, and would afford better access to the new on/off ramps for the 5th ward, 2nd ward, East End, and all neighborhoods there in.	This connector is not feasible because of other existing connections that are being maintained. Additionally, this connection would not be feasible because the geometrics would not work with the new depressed sections of the freeway; would not be able to make the connection.
58	Vidal, Reagan	5/11/2017	Written	I have property in Segment 1. When can I reasonable expect ROW acquisition to begin? Will TxDOT consider voluntary acquisition or early acquisition?	TxDOT considers advance acquisition on a parcel by parcel basis. You may contact the Director of Advanced Project Development, TxDOT Houston District to discuss your property.
59	Wang, Felix	5/11/2017	Written	(no written comment)	Comment noted.
60	Ogg, Teri	5/12/2017	Email	I am a resident on 2713 St. Emanuel St in the 3rd Ward. I attended the I45 plan public hearing last night and have some comments I would like to share with you as my council member. I also provided these comments in writing last night. 1. 288 HOV lane is planned to for major exit/entrance at Chenevert St south of Elgin. I am concerned with the potential increase in traffic through a dense residential neighborhood next to a park. I understand the current 288 project under construction has an entrance and exit to HOV at Holcombe for the medical center and that there already currently exists an exit and entrance ramp for 288 on Chenevert St. It is unclear to me how this might affect Baldwin park, Elgin, and the residents in the area.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
60	Ogg, Teri	5/12/2017	Email	2. I am very disappointed that this very large and expensive plan for our future does not include options for mass transit. The engineer last night explained to me that trains are a Metro thing from the City and this is State/Federal. I was quite disappointed that there was not more collaboration between the two. Mayor Turner has stated that a top priority for Houston's future is to invest in more mass transit options. I see this as the perfect opportunity. Houston does need to fix outdated roads but it does not need more roads. The plan is to expand the HOV lane to 4 across. Why can we not place one train and one HOV lane in each direction instead. The park and ride people could get onto a train instead of using Metro busses on the HOV lane to sit in traffic and potentially get to work even faster! Bottom line....If we are going to spend billions of dollars for a project that will take many years and disrupt countless residents, why not be more forward thinking.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
60	Ogg, Teri	5/12/2017	Email	3.I also use my bike as a mode of transit through the city and walk. I have concerns that the frontage road only has an outside lane of 14 feet for use as the bike lane. This is not safe for travel due speed of car travel and the inability to ride along a seem of sidewalk and street to stay >3 ft from the auto traffic coming off at freeway speeds. It would be safer if there was a wide sidewalk that would be used by pedestrians and bicycles. This will be very important to me since I often take St. Emanuel north on my bike to visit Discovery Green and to connect with Lamar bike lane for the public library and other downtown locations along with the Bayou trail system. Also, since I live off of Tuam and McGowen bridges to cross into midtown, I would feel much safer if the same 10ft wide sidewalks existed here. McGowen is listed as a bike route but it is very unsafe to ride on the street and the sidewalks are too narrow to ride with the pedestrians.	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH.
61	Fortson, Micah	5/12/2017	Project Website	Houston has been flooding a lot in recent years. This plan moves some of the existing elevated roadways to an underground position, especially along the intersection of I-69 and Hwy 288. Does the plan take into account and mitigate potential flooding in the proposed underground areas?	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
62	Manion, Laura	5/12/2017	Project Website	Please do not take down the Pierce elevated but instead keep it as another way for vehicles to travel.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
63	Sandifer, James	5/12/2017	Project Website	I think it is terrible judgment to build any of this under ground level. Everyone knows of the flooding of US59 under bridges of the Montrose Area and the flooding of I10 around Washington Ave. There have been plenty of flooding closures on 288. These highways are primary evacuation routes and to build them under ground is asking for gridlock in a rain emergency. I don't care what your studies show, they have not fixed the above mentioned areas so why add more?	The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation. Adding capacity to I 45, especially lanes that are flexible in operation, such as MaX lanes, would increase the carrying capacity of the roadway, thereby providing more efficient evacuation capabilities. Bringing I 45 up to current design standards would also improve operation and safety during normal and emergency operations. TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The COH has designated the I-610 Loop as a hazardous materials route. Hazardous material vehicles transporting hazardous materials product must use the I-610 Loop route and not travel through the city.
64	Longoria, Marc	5/13/2017	Project Website	I generally like the direction the project is going and I approve of the re-alignment and "tunneling" of most of the highways throughout the downtown area.	Comment noted.
64	Longoria, Marc	5/13/2017	Project Website	My main concern however is for the Woodland Heights and Near North side area, particularly focused on the N Main major intersection. From the N Main intersection, there are zero entry ramps onto I-45 N for drivers wanting to get onto 610 and potentially the Hardy Tollroad further down. A driver must now go through four other intersections north just to get to the first entry ramp under the 610/45 interchange, and in order to get onto 610, must make a substantial drive along both I-45 and 610 feeder roads to go either west or east on 610. A much better approach would be to add an entry ramp right past Cottage St when I-45 is rising up from the tunnel and temporarily reduce the frontage road from 3 lanes down to 2 lanes to allow this entry ramp. Same could be said for an exit ramp on the other side just before Cottage St bridge to allow easier mobility towards the major N Main intersection.	There will be a NB entrance ramp to I-45 north of Link Rd. (south of the I-610 interchange). I-610 E/W will be accessed via the new frontage roads through the interchange. Based on design criteria, there is not enough space to add an entrance ramp to I-45 north of Cottage St. because I-45 would be transitioning from a depressed area/tunnel. Adding an additional exit ramp on the southbound side of I-45 in this area was investigated but did not meet current design criteria for ramp spacing.
65	Quintanilla, Diego	5/13/2017	Project Website	I recently came across segment 3 plans proposed for downtown. So let me get this straight... let's put major highways underground in a city with notorious flooding and put 45 on top of 59 and then I-10 so we can have more confusion and criss-crossing of lanes ... TxDOT, what are you thinking?! Have you not learned anything from the flooding that happens on the low segments of Westpark or 288??	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections. Section 2 of the Draft EIS describes the alternatives analysis process in detail. Following publication of the Draft EIS, the study team considered comments received and the project design was revised, as discussed in Section 2 of the Final EIS.
65	Quintanilla, Diego	5/13/2017	Project Website	Why are we not investing into mass transit systems that can move more people over vast urban areas?! By the time this is completed, it will be outdated at the exponential rate our city and population is growing! Houston leaders and TxDOT would do right by the people if they would stop and look at what other (true) cities of the future are doing in regards to complex transit problems! Bad. Bad. Bad.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

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66	Cisneros, Karla	5/15/2017	Verbal	I represent District H, which will be significantly impacted by all three of the segments. You know, 59, 10, and I-45 will all be affected in my council district. One of the things that I think is important and I didn't hear really talked about is the importance of building capacity on the four MaX lanes for a new use in the future. We may, at some point in the future, want to have Metro going down that; and if we don't think about that at this time, if we don't have the infrastructure, if it's not wide enough or strong enough to hold up a train, it's not ever going to be able to happen. So I'm hopeful that that's part of the consideration, you know, in designing that piece of it, because our needs change; and what we have now isn't going to be good for later. And there's just no way that we can keep adding more lanes of traffic to solve our problems, and so I hope that that's something that's being considered.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
66	Cisneros, Karla	5/15/2017	Verbal	Another concern that I have is about bike lanes and how this is going to work into this whole overall solution. I know right now that the frontage roads have been increased to three lanes and the outside lane is, like, another few feet wider, 3 feet wider, to accommodate a bicycle. That is not an ideal place to ride a bike. You know, a lot of the neighborhoods I represent are people that use bikes to get to work; and I just don't think that's our best option, you know, to put a bicycle in the same lane as a car that's going 50 miles an hour. So I would encourage TxDOT to explore other opportunities. There are some. Along Little White Oak Bayou, there could be a wonderful bike trail that went along there that would be off road and not that far off the highway; but, I mean, just to -- you know, as you're going through and looking at that, I think that's an important thing to consider.	TxDOT acknowledges the concern raised of bicycle safety and in response has coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. TxDOT would note, however, that both the City's executive order on Complete Streets ("Complete Streets do not mean that all streets are identical.") and Bike Plan provide a framework for improving the functioning of bicycle facilities. They do not mandate certain design standards for every street as they relate to bicycles. With respect to NHHIP, the operation of frontage roads is different from segment to segment, and so the incorporation of bicycle design standards will be different depending on location and operation of the frontage road. It should be noted however, that although the bicycle facilities may vary depending on location, TxDOT is no longer proposing an outside 15' shared use lane. Bicycle facilities will be dedicated facilities and will be detailed during design. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible.
66	Cisneros, Karla	5/15/2017	Verbal	I like hearing about the sensitivity to parks and the connections to the bayous; and I hope that we can maintain the connections to the bayous underneath 45, along White Oak near Main Street, you know, connecting the east and west sides of the bayou level.....	The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
66	Cisneros, Karla	5/15/2017	Verbal	… and being sensitive to the archeological sites. I've been impressed with the work that TxDOT has done. The archeologist has done work at the old Frost Town site and Bute Park. So I just plug you for that and just to continue that way.	TxDOT performed archeological studies and completed archeological surveys in several areas of the proposed project. On February 25, 2019, the Texas Historical Commission (THC), in its capacity as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), concurred with TxDOT recommendations that no further work or consultation is required for the surveyed portions of the APE. TxDOT shall ensure that all archeological assessments as well as Section 106 and Antiquities Code of Texas consultation are completed prior to the commencement of construction within the remaining unsurveyed acres of proposed new right-of-way/easements.
66	Cisneros, Karla	5/15/2017	Verbal	And I like the covers. I hope -- I hope that they're affordable, you know, to plant. Is there any estimate from you on what the cost of the buildout would be for them?	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
67	Caicedo, Diana	5/15/2017	Verbal	I work with Council Member Jerry Davis. I've been at the two prior forums, had an opportunity to engage with some of our citizens; but this one is, in particular, important to us because one of the communities in District B that hasn't been engaged in this process of submitting comments has been the 5th Ward community. And I just wanted to make it known that while it -- you might not see it day-to-day or -- we have had several conversations with several of the constituents in the 5th Ward, incorporated those comments. We even went to Austin about three weeks ago and spoke to some of the TxDOT officials. Council Member Davis and myself were there, along with some of the constituents in the District, and conveyed some of the concerns that you-all have. So we are doing work on it. We are listening to you-all. If you have any additional comments, of course, the comment period is until June 27th. Please feel free to reach out to our office. I'm the point of contact for the project, in our office.	Comment noted.
68	Meaney, Robert	5/15/2017	Verbal	So I do appreciate that from [Pat Henry and Darrin Willer] and the effort that you put in, even though we may not agree with everything that's going on on the project. And although we've submitted our comments -- and I think we have a couple of follow-up comments that we're going to be getting with HNTB and TxDOT after this meeting.	Comment noted.
68	Meaney, Robert	5/15/2017	Verbal	Our community in Lower 5th Ward is highly affected by this. We have six entrances and exits in and out of the community, and three of those are being taken away from us. So we're losing 50 percent of our commuting in and out of the neighborhood.	TxDOT coordinated with the Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority and the East Bayou Civic Club regarding access for the Fifth Ward area. TxDOT developed a revised design to grade-separate Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. All access points to lower Fifth Ward will be maintained.
68	Meaney, Robert	5/15/2017	Verbal	One, how are we -- how is TxDOT going to be securing the remainder of the funding for this project -- i.e., committee or vote at the senate level?	The Texas Transportation Commission is responsible for approving funding for improvements to the state highway system. TxDOT Houston District will seek approval for continued funding to complete the proposed project.
68	Meaney, Robert	5/15/2017	Verbal	And, then, two, on the sample park projects that we see, how much infrastructure is being put in place as far as engineering consideration? Are piles being driven prior to these parks being put on top of the land for bearing the weight of these structures? If not, how are we going to be counteracting the heaving process of these piles being driven at a later date; and how will that affect the roads?	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.

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69	Diaz, Alex	5/15/2017	Verbal	I mostly drive 45 and my main concern is, right now, I have four and five lanes -- open lanes for the average person going each way and by the time they get through with this project, all this money, all this time, all the headache for the drivers, I'm still going to have four lanes each way. The only thing we're going to have is four -- I think four toll lanes. If anything, at least give one toll lane up to the average driver.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
69	Diaz, Alex	5/15/2017	Verbal	And, also, to be honest, I mean, from past experience by looking at the old Gulf Freeway -- I've been driving for 55 years. I just hit 70 -- they've been working on that thing forever; and they're going to be working on it forever. I feel on this thing here, you know, they need to just bite the bullet, because when they get through with this project, they're going to be back to the drawing board and trying to figure out how to widen it. They just need to just go ahead and put six to eight lanes open each way and just let it go at that. I mean, we don't need another 45 Gulf Freeway over here on 45 North.	Comment noted.
70	Merrick, Tami	5/15/2017	Verbal	One of the things is the Downtown Management District is working on a 20-year vision plan, and they're looking at connectivity to the east on Buffalo Bayou Park ... So we're hoping that TxDOT will continue to work with the Downtown Management District and Midtown Management District as we look at the master plan for Houston. That is one comment.	TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the Downtown Management District and Midtown Management District during detailed design and construction.
70	Merrick, Tami	5/15/2017	Verbal	The other one, of course, is Pierce Sky Park.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
70	Merrick, Tami	5/15/2017	Verbal	The second one is that the existing HOV lane that dumps down into Franklin right now, the Rail Watch Group is proposing a potential connector of bus rapid transit that could later become Metro rail and we are hoping the foundations are designed to accommodate future Metro rail on that route, because it's the only way we can move massive amounts of traffic, and, again, I think Karla referenced that in her comments.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
70	Merrick, Tami	5/15/2017	Verbal	... And we found out that Metro is also looking at this particular route. So we are hoping that TxDOT will work with them on that particular issue.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible, and when a preferred alignment for future rail has been determined.
70	Merrick, Tami	5/15/2017	Verbal	And then the second one I want to comment on is just the fly ramp connectors. We were looking at some connections to Buffalo Bayou Park from the neighborhoods and the existing bike lanes; and we would like the opportunity to connect what I would call piggyback fly lanes, instead of adjacent to cars that might be below cars in areas where there's potential to that to make the connections for the bike lanes.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
71	Patel, Hasu	5/15/2017	Verbal	I represent the Sleep Inn & Suites and the Americas Best Value Inn. That's the two hotels right there on 45 in Section 2. There's -- one of the exits for when somebody's coming from the north side, the North Main exit is going to be closed; and they have taken the exit towards Cavalcade.It's a long span and when the hotel guests come at my motels, it's going to take so much time and I'm going to lose the business. Not me [sic]. Along with me, the businesses around that area, the North Main area, the businesses are going to lose	TxDOT is coordinating with this property owner to complete advance acquisition of the Americas Best Value Inn property. The Main St. exit ramp is not included in the project design due to design standards; the proposed design will reduce weaving and improve traffic flow and safety. There will be a combined Cavalcade St./Main St. exit that will provide access to the Sleep Inn and Suites.
71	Patel, Hasu	5/15/2017	Verbal	So my request to you guys, to keep that North Main exit where it is right now, the existing one. That is my request right there, as well as the business lost income.	The southbound North Main exit is being moved to avoid ROW displacements to the surrounding area while also meeting design criteria.
71	Patel, Hasu	5/15/2017	Verbal	When construction is going on, my occupancy is going to be at 20 to 25 percent. At this moment right now, 75 to 80 percent I'm doing. That business lost income, do I get from the State? Currently there's 290. I have one of the hotels, and I'm experiencing this kind of economic hardness [sic]. So my request, if anything can be done where business can sustain there continuously, the remaining (unintelligible), so they can pay the property taxes, they can pay the management district fees and all those things. This is my -- one of the requests on that particular plan	Efforts will be made to accelerate/expedite construction, and access to businesses will be maintained.

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71	Patel, Hasu	5/15/2017	Verbal	Second thing, I have one of the hotels right here. It (unintelligible) on the detention pond, which I'm going to lose the location; and there will be no way I can replace that kind of location particular this area [sic]. So if the detention pond can be relocated somewhere else, there is -- that's the way the two hotels can be saved; and we are serving our guests around this area as well as the downtown.	The Americas Best Value Inn at 2536 North Freeway would be displaced due to proposed roadway improvements in this area. The property parcel and others along the east side of I-45 in this area would be impacted by the roadway ROW, and because Little White Oak Bayou is east of the properties, TxDOT is proposing a detention pond on the remainders of some of the properties. The detention pond is not the reason for the business displacement. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process. When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.
72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	I come before you today not as someone who drives a car but as someone who walks and bikes and, if possible, takes public transportation and in some regard, that makes me a bit unconventional in this city, but please hear me out, because there are a lot more of us out here every single day. Now, I'm not a native Houstonian. I'm a transplant. Though I only moved here a few years ago, there's no denying that I'm excited about the future of Houston; but I cannot bring myself to say that I am excited for this project.	Comment noted.
72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	Firstly, I would like to go on record as saying that if this project does move forward, two things must be addressed: One, eliminating Polk Street as a connection to downtown is a mistake. It is a vital pedestrian connection to Discovery Green, the convention center, and the Lamar bike lane.	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.
72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	Two, if the TxDOT is to implement Segment 3 downtown, it must also fund and complete the capped green spaces before moving on to any other segment of this project. You will be responsible for creating this mess. Therefore, you should be responsible for cleaning it up.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	This [*capped green spaces*] needs to be done with the guidance of both public and private entities, as well as local communities.	The Mayor of Houston has appointed a committee to oversee the potential designs and funding options for uses for the open space areas in Segment 3, and TxDOT will consider its recommendations. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	Failure to complete the first will effectively squash any kind of revitalization efforts in EaDo for years to come. Failure is not an option. You see, I live in East Downtown and I work downtown and it's fascinating to watch the way downtown is changing. It's growing. It's densifying. It's becoming a place to live, work, and play, as they say. It's becoming more walkable. And you know what? So is East Downtown.So much has happened to this neighborhood since this highway project was first proposed. It's a young and exciting place to be.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.
72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	Before I go on, I have to ask: In what city and in what decade does a 26-lane freeway belong inside an urban core? Because there are consequences for such proposals, and it pains me to think of what we stand to lose.	Comment noted.

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72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	St. Emanuel Street, arguably the heart of East Downtown, will be castrated. Businesses will be displaced. This is a fact. Little Woodrow's, Kim Son, the ever-popular Tout Suite to the north, to name a few, gone. Some of the very things that draw people to this area will be gone. You will fundamentally change the dynamic of this neighborhood for decades to come.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.
72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	What you are promising is two city blocks of roadway will take their place. I ask you: Have you ever walked across a 26-lane freeway?	Comment noted.
72	Conte, Shawn	5/15/2017	Verbal	We're so focused on how people drive around the city that we've forgotten about the people already living here. It begs the question: If the Texas Department of Transportation had invested in public transportation in the first place, would we even be here discussing this right now?	Comment noted.
73	Quan, Gordon	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm chairman of the East Houston Redevelopment Authority, TIRZ 15. We're directly impacted tremendously by this project. We have the area behind the George R. Brown, the old Chinatown area. As Shawn alluded to, that whole area has been undergoing a lot of redevelopment at this time. I know that we've been in touch with TxDOT regarding some of these modifications, especially in Segment 3 as it alludes to Polk Street.	The proposed project requires new right-of-way between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St. in the EaDo area. Businesses on those parcels would be displaced. The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
73	Quan, Gordon	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm also here to talk about Bell Street, because right now, if you recall, if you cross Leeland heading toward downtown, you get a spur that goes on Bell to get you to downtown. That's going to be gone now, and we're concerned that that area continues to be active. I know that they have some other lanes coming across, but an amendment could be made to allow that to continue. I also know that on Polk, we had to kind of settle for a U-turn lane that goes across later on because of all the traffic coming off the freeway going to Discovery Green and other places. We would hope for better, but that's all we were able to get out of it.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. The Polk St. exit from I-69 southbound is constrained structurally and cannot be revised to allow for the one-way pair. This was evaluated during the design process. The grade separation of Leeland St. at the West Belt Subdivision rail line has been evaluated by Gulf Coast Rail District and would impact many adjacent properties. This option was also evaluated during the NHHIP design process, with the same conclusion; therefore, it is not included in the NHHIP.
73	Quan, Gordon	5/15/2017	Verbal	Two other things I'd like to mention real briefly. I think Ms. Karla Cisneros spoke and Tami also spoke about light rail. I was on City Council when we did the Katy Freeway expansion. Many people came to us and said, "Well, aren't you to provide for a rail system to Katy?" And we said, "Sorry. That's TxDOT, and they did not provide strength enough for rails to be put on that highway when they expanded that." So I hope we can learn from that lesson.	TxDOT has been working with METRO to accommodate light rail within the NHHIP corridor.
73	Quan, Gordon	5/15/2017	Verbal	And then an allusion was made to some of these roads being a toll road, and I don't know. Has that been decided? Do we have those managed lanes being put as a toll road at this time? Do you know?	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
73	Quan, Gordon	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm just wondering about coordination with other authorities. What is Metro doing on this? What is the Harris County Toll Road Authority doing on it? It just seems like people are working in silos, and they should be working together.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible, and when a preferred alignment for future rail has been determined. TxDOT is also coordinating with the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) during the NHHIP development process.
74	DeLeon, John	5/15/2017	Verbal	I live on St. Emanuel and -- right there by Polk Street; but I was just more concerned about the design of what's going on right now, mainly because I saw in the rendering where 45 was elevated above Chartres. It wasn't going underneath -- I'm talking about right behind the George R. Brown Convention Center -- that there's a tunnel that's going to be green space above. Well, I just saw another rendering -- I can't remember where I saw it at -- where instead of going under, they went parallel to 59. In other words, 45 is now elevated above Chartres Street and -- which would eliminate Polk Street from being destroyed. So I just wasn't sure. And the cost of it would obviously be super cheap. I mean, I just wasn't understanding why you elected to go that route.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. Renderings mentioned were previous concepts that were evaluated and found not to be feasible.
75	Strohmeyer, Matt	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm a homeowner over in 2nd Ward. I love living over in the area, but what we're not thinking about is all -- what we are seeing is what it's going to look like in 2040. Most every one of us in this room is going to be retired, if not dead, by that point in time. We're not talking to the children. We are not talking to the millennials that are going to be using this. They're a different generation. They want light rails. They want public transportation. They're not into the buses and the such. We need to be looking for what our children want, not what we're going to be wanting. We're not going to be the ones driving these roads, for the most part.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

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75	Strohmeyer, Matt	5/15/2017	Verbal	You look at other major cities: New York, Chicago. Their populations don't vary a whole lot because they have zoning and they've already been built up. Here in Houston, we don't have zoning. That means that we have a lot of townhomes going up where there was one house. So now we have two or three houses in that amount of space.	Comment noted.
75	Strohmeyer, Matt	5/15/2017	Verbal	Because of that, the population is going to continue to boom; and it's one of those things where you have to think about all the side roads that are going to be affected by this. If you don't have the main arteries being taken care of now, it will be a mess later on.	Comment noted.
75	Strohmeyer, Matt	5/15/2017	Verbal	It's one of those things where we need to be thinking more about our children and not about us.	Comment noted.
76	Talma, Mark	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm an architect. I worked downtown. I do not live in many of the areas that are affected by it. I live over in the Midtown-Montrose area. However, looking at this plan, I'm curious as to whether we have been -- this plan was worked together with urban designers or people who are community planners … because just looking, for example, at the area opposite the convention center, where the highway is being submerged, there seems to be a lot of missed opportunities as far as commercial development as well as the way it [where the highway is being submerged] impacts EaDo/the 2nd Ward/East End area.	TxDOT has coordinated extensively with local government and other local groups. The initial design process involved urban designers.
76	Talma, Mark	5/15/2017	Verbal	I believe that there are a lot more opportunities that, if you're going to spend $7 billion to reroute a highway or submerge a highway or rework the way our traffic system works around the city, that you would want to ensure that it really benefits as many people as possible, that it's not just going to solve the issue of traffic but, more importantly, people's lives, how the city grows, you know, how does this city want to develop over the time -- over time, how does Discovery Green and the convention center want to start to interact with the communities around it, how does future development happen for the city, and perhaps spending a bit more time with those stakeholders, the communities themselves, investing, perhaps, a little bit more money into the overall planning of how these communities will interact with these roadways and how, if you're -- again, if you're going to spend this money, this amount of money, to change these, that it is better not just for the people in the car but for the people living in the communities, for the future of Houston, for the future of downtown; and, essentially, in the end, everyone will win that way.	During the project development process, TxDOT solicited and considered input from the public, agencies, and other stakeholders regarding the planning of the project. Since the initiation of the EIS process in 2011, outreach has included agency and public scoping meetings, public meetings, the public hearing, and hundreds of other stakeholder meetings with community organizations, elected officials, management districts, agencies, businesses, representatives of providers of services to the homeless, property owners, individuals, and others. The proposed NHHIP, as currently designed, accommodates many design changes and features that are a direct result of the coordination with and requests by stakeholders.
77	Cantu, Pedro	5/15/2017	Verbal	To date, I have never received any kind of mail regarding the project, whether it's from legal representation or any kind of authority who's trying to achieve it. Last week was my first time. I heard from a neighbor. The website is good. It's informative. This is the second, third time this project has been revised, I came to understand.	TxDOT has mailed public meeting/hearing notices since 2011 to thousands of stakeholders, including adjacent property owners and others on the project mailing list. Attendees of meetings and commenters who provide mail and email addresses are added to the mailing list for future communications. In addition, TxDOT posts meeting notices in newspapers and via social media.
77	Cantu, Pedro	5/15/2017	Verbal	But I am opposed to something that is a depressed highway below grade. That's my opposition or I wish for different.	Comment noted
78	Perez, Alejandro	5/15/2017	Verbal	As some of the previous commentators spoke up about, I wanted to also emphasize that I am one of the people that would like to enjoy driving through the streets and not having a freeway as a barrier to get in between communities.	Comment noted.
78	Perez, Alejandro	5/15/2017	Verbal	I appreciate the fact this is considered and, you know, that it recognizes a problem with Houston traffic. So I -- you know, I'm excited for this; but I'd also -- like the previous architect mentioned, you know, what is the plans to work with the communities to help integrate this construction project into the city of Houston? It's growing; and it's -- the way it's going right now, I really am having a positive outlook about it.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and other stakeholders during detailed design and construction.
78	Perez, Alejandro	5/15/2017	Verbal	And, you know, I just want to emphasize once again that the bike lanes	TxDOT is coordinating with the COH, METRO, and other agencies to accommodate, where feasible, their pedestrian and bicycle plans into the proposed project.
78	Perez, Alejandro	5/15/2017	Verbal	… and the thoughts of Metro working with TxDOT as an opportunity -- a missed opportunity if not considered right now, that, you know, needs to be looked at.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible, and when a preferred alignment for future rail has been determined.
79	Hopkins, Seth	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm representing Polk and Dowling Townhomes this evening. And, first of all, thank you to TxDOT for your presentation and a lot of hard work that went into what you've done tonight. I'm joining the chorus of people who are trying to save Polk Street. I've lived in East Downtown for about a decade now and for most of that decade, I've either walked to work downtown or I've driven to work downtown, but the one thing that I've had in common is that I've always gone down Polk Street.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
79	Hopkins, Seth	5/15/2017	Verbal	I took -- I started thinking about it and doing a little bit of research; and what I've discovered is, throughout history, the easiest way to destroy a neighborhood is to divide it. And we in East Downtown draw a lot of our strength from downtown and we've had a lot of setbacks through the years, but we've always survived.	Currently, the freeway in this section is elevated. The proposed project would include I-45 and US 59/I-69 as depressed in this section, allowing for the addition of greenspace above portions of the roadways. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to US 59/I 69 between Commerce Street and Leeland Street, which would reestablish connectivity of four streets (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker streets) across US 59/I-69 that was previously cut off when the George R. Brown Convention Center was constructed.
79	Hopkins, Seth	5/15/2017	Verbal	I took the opportunity to introduce an exhibit into the record this evening. This is a copy of the project map. I focused in on the East Downtown area; and I added, superimposed, some data. And what the data shows us is every black street that you see that's blacked off is a dead end. When the Brown Convention Center was built in 1987, we lost four streets connecting East Downtown and downtown; when Minute Maid was built in '99, we lost two more streets; the Toyota Center in 2003, we lost two more streets; and the soccer stadium, we lost two more streets. What we're left with is two connections in a ten-block area. The green one on top is Texas Street, which is one way and has a light rail impeding access. The next connection is Polk Street. It will also go by the wayside if this project as it's currently proposed is passed.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
79	Hopkins, Seth	5/15/2017	Verbal	I like the idea of more capacity on our interstates. I think it's great. I think these guys have done a terrific job.	Comment noted.

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79	Hopkins, Seth	5/15/2017	Verbal	But my one request is: Save this one vital street [*Polk*]. Let us tunnel under it, let us bridge over it, but please keep this important access between our two neighborhoods.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
80	Meyers, Martha	5/15/2017	Verbal	I live in Lindale Park and I currently serve as the president of the Lindale Park Civic Club. I want to thank you, Mr. Henry, because you did come to a meeting in our neighborhood. We have many of the same concerns.	Comment noted.
80	Meyers, Martha	5/15/2017	Verbal	Lindale Park is at the corner of 610 and 45 on the east side. You will be closing our on-ramp onto 610 from our neighborhood and requiring that we go -- if we're headed westbound, we have to cross the rail line at Fulton, already a nightmare. I come through that intersection at least five times a week, and it backs up all the time. We need to over -- to go over the intersection at Fulton. I also can't quite -- it looks like you've moved the southbound exit from I-45 to north of Cavalcade, to use Cavalcade rather than Link; is that correct? That's the southbound exit, but the northbound on-ramp looks like it's south of Cavalcade. So you've kind of cut our neighborhood, which used to be intensely accessible, and really limiting our access. I get it.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood. The proposed project includes a southbound exit to Cavalcade St. that avoids the Link Rd. intersection. There will be a northbound entrance ramp to I-45 north of Cavalcade St.
80	Meyers, Martha	5/15/2017	Verbal	One, thank you, because you've come to many meetings; and I really appreciate your listening. But you're providing options to travelers at the cost of residents. The cost needs to be borne more equally.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.
81	Moreno, Gloria	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm the precinct chair in Precinct 009, which is right here in this area. And I kind of wanted to comment initially to say that I was disappointed on the staff that you have being able to answer questions. Two separate people that I spoke to could not answer questions. So that's why I'm coming to talk to you-all. Hopefully, you-all can.	The design engineers were able to meet with Ms. Moreno and answer several of her questions at the May 15, 2017 public meeting.
81	Moreno, Gloria	5/15/2017	Verbal	The first thing I wanted to know is: Which exits will you have available to get into 2nd Ward and the East End? Currently, we can get in off of I-10 at McKee-Hardy or at Jensen. Nobody can tell me if those exits are going to still be open.	The I-10 eastbound exit to McKee-Hardy St. would remain; the Jensen St. exit would be relocated. Access to the Second Ward and East End area would be available from McKee St. to Rothwell St. to Jensen St.
81	Moreno, Gloria	5/15/2017	Verbal	Secondly, from 59, will they exit at Jackson? Is that going to still be available? Because those are the only three exits.	There will be a US 59/I-69 southbound exit to Hamilton St., only two blocks from Jackson St. The US 59/I-19 HOV lanes will utilize the Jackson St. exit, as exists today.
81	Moreno, Gloria	5/15/2017	Verbal	Now, those people in EaDo, I'm sure you-all are very nice people. However, 2nd Ward is the foundation growth of where Houston started. So we should -- when we talk about de minimis effects, what about the de minimis effect of those people living in Clayton Homes? Right now, there's 296 apartments in Clayton Homes. Thirty-six are one-bedroom, 100 are two-bedroom, 80 are three-bedroom, and 80 are four-bedroom. That's a lot of people that -- I know you-all are talking to the Houston Housing Authority to get these people moved out, but where are they going to go? These are my voters. Why are the electeds not concerned about this? Why is it okay that the de minimis effect is just environmental when the de minimis effect should be on our people and our residents who live in 2nd Ward?	TxDOT has been coordinating with Houston Housing Authority regarding potential impacts to Clayton Homes and Kelly Village. In May 2017, the Houston Housing Authority held meetings with residents to discuss the proposed project and the relocation process. Throughout 2019, TxDOT representatives met with Houston Housing Authority representatives to discuss advance acquisition of property and develop an agreement regarding replacement housing. Actions taken to mitigate impacts to Clayton Homes and Kelly Village are focused on ensuring that displaced residents of both communities are provided with multiple relocation options resulting in minimal disruptions to their lives. This includes eliminating the need to move multiple times, minimizing interruption to current employment and allowing children to remain in the same school district. Additional information is in Section 5.1.2.5 of the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS. TxDOT recognizes the challenges of affordable housing in the project area. In consideration of the impacts of the Preferred Alternative, TxDOT intends to support affordable housing initiatives in those communities most affected. The mitigation is intended to compensate for the direct effects of residential displacements, the indirect effects of potentially contributing to ongoing housing affordability problems, and past and present contributions to recurrent adverse effects. TxDOT will provide financial assistance to neighborhoods to support specific affordable housing initiatives. The eligible initiatives include construction of affordable housing and supporting programs that provide assistance and outreach related to affordable housing. Additional information is in Section 5.9.3.2 of the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS.
81	Moreno, Gloria	5/15/2017	Verbal	My family's been here [*Second Ward*]for over a hundred years. We came in here -- I don't even know how long, but we put the cornerstone bricks there at Guadalupe Church at the brick church. I've been here a billion years.	The Guadalupe Church property would not be impacted by this project.
81	Moreno, Gloria	5/15/2017	Verbal	I love change. It's great that I have tons of condos that are coming to my area. Gentrification is not my thing; but these people are spending 350 or 400,000. How are they going to get to the neighborhood; and, more importantly, how will we get out of the neighborhood? Right now, I work downtown. I get in through Commerce or I go through Preston, just so I can get and finagle my way around Minute Maid and through the county system. What access -- you-all are worried about Polk Street. What about everybody else in 2nd Ward and the East End?	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.

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81	Moreno, Gloria	5/15/2017	Verbal	The last thing is, with regards to your presentation, I can tell that your priority is on those neighborhoods that are coming from 59 North, where you have streets identified and outlined; but if you notice on this, there are no streets identified on the East End. Why? It's not their priority, people. We have to make our communities their priority. We should have been prominently displayed so that we can identify: How are you going to -- how do we exit, whether it be north or south, to get to the East End?	The proposed project would maintain the existing access to the East End from I-69/US 59. The project would also add a continuous southbound street adjacent to I-69 between Commerce St. and Leeland St. to improve access for nearby communities, including the East End.
82	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm the director of the Independent Heights Redevelopment Council. We are located just north of 610, right in the curve by -- 45 is our boundary, east boundary. And some of the concern that we have in the community is not so much the amount of land that's being taken on the side, but is there some conversations happening with Flood Control? Because part of our neighborhood has been deemed in the 100-year floodplain. We also have the 500-year.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. HCFCD will review the NHHIP design plans to confirm compliance with HCFCD's criteria and policies.
82	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	5/15/2017	Verbal	And some of the concern is if there's a buyout of 163 homes in our neighborhood; and when I look at the map and I see the impact north of -- between Tidwell and Crosstimbers...	TxDOT understands that some homes in Independence Heights are identified in a floodplain buyout program. The proposed NHHIP would displace and relocate 27 single-family residences and 138 multi-family residential units. TxDOT's relocation assistance program for the NHHIP will provide the opportunity for residents who would be displaced by the proposed project to relocate within the community i they so choose. Additionally, enhanced counseling and assistance for displaced residents will be available to facilitate the planning and transition associated with the relocation process. This program is outlined in Section 5.1.2.2 Residential Relocation Assistance discussion in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.
82	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	5/15/2017	Verbal	... how are you working with Flood Control to maybe even mitigate some of the things that might happen with the flooding that may even save these homes? And so I'd really like to ask you-all to consider coming to the community, sharing with Flood Control how you might be able to mitigate the loss of homes in the neighborhood.	HCFCD is a participating agency for this project and will also review the NHHIP design plans to confirm compliance with HCFCD's criteria and policies. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. The buyout of homes subject to flooding in Independence Heights is a HCFCD project/responsibility and is not a part of the proposed NHHIP
83	Todd, Ian	5/15/2017	Verbal	I live in -- I guess it's the East End. And I love -- I love moving into the downtown area, and I love the fact that it's growing and that we get to participate in a new lifeblood that's being brought downtown. You don't have to travel outside to have fun anymore. We have the fun right where we're at. And I actually love this plan, too, for the fact that there are some of us that are going really fast on the expressway and there are some of us that want to stop and see the scenes on the sides and I love that idea.	Comment noted.
83	Todd, Ian	5/15/2017	Verbal	However, as we've noted in so many of the speakers -- and I feel like I'm now just adding to your pile -- there are some places that are going to be cut off. This is a blood system. Right? This is just like we would look at a human body. And you've got your arteries; and you've got your capillaries and -- you know, all the way down to the blood in your fingerprints. And we don't want to leave anyone out, because if you do that, you end up having to amputate it, right? You've got to cut it off. And right now, as noted by Ms. Moreno and several other speakers, most of the East End, we only have a few access points and those who want to live downtown and -- you know, contribute to that, but some of them work -- like my neighborhoods, they work out in random parts all over the Houston area. They want to help build up our community there, but they can't do that and keep their jobs and keep that travel if they don't have access.	TxDOT coordinated with the Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority and the East Bayou Civic Club regarding access for the Fifth Ward area. TxDOT developed a revised design to grade-separate Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. All access points to lower Fifth Ward will be maintained. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
83	Todd, Ian	5/15/2017	Verbal	So I think this is a great plan; but I do think that those local connections, those little capillaries and smaller arteries coming off of it need to be connected to those civic groups, to those people to where everyone feels like they've been heard and everyone has an access to the system...	The study team attempted to maintain all existing connections between neighborhoods along the freeways, and to improve connections where feasible. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT has coordinated with the COH, METRO, and surrounding neighborhoods to develop a plan that provides improved highway, transit bicycle/pedestrian, and local street connectivity.
83	Todd, Ian	5/15/2017	Verbal	... because, otherwise, it is only serving the suburbs. It is only serving those who traveling in from out of town. Right? And those of us who live downtown, those of us who probably came tonight are going to be the ones that suffer.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.
84	Manion, Laura	5/15/2017	Verbal	I live in Idylwood, which is a small neighborhood east of downtown. I moved there about four years ago. One of the things I really like about living on the east side is that there are lots of secret ways to get around; and I was really fascinated by the old plans that showed how east of downtown is getting blocked off, you know, first by the George R. Brown and then Minute Maid stadium. So I think it's crucial that we keep as many of those access points into downtown open as possible.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
84	Manion, Laura	5/15/2017	Verbal	But there's another thing that I haven't heard anybody mention yet, which is east-to-west traffic. East of downtown is booming. There are lots of new businesses, which is great; but a lot of us still do most of our shopping, go to the doctor's office, take our kids to school west of downtown. And, to me, it seems absurd that everybody east of downtown has to go north of downtown just to get west to points like Allen Parkway or Memorial.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of Downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times.

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84	Manion, Laura	5/15/2017	Verbal	While it would be great to have the Pierce Elevated as a green space, I think it really needs to be preserved to serve the east-west traffic without having to go all the way north of downtown. Right now, the east side does not have anything comparable to Allen Parkway; and we really need something like it.	Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times.
85	Dominguez, Mariano	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm a resident here just north of Saint Arnold's. And maybe about a year and a half ago, I think, there was a meeting down at Jeff Davis High School, which is now Northside High School; and how that happened, I'm not too sure. But, anyways, there were some things that I was looking at that was going to affect my right-of-way [sic] to work and to-from and areas that I commute; and there was a lot of areas that were cut off. Like, the Quitman, it's now -- I can see there's now an entrance going to the freeway in the Quitman area. There's also some other areas that I was proposing, I requested; and those things have changed also. So it kind of concerns me now that I see there are some more people here. They are seeing that there's more areas that are cut off for them as well. So I'm wondering how the engineering is being looked at and how it affects the people.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
85	Dominguez, Mariano	5/15/2017	Verbal	And I have my children, also, that's going to be -- they're going to U of H; and they're staying in this area here as well. They love this area; they don't want to move; but the concern is for them, as well, as far as how they're going to be traveling in the future. One of the people that was requesting also saying about they're not going to be wanting to look at what the plans are today, how they're going to affect them in the future.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district.
85	Dominguez, Mariano	5/15/2017	Verbal	So my concern is -- also is the flooding, you know. The last time, I was told there was going to be pumps and backup pumps and backup pumps to those; but where is the water going to? I mean, it's not going maybe to the Buffalo Bayou; but we already know what Buffalo Bayou turns into in the flood sections, right? So my concern on that is: Is there more designing engineers putting thought into that? Because a lot of these changes are being done by the people that live in this area.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
85	Dominguez, Mariano	5/15/2017	Verbal	So I'm not, you know, for this -- the highway the way it is now. I remember when the 59 changed, and it didn't fix the traffic area. So I guess the spaghetti mess we're going to be having there is not going to make any difference either.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Traffic studies for the proposed project showed that in 2011, travel speeds on I-45 (Pierce Elevated) and US 59/I-59 in the Downtown area were typically less than 30 mph. The Preferred Alternative would provide the greatest improvement to mobility by increasing travel speeds around the Downtown Loop System by 20 to 25 mph. The increased travel speeds would be achieved by means of reconfiguring the Downtown Loop System, which would allow through traffic to bypass Downtown via the I 10 express lanes and the I 45 general purpose lanes on the east side of Downtown. Local traffic would have improved access to Downtown.
86	Holzer, Robin	5/15/2017	Verbal	I'm here as a person who bikes around our city and rides transit. I drive, too. I want to start by saying thank you to Pat Henry and the TxDOT team and to Darrin and the HNTB team, because over the years, they have been super responsive answering questions.	Comment noted.
86	Holzer, Robin	5/15/2017	Verbal	The first is there are several places where there are cross streets of this section -- of the various sections that will be bridges or maybe they'll be underpasses or maybe they'll be overpasses, but they're going to be reconstructed as part of this project. This is the time to make sure those crossings are wide enough to be complete streets, to not just be two lanes each way for vehicles but to go ahead and include the 8 feet or 9 feet that would allow for a full-width protected bicycle crossing on those bridges. Get that right now.	TxDOT has worked closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segment 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. Another matter, TxDOT acknowledges that the segment does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavy retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan.

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86	Holzer, Robin	5/15/2017	Verbal	The flip side of that is there are many places where there are access roads or parallel frontage roads that will be alongside the new highways; and now would be a great time to downsize those and make them calmer, neighborhood friendly streets that people are comfortable getting in and out of the adjacent businesses, and not super-fast highways, right next to the highways.	TxDOT has worked closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segment 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. Another matter, TxDOT acknowledges that the segment does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavy retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan.
86	Holzer, Robin	5/15/2017	Verbal	A corollary to that is I urge you guys to work with the City to model the whole traffic network. It seems like there's been modeling of how the freeway network is going to work, and I can't tell that there's been any modeling of where those interfaces are going to go for the City's local street network. It would great if we could look at that holistically to make sure we're building a system that will work.	TxDOT worked closely with the COH during development of the proposed recommended alternative to ensure the freeway and local streets would function as an integrated system. The local street network adjacent to the NHHIP was modeled as part of a separate traffic study, which was reviewed by the COH.
86	Holzer, Robin	5/15/2017	Verbal	The third thing I want to repeat I heard somebody say it earlier, but we urge you to coordinate with Metro. Partly, there's an opportunity for future high-capacity transit -- for example, the inter-Katy line that Metro voters approved in 2003 -- that could connect from the east-west existing rail lines to the Northwest Transit Center, where it looks like we're going to have high-capacity high-speed rail in the future; but that's got to cross through this project.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible, and when a preferred alignment for future rail has been determined.
86	Holzer, Robin	5/15/2017	Verbal	And so making sure that we do this project in a way that that future rail link works would be great.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
86	Holzer, Robin	5/15/2017	Verbal	Also, coordinate with Metro's local bus network. Streets like Polk are really important.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
86	Holzer, Robin	5/15/2017	Verbal	And then the last thing I would say is there are wonderful lid parks proposed. In the schematics back there, it shows them [greenspace caps] being cut up and divided up with U-turns at every block, it seems like, that don't leave very much in the way of usable green space. And so I would urge you -- where -- Mark got away but our wonderful guy from Gensler, who talked about including urban designers to make sure that the lid parks are minimizing the crossings of them and being designed to be an intact, usable amenity for the neighborhoods that they're going to serve on either side, so that they're accessible on foot, accessible on bike, and really something special to come out of the project.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in this area and support a future open space option TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
87	Bard, Laura	5/15/2017	Written	Would favor public rail for expansion before increase in car traffic. Like current pattern at our house much better than last pass!	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
87	Bard, Laura	5/15/2017	Written	Please put sound walls at Alma. Noise is so loud already and elevation of road is rising, with respect to current so it would increase volume.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. Between Houston Avenue and White Oak Drive, along the west side of I-45, noise barriers are proposed to mitigate for predicted traffic noise impacts.
87	Bard, Laura	5/15/2017	Written	Also would sound walls deflect any particulate matter pollution?	Barriers such as sound walls can dilute concentrations of transportation-related pollutants such that, downwind of a barrier, they are typically lower than they would be in the absence of a barrier. Regardless, the area is designated attainment/unclassifiable for particulate matter (PM), the air quality evaluation for this project does not demonstrate that a PM impact is probable, and future modeling projects reductions in PM over time even assuming increases in VMT over the same period. TxDOT will comply with all regulations related to protection of air and water quality.
88	Basset, Ebony	5/15/2017	Written	With the addition of this new highway construction/build it will very much **NEGATIVELY** affect access to my home. I use exit 770B everyday, as well as taking San Jacinto to I-10, both Pease and Jefferson to gain access to I-45. This will negatively impact the EADO neighborhood.	Though the freeways would be reconfigured with the proposed project, the accesses mentioned in the comment would be maintained: -Exit 770B (I-10 westbound exit to Jensen) would be relocated to west of McKee with access to Jensen provided via Rothwell St. Rothwell St. would be grade-separated under the railroad so that eastbound traffic would not have to cross the tracks at-grade. - An eastbound entrance ramp would be provided for access to I-10 just west of McKee. - Access to/from I-45 would continue to be provided via Pease St. and Jefferson St.

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89	Brackmon, Adam	5/15/2017	Written	Why not depress the northern portion of downtown freeways the way that the east (between GRB and EaDo), south (Pierce Elevated removal), and west (over Buffalo Bayou)? Lower the freeways below grade and add possible cap on top.	It is not feasible to depress these sections. Below grade would require more ROW and cause significant impacts and displacements. Also, Buffalo Bayou would parallel the depressed section and would cause drainage and flooding concerns.
89	Brackmon, Adam	5/15/2017	Written	It is ludicrous to add such a tall above-ground freeway in a historic neighborhood that will adversely affect the Near Northside. This is modern day racism. No doubt plans would be different if the Near Northside were Whiter and Wealthier. Shame on TxDOT.	The proposed project minimizes additional ROW from the Near Northside. The proposed realignment of I-10 was constrained by existing railroads and a historic district. I-10 in the area between North Main Street and Walnut Street is currently elevated. The proposed NHHIP provides generally the same local street connectivity and accommodates the City of Houston's plan for connecting San Jacinto Street to Fulton Street. With the proposed recommended alternative, North Main Street, Naylor Street/San Jacinto Street, McKee Street, Hardy Road, Elysian Street, and Jensen Drive would have connectivity over the freeways. To the north of Downtown, the proposed elevated lanes along the realignment of I-10 would increase the visual barrier between Near Northside and Downtown neighborhoods, visually disconnecting Nea Northside and the future Hardy Yards development from Houston's central business district. Efforts have been made to maintain existing greenspaces and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential green spaces. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.
90	Broussard, Matt	5/15/2017	Written	Please post the additional cost of adding structural cap to the sections with potential for parkland in sections 2 and 3. Residents would be more likely to be interested in raising money for landscaping. Cement structural caps would be a harder sell to raise locally. What is the cost of structural caps?	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
90	Broussard, Matt	5/15/2017	Written	Also, what changes are being made to Spur 529, if any?	I-69 south of and including Spur 527 is being evaluated by TxDOT in a separate study.
91	de Hoyas, Carlos	5/15/2017	Written	(Against) Closure of Irvington on ramp and off ramp	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
91	de Hoyas, Carlos	5/15/2017	Written	Neighborhoods of Lindale Park, Nottindale & Melrose will be choked and forced exits (going North of 45). Cavalcade & Crosstimbers - already high traffic areas & metro rail	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
91	de Hoyas, Carlos	5/15/2017	Written	Fulton Street & Metro rail under 610 is heavily traveled and not traffic friendly now	The design was revised to allow I-610 westbound traffic coming from Irvington St. to bypass light rail at Fulton St.

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91	de Hoyas, Carlos	5/15/2017	Written	Those businesses and home owners currently exiting Irvington would have to exit Cavalcade (North) and taking off ramp prior to Fulton and Metro bottleneck and horror traffic	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
91	de Hoyas, Carlos	5/15/2017	Written	-Closure of Irvington Blvd off ramp would force not only residents of mentioned neighborhoods but businesses to travel through neighborhoods and rightaways -Large trucking companies (southeasten freight) would have to travel through mentioned neighborhoods (residential)	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood. TxDOT is proposing a storm water detention area at the existing Love's Truck Stop, which would displace the truck stop and should reduce freight and other truck traffic in the neighborhood.
91	de Hoyas, Carlos	5/15/2017	Written	Off ramps or on ramps which include Fulton St would be detrimental to residential neighborhoods & businesses	In response to community comments relating to traffic congestion in this area, the design of the proposed Irvington Blvd. to westbound I-610 frontage road/entrance ramp has been modified to elevate the frontage road over the METRO light rail line along Fulton Street.
91	de Hoyas, Carlos	5/15/2017	Written	Repeat - any traffic deviated toward Fulton & 610 will be the death of neighborhoods & businesses (keep Irvington off ramps & on ramps)	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood. In response to community comments relating to traffic congestion in this area, the design of the proposed Irvington Blvd. to westbound I-610 frontage road/entrance ramp has been modified to elevate the frontage road over the METRO light rail line along Fulton Street.

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92	Duke, Virginia	5/15/2017	Written	Need to keep existing Irvington Blvd. exit and entry ramps. Need ramps over metro rail at Fulton crossings.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
92	Duke, Virginia	5/15/2017	Written	How will overflow of detention ponds effect current streets and neighborhoods?	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increased runoff associated with additional impervious surface. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies (Harris County Flood Control District and City of Houston) to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
92	Duke, Virginia	5/15/2017	Written	Build "urban space" during construction (i.e. "cap) in segment 2.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
92	Duke, Virginia	5/15/2017	Written	If removing North St. overpass - connect neighborhoods to avoid construction delays later	To elevate I-45 above the 100-year base flood elevation in the vicinity of the Little White Oak Bayou crossing, the North Street bridge must be removed. N. Main St. will be the nearest street (to existing North St. bridge) to cross I-45 and will have pedestrian-bicycle accommodations. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. Any trail will be constructed by entities other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of a proposed trail. TxDOT will continue to evaluate the design of frontage roads, which will be further refined during detailed design.
93	Garcia, Jason	5/15/2017	Written	Keep Jenson/Mealson/Gregg open and/or build over railroad tracks on McKeey/Nance. We need to consider all residential development & the midway property that is supposed to be next town & country plaza. This will increase traffic and we can't be caught by trains or close another exit.	Proposed access improvements include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade.
93	Garcia, Jason	5/15/2017	Written	I'd rather make Houston more walkable; that will take cars off roads.	Comment noted.
93	Garcia, Jason	5/15/2017	Written	Invest in expanding metro rail out to suburbs. Build Metro rail on top of the HOV lanes to park n ride.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
94	Handfelt, Ian	5/15/2017	Written	Please include Metrorail into the design or at least the option to extend rail along I-45. Not doing so would be a major missed opportunity.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
95	Hayslid, Mary	5/15/2017	Written	Concerned about the noise… its already to load. Please put up a sound wall to help with the noise and pollution. Plus it would be really nice if you did it before construction.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. Between Houston Avenue and White Oak Drive, along the west side of I-45, noise barriers are proposed to mitigate for predicted traffic noise impacts. In addition, longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels. The timing of noise barrier construction (prior to or during roadway construction) would be at the discretion of the construction contractor. TxDOT will comply with all regulations related to protection of air and water quality.

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96	Le, Anne	5/15/2017	Written	Tout Suite/The Annex HTX has worked so hard to contribute to the city & build up not only East Downtown, but to the entire Minute Maid District, BBVA, George R. Brown, Toyota Center visitors as well as all of Downtown. Our building has so much history and has served the positive growth of EaDo's residential and business community. PLEASE consider & explore other options.	The proposed project ROW in the area of the subject building is as narrow as possible. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process. TxDOT coordinated this property and others nearby with the SHPO and consulting parties including the City of Houston Historic Preservation Office; the property was determined not eligible for NRHP-listing and there is no historic district in the area. While it may be a community asset, the property is not considered historic by TxDOT or SHPO.
97	Manion, Laura	5/15/2017	Written	Please improve access from east end to downtown & Allen parkway/memorial area. We are losing too many throughways.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of Downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times.
98	Manion, Laura	5/15/2017	Written	Please keep Pierce elevated to serve local traffic from the East/Southeast to the west & vice versa.	Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times.
98	Manion, Laura	5/15/2017	Written	East and south residents need better access to Allen Parkway/Memorial than in this current proposal.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of Downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times.
99	Martinez, Sandra	5/15/2017	Written	Add as much green space and parkland ASAP around the affected areas. Adding more usable space for parks would make neighbors more available to support your project.	Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
100	Muniz, Issac	5/15/2017	Written	I would like for the Jensen exit to be further studied. Currently we can access Jensen exit without encountering rail road tracks. Per design, exit would be pushed further west and an at grade railroad crossing would be encountered which would make access to our neighborhood miserable. Can below grade crossing be accomplished?	Proposed access improvements include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade.
100	Muniz, Issac	5/15/2017	Written	Also heading westbound, will at grade crossings be designed to pump >2 year event, <100 year event? Exiting underpass usually floods, with removal of at grade crossing, only one alternate would remain which is through Lyons and area would bottleneck. Please advise on design of storm sewer in this area.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
101	Perkins, Luther	5/15/2017	Written	We need more exits and entry way for our subdivisions. We have to go through some bad areas to get to our houses with this project.	We understand you live in the Address is 314 Sydnor Street. The existing access to your subdivision will not change with the NHHIP. In fact, we are proposing to improve the Nance/Jensen interesection and adding a section of missng eastbound frontage road between Gregg St and Waco St to improve local circulation and access to the freeway system.
101	Perkins, Luther	5/15/2017	Written	We need a direct exit to get Clinton St. off of Jensen.	City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston. Additionally, the railroad tracks and ROW in the vicinity, an exit to Clinton Dr. from the proposed project is not feasible.
102	Peters, Patrick	5/15/2017	Written	I agree with Council Member Cisneros that the MaX Lane should be designed for future integration of Metrorail and a better integration of safer bicycle lanes.	TxDOT has been working with METRO to accommodate light rail within the NHHIP corridor. Converting the MaX Lanes to light rail would remove the ability to maintain HOV and bus operations; therefore, a separate structure is being considered. Bicycles will not be allowed on the MaX lanes or main lanes. Bicycles will be accommodated on the surface streets in the project corridor.
102	Peters, Patrick	5/15/2017	Written	I am very anxious to see how this traffic improvement project can be the catalyst to enhance park space at UHD's bayou frontage.	Comment noted. At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
103	Ruple, Reid	5/15/2017	Written	Seems like a huge waste of money to add toll lanes. Where are the added free lanes? TxDOT already has right of way for Pierce Elevated. Double deck that and double capacity without buying so much additional land.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
104	Shotwell, David	5/15/2017	Written	Need to maintain or add exits for all the areas an also plan how much traffic will use ramps and how all traffic in neighborhoods will get to ramps and traffic will be handled.	We understand you live in the Address is 335 Sydnor Street. The existing access to your subdivision will not change with the NHHIP. In fact, we are proposing to improve the Nance/Jensen interesection and adding a section of missng eastbound frontage road between Gregg St and Waco St to improve local circulation and access to the freeway system.
105	Sullivan, Esmar	5/15/2017	Written	Please lower the proposed freeways between I-45 and US 59 on the north side of Downtown (I-10 and 45). The noise and pollution will adversely affect the Near Northside. You are moving the free way, which it already loud, closer to my house. At the very least, install sound and odor mitigating elements.	The freeway segments cannot be depressed between I-45 and US 59 due to geometric constraints. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. The Near Northside neighborhood was evaluated for potential noise impacts as a result of the proposed design. A number of noise barriers are being proposed adjacent to I-45 along the east right of way to mitigate for noise impacts. Based on the project level air quality analyses, carbon monoxide traffic air quality analysis (CO TAQA) and mobile source air toxics (MSAT) analysis, as well as historical monitoring trends and future modeling projections, TxDOT does not anticipate an air quality impact for either criteria pollutants or mobile source air toxics because of this project. Please see the CO TAQA and Quantitative MSAT technical reports for more detail. Although there is no demonstration that air quality will exceed any health-based standard, there could be odors associated to certain construction activities. These would be expected to be both temporary and transient and construction contractors are required to abide by applicable regulatory requirements regarding such activities. TCEQ has a program to address potential odor complaints by the public (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/compliance/complaints/odor_complaint.html).
106	Tran, Sandy	5/15/2017	Written	We are on the edge of the expansion near EaDo with all four of my businesses. At 2001 Commerce St. adding over 2.5 million dollars of improvements in the last 3 years dedicated to bring people together through food and venue and co. shared workspace. My partner and I are native Houstonians and have worked hard to make these projects come to life. This project will devestate our neighborhood and our loyal customers who travel to dine with us.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.
107	Unknown 1	5/15/2017	Written	Major concern how light rail will be impacted, especially at a major transit center - wheeler station - where Metro passengers transfer to/from light rail to connecting bus routes. Many city service workers use this transit center to reach places of employment to downtown Houston and the Texas Medical Center. They do not have alternative mode of transportation at their disposal or are traditionally faced with limited household budgets. Even a 6 month disruption of critical routes to/from work create huge burdens for time challenged, fiscally fragile work force.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
108	Unknown 2	5/15/2017	Written	Please provide translation or interpretation of the invitation/announcement to request translation/interpretation services (the announcement, while greatly appreciated, was only made in English, which might go unheard or misunderstoodby a non-English speaker). It would also be helpful to have signs in Spanish about language options. Thank you for having equipment for language accomodations. I hope more people are able to know that is to them in order to remain engaged and informed.	The announcement about simultaneous audio translation was made in both English and Spanish at the May 9 and May 11 pubic hearings. We apologize for not making the announcement in Spanish at the start of the May 15 meeting. There was information about the translation services at the sign-in table and at a table where the audio equipment was distributed. At future events, we will post improved signage about translation options, and ensure a verbal announcement is given in Spanish. The presentation and all handout materials provided at the public hearing were available in both English and Spanish. Additionally, TxDOT had Spanish-speaking staff available at all meetings to assist with translation needs.
109	Unknown 3	5/15/2017	Written	A recently move into the northeast downtown area for several reasons: 1) ease of getting into the main highways from either side (N, S, E, W) 2) continual growth. While I am excited about making the area more vibrant, we ought to consider the flow and accessibility for the residents inside the loop. We have very few entrances and blocking them could really detriment the commute of thosands of people. Additionally, it may ___ a ___ for development and for others to come to the area and grow.	The study team attempted to maintain all existing connections between neighborhoods along the freeways, and to improve connections where feasible. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT has coordinated with the COH, METRO, and surrounding neighborhoods to develop a plan that provides improved highway, transit bicycle/pedestrian, and local street connectivity.
109	Unknown 3	5/15/2017	Written	I-10 access to Downtown specially is already very congested. I cannot forsee how closing avenues would help.	Taking through traffic off I-10 will relieve congestion.
109	Unknown 3	5/15/2017	Written	Please consider funding of public transportation rather than expansion of roads. As a younger generation would love to be able to commute from Downtown to the suburbs and __.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.
110	Valentine, Andrea	5/15/2017	Written	Losing three access points is unacceptable, especially given the growth in the area.	TxDOT coordinated with the Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority and the East Bayou Civic Club regarding access for the Fifth Ward area. TxDOT developed a revised design to grade-separate Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. All access points to lower Fifth Ward will be maintained.
110	Valentine, Andrea	5/15/2017	Written	I haven't heard or seen plans how METRO/bike/parks are going to be taken into account or added to our neighborhood.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH, METRO, and other agencies to accommodate, where feasible, their plans for enhancements in the project area.
110	Valentine, Andrea	5/15/2017	Written	Haven't heard anything about improving our area or way of life locally, only for those who come into the city.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
111	Vargas, Theo	5/15/2017	Written	As the GM of a thriving local business, Ive truly been amazed on how much EaDo has truly flourished, from other businesses and our own. This projected projectwill take away the heart of our community and will put EaDo at a dissadvantage and will take away a sense of community we've all worked so hard to build.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.
112	Yokubaitis, Kevin	5/15/2017	Written	The Segment 3 proposal is not favorable to residence who, like myself, need quick access on to I-10 and 69. I live in lower 5th ward. The Jensen-Meadow-Gregg exit is a direct exit ramp into my community. This exit is being deleted. We NEED these exit, entrance ramps.	The Jensen St. exit cannot be maintained in its current location due to safety concerns. The exit would be relocated and grade-separated at railroads to provide unimpeded flow. Additionally, TxDOT will evaluate adding an I-10 east-bound exit to Gregg St. during detailed design.
112	Yokubaitis, Kevin	5/15/2017	Written	This entire project is only favorable to those people commuting outside the City, pay taxes outside Houston! Please reevaluate local residence and local redevelopment, 5th ward, East Downtown. We are shut out.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.
113	Kim, Jong	5/15/2017	Email	What is more important to the people traveling to, living, and working in segment 3? Decreasing the time of travel or improving the quality of life of the people living and working at the affected areas of segment 3? The current proposal feels like it favors the car versus the people that live and work there. I would like to see an option B where the quality of the current highway in segment 3 is improved, but maintains its current footprint as not to negatively impact the urban grid and rate of urban growth of affected areas.	TxDOT agrees that this project represents a huge opportunity that will not come around again soon. Therefore, TxDOT took extra care to ensure all interested and potentially affected parties were engaged in this project from the early stages. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. TxDOT developed a comprehensive public/stakeholder outreach program and conducted/attended meetings with elected officials, neighborhood associations, management districts, and others during project development. The project design has been developed in consideration of the input received to minimize impacts within the study area. TxDOT will continue to evaluate opportunities to refine and minimize impacts during detailed design.
114	Braun, Elizabeth	5/15/2017	Project Website	I am opposed to the current plan to discharge northbound 288 HOV traffic on to Chenevert. That traffic will run through an established townhouse neighborhood, past a popular city park with playground, jogging track, and community events. Noise and safety will be a problem, creating a one-block wide strip of residences caught between 288/69 and the ramp. Rediculous! On-street parking is already at a premium in this dense neighborhood, so the loss of parking on Chenevert will impact the surrounding blocks. Let the 288 HOV exit ramp feed traffic onto the 69 northbound feeder road (Chartres St.) or on to Almeda or Hutchins south of 69	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
115	Brown, Hayley	5/15/2017	Project Website	As a resident of the Midtown area near the 288 Chenevert St exit, I support keeping the exit as it currently stands. However, converting or expanding that exit would create an excessive amount of traffic directly by a park near a series of homes and I oppose any such plans.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
116	Engle, Justin	5/15/2017	Project Website	There needs to be highway connections for I-45N and 610 E/W from Northbound freeders (section II). Per the current plan, there is no way for the Heights and Near North side community to access I-45 or 610 from N. Main through north of 610.	One of the primary benefits of the project is that TxDOT is able to incorporate frontage roads through the I-45/I-610 interchange that do not exist today. This will allow for bike/pedestrian traffic to safely pass through the interchange versus having to use the indirect routes of using the city street grid system (Fulton, Crosstimbers, Airline, and Cavalcade). The proposed project includes a southbound exit to Cavalcade St. that avoids the Link Rd. intersection. There will be a northbound entrance ramp to I-45 north of Cavalcade St. There will be a NB entrance ramp to I-45 north of Link Rd. (south of the I-610 interchange). I-610 E/W will be accessed via the new frontage roads through the interchange. Adding additional entrance ramps in this area was investigated but did not meet current design criteria for ramp spacing. Access to the Near Northside would not be eliminated. The exit ramp was relocated to west of Fulton St. to meet current design standards, and would still provide access to Irvington St. The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
117	Hildebrandt, Dian	5/15/2017	Project Website	Concerning the proposal of 288 HOV on and off ramps at Elgin and Chenevert-we have lived here 18 years and worked each of those years to make this area a neighborhood. It was a crime infested, dirty uninhabited area and park before 1999. It is now alive with residents who pay taxes and have invested time and money to make this a neighborhood. PLEASE consider this and DO NOT increase traffic by our park and school. Please do not add the 288 HOV lane ramps in our neighborhood.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
118	Holloway, Michael	5/15/2017	Project Website	I need to think about this…before I comment	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
119	Murphy, Britney	5/15/2017	Project Website	I do not want an exit/entrance ramp on to 288 near a park or school.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
120	Peto, Ulrike	5/15/2017	Project Website	In my opinion it is a very bad idea to put an on/off ramp off 288 on Chenevert which runs through a residential area. Surely there must be a better solution. Put your thinking hats on, Gents. Thanks.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
121	Rajkotwala, Farid	5/15/2017	Project Website	I would like to voice my concern and express displeasure to the idea of turning the current 288 exit/offshoot onto Chenevert Street in midtown Houston into an HOV entry/exit lane in the future. Chenevert Street is a heavily traveled pedestrian street in an almost completely residential part of midtown. Chenevert Street in midtown off the 288 exit has a school (Houston Academy for International Studies) that borders it, a heavily used historical park (Baldwin Park) that is immediately adjacent to it, and many homes that require parking ability off that street-all of which would seriously suffer in quality of life and valuation of the neighborhood due to vehicle traffic. Additionally, the currenty traffic is already more than the road can handle and it's still not safe. This is NOT the way to go about intelligent design of transportation by TxDOT or any other entity involved.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
122	Smiley, Arthur	5/15/2017	Project Website	Segment 3 of this project has been described as the best way to speed traffic around downtown Houston. However, the best way to speed traffic around downtown Houston is for some of that traffic to not go near downtown. From the north, I-45 should be routed east along 610 until it reaches I-45 on the southeast side. Any roadway expansion should occur on the combined I-45/610 E where TxDOT already owns virtually all of the right of way needed for road expansion.	Multiple studies were conducted to determine traffic patterns and destinations within the region, including using I-610. The results of the study showed that destinations inside the I-610 loop still require a north-south facility to support the traffic demands.
122	Smiley, Arthur	5/15/2017	Project Website	The old I-45 through downtown, including the Peirce Elevated, should remain in place as I-45 Business District. This would save money and avoid the construction of an underground canal on the east side of downtown.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
122	Smiley, Arthur	5/15/2017	Project Website	I really am curious as to what your projections are for the number of people who will drown annually while trying to drive their cars through floodwater in the underground section of your preferred routing.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
122	Smiley, Arthur	5/15/2017	Project Website	I think sending all commercial traffic (headed for I-45S) from I-45N and I-69N east along 610 until it reached I-45S today would vastly improve rush hour traffic flow into downtown in the morning.	I-610 is and will remain the expected commercial and hazardous materials route; however, not all large trucks are commercial and many will continue to come into Downtown for local deliveries, pickups, etc.
122	Smiley, Arthur	5/15/2017	Project Website	If you just have to reconstruct all the highways north of downtown, you should wait until the Harris County Flood Control Disrict has straightened out the bayou to reduce the potential for flooding in the area.	TxDOT is aware of HCFCD's studies and is accommodating the bypass channel footprint in the design of the proposed NHHIP.
123	Tran, Chris	5/15/2017	Project Website	I object to this proposed project. The area on Chenevert st where the proposed project will be is a high residential area with many people using Elizabeth Baldwin Park. An HOV ramp will bring additional traffic to the community and it will make he park less desirable during high traffic times. I would vote against this proposal.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
124	Walwyn, Bryan	5/15/2017	Project Website	I live right off of this ramp. I think it will be very dangerous to continue having traffic zoom in and out of this 288 ramp. There's a school zone there that isn't even recognized until cars have passed the school. It's already as unsafe as it can be!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
125	Busker, Candace	5/16/2017	Project Website	I want to encourage you to find an alternative to your current plan of having an HOV from/to 288 enter and exit downtown Houston on Chenevert at Elgin. This is a primarily residential street (at this location) and is between a school on the east and a small, well-used park on the west. It feeds directly into a narrow, tree-lined (80+years old) street of residential properties.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
126	Cohen, David	5/16/2017	Project Website	As a resident of Stuart Street, which is adjacent to the proposed 288 on and off-ramp, I have serious concerns about how you plan to accommodate a multi-fold increase in traffic on Chenevert as it comes into Midtown. There is already significant morning rush hour traffic on Chenevert and it's currently only an off-ramp. The addition of an HOV lane will likely exacerbate this. How will this major impact be mitigated? What will likely happen is that drivers will get frustrated at the traffic build-up caused by the stoplight at the Chenevert/Elgin intersection and then use my street as a detour making it nearly impossible for us to enter/exit our driveway. This will also increase the likelihood of traffic accidents in this area. Lower Midtown is a residential neighborhood. I don't see how there's even enough land area to make this plan feasible.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
127	Goad, Brian	5/16/2017	Project Website	I am very opposed to this street improvement for the off ramps at 288. This will destroy the neighborhood feel for chenevert and cause a property value drop to all the residents because of the noise. The increase traffic will increase road noise and harm the neighborhood. This will only cause increase traffic issues that result from such a large volume increase in traffic. I am opposed to these HOV lanes.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
128	Hildebrandt, George	5/16/2017	Project Website	The plan to route the on- and off- ramps for the 288 HOV lanes through Chenevert at Elgin is a very bad idea. Chenevert is a largely residential street (and not very wide) at that point. The school and the park ensure that children and school kids and always present. The neighborhood would not be able to absorb the increased traffic that would result. The 288 HOV on- and off-ramps must be moved to another location. Thank you	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
129	Mulligan, John	5/16/2017	Project Website	I think this project is a big waste of money.	Comment noted.
129	Mulligan, John	5/16/2017	Project Website	Automated vehicles are on the horizon and once you take the human factor out of driving, a lot of the current traffic issues should be minimized.	The proposed NHHIP includes managed lanes on I-45 that will be for use by high-occupancy vehicles such as buses and other vehicles with more than one passenger. These lanes can be used in the future by autonomous vehicles.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
129	Mulligan, John	5/16/2017	Project Website	A better way to use $7 billion would be: 1) Determine problem areas that flood and develop smaller projects to fix those specific sections of road. 2) Maintain the existing freeway infrastructure. 3) Invest in preparing the city to take advantage of automated vehicles.	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high-capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area.
129	Mulligan, John	5/16/2017	Project Website	However, if the current project does get approved, here are a few things to consider: 1) Access to the covered area/ green space at Main St was extremely limited. Consider including in your design access points for pedestrians to cross the access road to get out that space	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
129	Mulligan, John	5/16/2017	Project Website	2) The South St neighborhood entrance to 45N merges very quickly with the traffic on the 11 OE to 45N transfer ramp. Please make sure to consider the distances allowed for vehicles to merge to avoid creating major pinch points.	The proposed project design considered existing conditions.
129	Mulligan, John	5/16/2017	Project Website	3) The rendering didn't show the space under Quitman being used. Please make sure not to fill in that space in a way that causes flooding to the homes on either side of the freeway near there. If anything, it should be used to increase water capacity for the bayous.	Proposed roadway drainage facilities would permit conveyance of the 100-year flood without causing major impacts to the main lanes of the proposed roadways, streams, or adjacent properties. Fill placement in the floodplain would be mitigated with equivalent floodplain storage in the vicinity of the proposed project.
129	Mulligan, John	5/16/2017	Project Website	4) The Main St intersection needs to be reviewed. The current design makes it a 5 way junction because of Houston Ave. Traffic is always backing up with vehicles trying to go from Main St heading South to I45 heading North. Did anyone look at crossing Houston Ave over I-45 and merging it with the access road on the East side of 45? The covered section begins very close to the teardrop/ horseshoe shaped part of Houston Ave. By crossing it over, you can simplify the traffic intersection at Main St and you won't have northbound traffic from Houston Ave blocking Main St. Right now, traffic gets backed up and vehicles on Houston Ave that want to access 45N have to right turn onto Main and then immediately be in the left lane to turn left onto the 45N feeder.	It is not feasible to cross Houston Ave. over I-45 as this would directly impact Hollywood Cemetery due to the need for additional ROW along the northbound frontage road. This extension would need to terminate near Cottage St. and would negatively impact intersection operations. TxDOT will work with the COH during the design phase to optimize the Main Street/Houston Avenue operations.
130	Myers, Bart	5/16/2017	Project Website	By turning the 288 Chenevert St. Exit into an on/off ramp for the Hwy 288 HOV lane is completely unacceptable. It will turn a quiet neighborhood into a dangerous area. Midtown has come so far in the last 10 years ... do we want to reverse that progress? Property values will fall. With all of the pedestrians in the area, how many people will end up dead, or badly injured? VOTE NO! Figure out a more practical way, perhaps directly into downtown, bypassing the residential areas. Thank you.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
131	Nguyen, Andrew	5/16/2017	Email	Thanks for putting together the presentation to give further insight into the I-45 development to come. It was very informative though very anti-committal to any scheduled events beyond the Spur 527 work to begin in 2020. I have the following follow up questions that I would appreciate a comment on: When can we expect a full timeline of all three segments to be announced? When will the work on Spur 527 be completed? When will the next project in Segment 3 be approved and scheduled? Will the projects within segment 3 be completed concurrently? When will all of the Segment 3 work be completed? Will all of the Segment 3 work be completed before Segment 1 and 2 are approved? Will all of the Segment 3 work be completed before funding for Segment 1 and 2 begins? Will all of the Segment 3 work be completed before work on Segment 1 or 2 is begun? Is it a certainty that Segment 2 will be worked on before Segment 1? Is there any possibility TXDOT will work on multiple segments at once?	Due to the nature of design-build procurement, a full, detailed timeline for Segments 2 and 3 are not possible until a design-build team is selected and prepares a phasing plan. In regards to Segment 1, until it is funded, only an estimated construction start date is known. Estimated construction start dates are (as of February 2020): • Segment 1 – no sooner than 2025 • Segment 2 – late 2023 • Segment 3 – late 2021 In regards to the remaining questions: • Will all of the Segment 3 work be completed before Segment 1 and 2 are approved? In regards to environmental approval, all segments are included in the FEIS so they would be approved at the same time. • Will all of the Segment 3 work be completed before funding for Segment 1 and 2 begins? Unlikely. Segment 2 is currently in the process of being funded and funding is currently being sought for Segment 1. • Will all of the Segment 3 work be completed before work on Segment 1 or 2 is begun? Unknown – a full, detailed timeline for Segments 2 and 3 are not possible until a design-build team is selected and prepares a phasing plan. • Is it a certainty that Segment 2 will be worked on before Segment 1? No, it is not certain, but it is likely that Segment 2 work will begin before Segment 1, due to funding timelines. • Is there any possibility TXDOT will work on multiple segments at once? Yes, it is possible that the construction of different segments may overlap. A full, detailed timeline for Segments 2 and 3 are not possible until a design-build team is selected and prepares a phasing plan.
131	Nguyen, Andrew	5/16/2017	Email	Please confirm whether the comment is true: For Segment 1, ROW acquisition and work will begin on the south end of the east side of the segment, will progress north to Beltway 8, start again at the south end of the west side of the segment and progress north.	A construction schedule for Segment 1 cannot be determined until funding is identified. TxDOT anticipates beginning construction of Segment 1 no sooner than 2025.
131	Nguyen, Andrew	5/16/2017	Email	Once acquisition of property for highway expansion through eminent domain is negotiated: Does ownership of the property change immediately or after a period of time? Do all commercial tenants become tenants of the state at that time? Does TXDOT/another government body take over management of the property or does it remain under current management until construction begins?	1. The taking of private property by eminent domain must follow certain procedures. Ownership changes during the process, after there is a written decision and after TxDOT pays the property owner the amount (award) determined during the process. For additional information on eminent domain procedures consult the Texas Attorney General's Landowner's Bill of Rights: https://texasattorneygeneral.gov/agency/landowners-bill-of-rights 2. Yes. 3. This would be determined during the eminent domain process.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
132	Svoboda, Mark	5/16/2017	Email	There is a huge major flaw in this design. There is a single corridor which will affect all north and south bound traffic through Houston corridors I-45, I-69(US59), and 288 will run through an excavated area. The excavated areas shall be elevated to eliminate flooding issues for hurricane evacuation purposes.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation. Adding capacity to I 45, especially lanes that are flexible in operation, such as MaX lanes, would increase the carrying capacity of the roadway, thereby providing more efficient evacuation capabilities. Bringing I 45 up to current design standards would also improve operation and safety during normal and emergency operations.
133	Tate, Judson	5/16/2017	Project Website	The off ramp for the 289 express lanes does not belong in a residential neighborhood. There is a park and a school on the route and this is a highly traveled pedestrian route. Chenevert will not be able to handle the increased traffic. It is already crumbling. Please reconsider this terrible decision.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
134	Thackerson, Kristy	5/16/2017	Project Website	288 HOV ramp does not need to go through a residential area on Chenvert street. This is dangerous, and takes away the quality of life from the residents.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
135	Wurzbach, Megan	5/16/2017	Project Website	I highly oppose the construction of the on/off ramp of the 288 HOV lane on Chenevert. Chenevert st is in the heart of one of Midtown's neighborhoods, and there is significant pedestrian traffic (including but not limited to families with small children and a large dog population). The addition of the on/off ramp will create a significant increase in traffic along the street, where there is already too many wrecks and speeders on the street now. Chenevert st is home to a family-friendly park, a school, and hundreds of residences. The on/off ramp would ruin the residential feel of the street and neighborhood and potentially put it's residents in the path of injury with the increased car traffic and the subsequent disregard of the speed limit, safety, etc of the cars traveling on and off the HOV ramp. Please change the plans of the 288 HOV on/off ramp to enter and exit in a more business setting.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
136	Barnum, Dainel	5/17/2017	Written	Given the coming improvements in transit and coming self-driving cars, I think you are overthinking traffic volumes.	Traffic projections used for the proposed project are based on the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), developed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council, which is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the eight-county Houston-Galveston Transportation Management Area.
137	Guinn, Matthew	5/17/2017	Project Website	I am writing to you in regards to the proposed on off ramp HOV from 288 on to Chenevert St. This is not a feasible plan. This small two lane road cannot handle the traffic of a proposed HOV conduit. In addition it is in a purely residential area with Baldwin park and a school directly on the route.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
137	Guinn, Matthew	5/17/2017	Project Website	Where can you go to see proposed plans and voice concerns about this project.	The project website (http://www.ih45northandmore.com/) provides additional materials including maps and schematics. Additional opportunity for review and comment is also available on the project website.
138	Myers, Bart	5/17/2017	Project Website	This city needs to invest in public transportation, i.e. commuter rails, and get more cards off the road. Then, none of this is an issue. Build for the future, not for today!	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.
139	Panjwani, MK	5/17/2017	Project Website	Please do not build the Chenever / 288 on/off ramp. It will severely hurt the neighborhood .	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
140	Salil	5/17/2017	Project Website	Please do not build the HOV ramp as proposed for TX 288 off chenevert. This will destroy the residential neighborhoods off chenevert.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	Comment focus areas for each of the three project segments: 1. Connectivity – The NHHIP should improve connectivity between communities in and around Downtown not reduce it. Where possible, strong connections should remain and new ones should be added to our existing street network. Reducing connectivity in areas around Downtown should be avoid or mitigated wherever possible. It also troubles me that local street operations have not been analyzed at the same level of detail as freeway operations. Improving connectivity, by providing multiple routes where people can travel, is critical to avoid relocation congestion from freeways to local streets.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with City of Houston and HDMD. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	Comment focus areas for each of the three project segments: 2. Support Walking, Biking and Transit Opportunities– this project represents a once in a lifetime opportunity and the details which impact how people safely get around need to be fully thought out. This requires careful planning and a greater level of detail than has been provided by the current schematics. Focus on well thought out design of safe intersections, sidewalks and bikeways, transit stops, frontage roads and connections has the potential to greatly enhance mobility options. Failure to do so would be a huge detriment to the project. Elements like wide outside lanes for bicyclists, which are likely to be eliminated as guidance from the next AASHTO bikeway design guide, should not be included in this project. The design needs to be forward looking and incorporate best practices for safe multimodal streets. Transit, including how the NHHIP can be designed to support faster transit trips between major activity centers and destinations, should be much more prominently considered in the plan. This should include rail expansion opportunities as well as the potential for an optimized express bus network.	TxDOT is working with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. TxDOT is coordinating with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. We note that the policy states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	Comment focus areas for each of the three project segments: 3. Enhance Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunities– a project of this magnitude has significant impact on potential development, both positively and negatively. It will also impact the City's tax base through acquisition of valuable land in the City's urban core. The design should be optimized to support high quality development opportunities that are beneficial to the City of Houston and the surrounding communities. To pretend this is solely a mobility project and to overlook the development impacts would be huge missed opportunity. TxDOT and its partners should work to identify and incorporate development opportunities into the project in the initial design, especially in areas where the project eliminates significant existing tax base.	Comment noted.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*Comment focus areas for each of the three project segments* 4. Other General Design and Coordination Considerations– This project will be transformative, for good or for bad. It is most likely to achieve good outcomes if TxDOT closely coordinates with the City of Houston, METRO and other entities such as Management Districts, TIRZs to make the project as strong as possible. This means thinking beyond the direct Right-of-Way of the project to understand opportunities and impacts on street, bikeway, greenway, and transit networks. It also means working to tie communities together, not separating them further with ever wider freeways serving as barriers.	TxDOT has conducted extensive coordination and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston, METRO, GCRD, HDMD, other management districts, and many other entities, agencies, and local groups as the project development continues.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Connectivity East i-iii* i. Include Runnel>McKee or Canal>Ruiz connection. The loss of Runnels cuts off the area of the East End north of the West Belt rail line and Buffalo Bayou and limits access to Downtown to just the Franklin/Navigation underpass. Or residents can backtrack to Harrisburg which doesn't really connect to downtown that well due to the street network, stadiums and large parking lots in the area. One of these proposed connection would be significant improvement. ii. Maintain Polk Street Connection 1. Revise design to bring IH-45 Main Lane ramps and I-45 to IH-69 N ramps down below grade between Polk and Rusk. Maintain critical Polk Street connection (Adjust Polk alignment and grades as needed). This proposal eliminates crossings for Dallas, Lamar, McKinney (similar to today). a. This change would reduce the size of the proposed Park Cap by several blocks (from 10+ blocks to 7) to a more manageable size. For reference, Klyde Warren is about 5 acres, the east side park cap as proposed is nearly 30 acres. b. The potential park area as currently conceived is as big as 15 Market Square Parks or 2.5 Discovery Greens. That is a lot of park space to program and maintain. I feel some of the space should be envisioned as development developable with walkable 1-3 story buildings, potentially as a home for the businesses displaced in EaDo. This opportunity exists regardless of what happens to Polk Street. Would also generate revenue to support park maintenance. i. Freeway support structure should be designed with this in mind. For example you could relocate all the bars and restaurant currently along St. Emanuel demoed by the freeway widening to a location on top of the cap, creating an instant destination linking the convention center and stadiums. Would be similar to the bar/meeting space that is on top of Klyde Warren and provide revenue to support maintenance. ii. Would also think about how you could access the park from the convention Center, potentially with an elevated connection over the southbound frontage road. iii. Connect Leeland to a Leeland/Bell one way pair as it is currently. Will require redesign of the freeway off-ramp connected to Bell which seems achievable. If Polk connection is eliminated, TxDOT should identify funds for a grade separation of Leeland at the West Belt so that a major east-west connection exists without barriers between Eastwood and Downtown.	i. Runnels St. cannot be extended across I-69 due to the vertical transition of the highway from below-grade to elevated, and cannot be extended below I-69 within the proposed ROW of the project. An alternative east-west route is using Navigation Blvd. to Commerce St., then west on Commerce St. to Downtown. ii. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. iii. Gulf Coast Rail District has been studying a Leeland St. underpass of the West Belt rail line for several years and found it was not feasible. There is already a Polk St. underpass at the West Belt that will remain.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segement 3) Connectivity East iv-ix* iv. Maintain Walker St crossing between St. Emanuel and Hamilton as an extension of Columbia Tap trail to west side of SB frontage road (instead of as a street crossing) then bring trail south to Polk St. along the back of the convention center. v. Ensure underpass at Commerce/Navigation proposed by GCFRD can be constructed with acceptable and safe grades/visibility for all modes of traffic. 1. The intersection of Franklin and St. Emanuel Frontage Road seems poorly thought out given existing grades, typical travel speeds, and sight distance, should the full underpass mentioned above not come to fruition. vi. Ensure Buffalo Bayou trails can connect to East End/Fifth Ward though detention area and freeway crossings. This is critical connection for the East End and must be excellent. vii. Consider making more bridges and related traffic control two-way (e.g., Leeland, Commerce). This should be paired with consideration of more two-way streets in downtown. viii. Proposed Lamar St at St. Emanuel intersection is difficult to see on the schematic but seems pretty awkward with difficult geometry. Keeping Polk open (with related ramp changes) would address connectivity issues and eliminate need for this funky design. ix. In the area north of Minutemaid Park, the operations of the proposed southbound frontage road and existing Hamilton appears problematic. Having two parallel one-way street traveling the same direction and located 100' apart seems like a recipe for conflicting queues and confusing operation for motorists both on these streets and crossing them. I think there is significant potential for wrong way turns from crossing streets as drivers are used to the alternative pattern of one-way street Downtown. Consider consolidation of these streets or revisions to ramp access to Downtown.	iv. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. v. 1. The NHHIP design has been revised to accommodate the proposed Commerce/Navigation underpass project by GCRD and the City of Houston. vi. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership to accommodate plans for trails. vii. City street operations are the responsibility of the City of Houston. viii. The intersection is designed to prevent conflicts between traffic existing from northbound I-69 and the local street traffic. The U-turn is for traffic from northbound I-69. Traffic from Polk St. and St. Emanuel St. will also be able to cross I-69 and I-45 on Lamar St. The traffic will be channelized to protect traffic from unsafe movements and promote flow for both local traffic and existing traffic from I-69. ix. City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston.

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141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Connectivity West* i. Include Houston Avenue realignment and direct connection to Walker/McKinney as proposed by Downtown. ii. Downtown Connector should be designed to allow Andrews Street to connect underneath structure as a walking and biking path to better connect 4th Ward to Downtown/Allen Center. iii. Review need/potential to maintain IH-10 HOV Connector near Amtrak Station. Maintenance as a transit only facility could have significant value. If the existing IH-10 Connector is removed as currently proposed, Washington Avenue should be connected to the Post Office site. Ideally the connector could be maintained and designed to allow Washington Avenue connection, and incorporate a transit stop to serve post office redevelopment. iv. The segment of the northbound frontage road between Dallas and Andrews should be made two-way. This will allow direct access to the Metropolitan Garage from more directions and make the connection to the south part of Allen Center more seamless from the west without having to circulate unnecessarily. v. Instead of off-ramp from clover leaf ramp, connect Clay Street as a two-way road between Allen Parkway and Dallas Street with a signalized intersection at Allen Parkway to provide park access to Sam Houston and Buffalo Bayou Parks. vi. Provide side path along both Heiner Street and NB frontage road on each side of Downtown Connector to connect Midtown to Buffalo Bayou. Link to new trail proposed for Brazos Street.	i. TxDOT will provide a stub-out to accommodate future City of Houston projects for the mentioned connections. All streets mentioned in this comment are city streets and any projects will be the responsibility of the City of Houston. TxDOT has discussed this at meetings with the City of Houston. ii. An east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along the existing Andrews St. route under the proposed I-45 connectors will be accommodated. iii. The connector cannot be maintained due to conflicts with reconfigured I-10. The connector will be replaced with I-10 express lanes, with dedicated bus lanes. Washington Ave. is a city street and it is the City of Houston's responsibility to evaluate connecting it to the post office site. iv. Frontage roads will not be two-way facilities. v. The proposed design was developed based on coordination with the City of Houston and other stakeholders. vi. These are city streets and are the responsibility of the City of Houston.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Connectivity North* This area appears to see the least benefit from the NHHIP plan. TxDOT should offset this by seeking to improve the connectivity in this area which is already hampered by freight rail lines and the Bayou. i. Plan for the extension of San Jacinto Street to Fulton including potential grade separation at the UP Passenger Main crossing which is hugely impactful to drivers and transit in this area. ii. Providing an additional bridge crossing of IH-10 between Gregg St and Hirsch St would be very beneficial, potentially at Bringhurst, given the potential development of the KBR site in the East End. iii. Provide improved version of existing walk/bike crossings of freeway east of Elysian and link to a new north-south trail connecting to Near North Side. iv. Explore extending two-way frontage road along IH-10E west of Jensen to connect to Nance Street to improve link between Fifth Ward, East End, Near North Side, and Warehouse District. v. Reconstruct Hogan and Quitman bridges with Bike Friendly crossings and sidewalks.	i. TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. ii. TxDOT coordinated with the Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority and the East Bayou Civic Club regarding access for the Fifth Ward area. TxDOT developed a revised design to grade-separate Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. All access points to lower Fifth Ward will be maintained. iii. The existing crossing would be replaced as part of the NHHIP. TxDOT evaluated options for a new bridge, including possibly constructing it under Elysian St., as suggested by others. However, this is not possible because it would not meet vertical clearance requirements with the reconstructed Providence and Rothwell streets. The revised schematic shows the proposed location of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge just west of the BNSF rail crossing. This location will provide improved pedestrian connectivity compared to the existing conditions. iv. The proposed design provides east-west connectivity along I-10 with the proposed Rothwell St. and Providence St. connections. The new east-west connections would be grade-separated at railroads to provide unimpeded flow. The schematic has been updated to retain the two-way traffic between Jensen and Meadows. TxDOT will evaluate adding a west-bound I-10 frontage road connection across I-69 during detail design between Meadow and Jensen. v. 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.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Connectivity South IH-45 Pierced Elevated* i. Approve of elimination of Pierce Elevated. Would love to see this redeveloped as expanded housing options for more people in the area.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Connectivity South IH-69* i. Complete Wheeler area Park Cap and related street and transit connections. Coordinate with City and METRO to ensure this area is designed to maximize future transit and development opportunities. See attached write up for overview recommendation of Wheeler TOD and Park Cap's potential. ii. Maintain Blodgett connection from San Jacinto to Main St. This is very useful connection and also is very helpful to the bus operations at the Transit Center. With redesign on San Jacinto on-ramp to east side of street, this should be achievable. iii. Ensure Transit Center can function. Current Schematic does not show exit point for Transit Center driveway. This project presents opportunity to rethink operations. iv. Thank you for adjusting NB ramp on San Jacinto to the east side of street from west. Think this is better design and less impactful to street network and neighborhood. v. Extend Blodgett from San Jacinto to Main St. vi. Design wider Almeda Bridge crossing to support development as noted in (3b) below. vii. Ensure LeBranch and Austin bridges are wide enough for safe walk/bike crossings.	i. TxDOT has coordinated and continues to coordinate with the City of Houston and METRO regarding the potential for highway cap in this area. With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center. ii. TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain. iii. Comment noted iv. Comment noted v. TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain. vi. TxDOT will evaluate the feasibility of widening Almeda Rd. to add buffer buildings, but any option to widen the bridge and any improvements would need to be paid for by others. vii. Bridges will be designed with pedestrian/bicycle crossings.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Support Walking, Biking and Transit Opportunities* a. Ensure bridge widths throughout the project include sufficient space for quality sidewalks and high comfort bikeways as called for in COH standards and guidelines, and not be designed to match existing cross-section or old standards. b. Design bikeways for All Ages and Abilities in line with the high-comfort bikeway guidelines set out in Houston Bike Plan. Protected bikeways or side paths set behind the curb should be designed for all bike connections. Bike lanes should be 6' wide minimum. 14' wide outside lanes designed as shared bicycle facilities are unacceptable and should not be included in this project. Intersections should be designed for safe crossing to accommodate bikeways and sidewalks. c. All lanes on city streets and frontage roads should comply with City of Houston's 11' lane standards and encourage appropriate travel speeds and safe travel. Having different lane width for different roads create inconsistent driver experience. 12' lanes are freeway lane standards and not local streets. They encourage excessive speeds through urban area where higher speeds are out of context and unsafe. d. Define which intersection are proposed as traffic signals and all-way stop control. It is impossible to truly assess whether the design supports safe walkability, bikeability and transit use without this information. Traffic control recommendations should be developed with multi-modal safety and connections in mind.	a. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted. b. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. c. TxDOT will evaluate the application of 11' lanes on a case-by-case basis, taking in to account factors including: safety, facility type, geometry, connecting facilities, design speed, traffic volume, lane usage by vehicle type, etc. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH, Harris County, METRO, and other agencies during detailed design. D. Intersection signalization will be determined during detailed design, in coordination with the City of Houston.

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141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Support Walking, Biking and Transit Opportunities* e. Multiple streets have been shown with sweeping, large radius turns. Several of these match the existing roadway curb lines which may have been designed at a different time for different uses. This project should take the opportunity to minimize these issues, especially in areas where large numbers of people walking can be expected around Downtown and Buffalo Bayou. i. Sabine Street at Allen Parkway should be shown as T-intersection without sweeping right turn design. These are not appropriate for the context, given walking and biking crossings and desired travel speeds along Buffalo Bayou Park. ii. IH-69 exit to Main Street near Wheeler TC should be designed to allow improved pedestrian crossing and potential for bike connectivity as identified in Houston Bike Plan/METRO Bike & Ride studies. iii. Southbound Hamilton at McGowan and northbound Chartres at Elgin should be designed without sweeping right turn lane f. As mentioned previously, design should accommodate potential for Midtown to Buffalo Bayou trail connection parallel to Heiner and a trail along east side of the northbound frontage road from Brazos/Pease to Dallas St. with a connection between them near Andrews St. g. Safe comfortable bikeway on key bridge crossings should be provided including, but not limited to, Dallas St, Andrews Connection, Polk St, Leeland St, Walker St, and Commerce St. h. In general, sidewalks should be identified on the schematics, at minimum in typical sections. All bridges should have wide sidewalk for safe crossing to see if it could be better used as part of express bus network or as an alignment for a light rail extension.	E. Intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design to ensure safe crossings are provided for pedestrians and bicyclists. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. i. Sabine Street at Allen Parkway has been revised to reflect a T-intersection without sweeping right turns. ii. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. iii. TxDOT analyzed these free flow right turns and found the projected turning movements and traffic mix do not warrant including it. The schematic has been revised to remove these free flow right turns. F. In response to requests from stakeholders, TxDOT revised the design to provide additional space for a shared-use path along Heiner Street between Bagby and Dallas Street. The path itself will be constructed on this additional space by organizations other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of this path. G. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. H. Sidewalks were shown on the schematics for Segments 1 and 2 and sidewalks are now shown on the updated schematics for Segment 3. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding incorporating the Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets for Segment 3. The schematic was updated to show the sidewalk network agreed upon by TxDOT and the COH.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Transit Considerations* i. The loss of Downtown to East End/EaDo connectivity at Polk and Runnels also impacts METRO service from the East End to Downtown. Routes 40, 41, 48 will need to find separate routes for eastbound and westbound trips. This will increase complexity, impact reliability for customers, and potentially incur service costs for METRO. Keeping Polk open would mitigate some of these issues and is recommended. ii. Design should be developed to accommodate future two-way express bus service on IH-69/US 59 with particular focus on Spur 527. Direct or expedited HOV connections to Wheeler TC should also be explored. iii. When reconstructing Green/Purple crossing of I69/I45 trench between East End and downtown, design larger radii turns to support faster train operation speeds. Improve signal operations for rail crossing at St. Emanuel and design Hamilton crossing to work effectively. Coordinate with CITY and METRO and potential for dedicated transit lanes on Capital and Rusk as well as rail connection through proposed cap park. iv. Entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered Stops (and access to stops) would be designed to ADA and METRO standards with room for shelters to support high quality transit experience. v. When reconstructing Red Line over IH-69, consider elevating to remove conflict with Main, Richmond and Fannin. Elevated station could be designed to be oriented above bus transit center stops, minimizing footprint of station and making for easy customer connections. Design should be optimized to maximize TOD opportunity. Could also consider other alignments such as routing behind Sears and then parallel to San Jacinto. Main goal would be to minimize train/roadway conflicts (e.g., train does not cross streets in the middle of intersections) while maximizing transit operations and TOD potential vi. Links to downtown should support high-quality, fast, reliable connections to major activity centers. The loss of the existing downtown connector tied into Franklin, should be re-evaluated to see if it could be better used as part of express bus network or as analignment for a light rail extension.	i. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. ii. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO regarding the planned University Line BRT (included in MetroNext referendum) and two-way express bus service along I-69/US 59 throughout the final design phase and through our ongoing I-69/US 59 Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center. iii. TxDOT coordinated with METRO regarding the operations and construction of these lines. METRO did not propose any changes to the existing configuration of the lines, however TxDOT will continue to coordinate with them during detailed design. iv. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards. v. With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center. vi. The connector cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. The connector would be replaced with a dedicated bus lane along I-10.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunites A* Partner with COH, METRO and others to develop Cap Park near Wheeler Transit Center from west of Main St. to east of San Jacinto coordinated with improved multimodal mobility and Transit Oriented Development potential. (See attached) i. Supports green space and walkable access to Transit Center ii. Support potential for adjacent TOD near Wheeler TC potentially with affordable housing component at rail stop ½ way between Downtown and TMC job centers. iii. Supports Blodgett connection to Main St matching existing connectivity iv. Supports existing or better operations for Wheeler TC (350 buses use TC bus bays per day not including stops on Main St). Proposed TxDOT plan does not correctly match or support current operations. v. Recommend assessment to determine if the Red Line could be elevated from north of Wheeler to south of Blodgett as described earlier.	With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunites B* Consider widening Almeda bridge to allow simple buffer buildings (see photo of IH-670 in Columbus below for example). This would reduce view of freeway and make a more seamless commercial corridor experience on this important roadway.	TxDOT will evaluate the feasibility of widening Almeda Rd. to add buffer buildings, but any option to widen the bridge and any improvements would need to be paid for by others.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunites C* Area south of Baldwin Park should be redesigned to more of a neighborhood context without sweeping high speed curves in streets. For example, Francis Street could be designed as a T-Intersection with Chenevert. This would allow block between Chenevert, Francis, Jackson and Stewart to be reassembled at full city block. This could be used for green space or development opportunities.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunites D & E* D. Consider abandon Conti Street between McKee and Frontage Road. Space could be abandoned and reallocated to development space. Could also clean up transition from Lyons to McKee to make smoother and more legible. E. Integrate connection to link area north of UP RR on the north side of the post office site to Downtown. This could potentially be incorporated into Downtown Connector, Bagby, Washington Avenue extension design.	D. Conti St. is a city street and any modifications would be a City of Houston project. E. These are city streets and any modifications would be City of Houston projects.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 3) Other General Design and Coordination Considerations* a. Where frontage roads are proposed such as between Midtown and Museum Park or between Downtown and the East End, it would be helpful to know which intersections would be proposed for signalization nor all-way stop control. This will greatly impact people's ability to cross at these locations, especially those walking or biking. It would likely be beneficial if all of these be considered for either signal or all-way stop control. b. Would like to know if local street intersections have been analyzed in any way. It is not clear from the material on the website and would want to know if that included in the plan and FEIS analysis. If not, I believe that is a serious oversight to understand the proposed plan impacts. c. In general, creating excess unproductive space should be avoided in street design (e.g., small triangles of isolated land unless there is clear plan to address (e.g. public art projects). Would also like to know how the project will be landscaped. d. Tying SH 288 managed lanes directly into Chenevert seems troubling. This is very much a residential neighborhood and Chenevert is not natural connection to most destinations Downtown. Tying to frontage roads would be preferred, particularly for northbound traffic. If Chenevert connection is maintained, there should be design elements in place to slow traffic through the neighborhood to appropriate speeds. e. Need to define street network under the freeway segment of IH-10 north of Downtown. This area is designated "Excess ROW" and has significant potential to transform the warehouse district area. What will be the process to clarify? f. Bottlenecks – i. Could IH-45>IH-69N to IH-10 Ramp be separated to eliminate some of the likely weaving though that section. IH-45 N to IH-69 N connection could occur in vicinity of Runnels. Think this has potential to reduce weaving through that area overall. ii. IH-69S south of merges seven southbound lanes (2 from Hamilton/Webster, 4 from IH- 69S main lanes, 1 from IH-45N) in 6 lanes which drop to 4 lanes once two lanes are peeled off to local streets on south end of midtown. This seems like it will end up as a major bottle next similar to Existing IH-69 NB at the Spur. Don't really have a solution but seems like it will be challenge at day one of opening. g. I know several stakeholders have submitted recommendations that have potential to significantly improve connectivity but have not been reflected in current plans. Plans say they are "subject to change" What is the process to consider these changes?	a. Signalization is determined during detailed design. b. 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. c . TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public d. Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St. e. At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 2) Connectivity* a. Clarify end of streets like North Ave, Woodland and Farwood. Do they cul-de-sac or connect to Frontage Road? Connections seem preferable. b. Appreciate extension of frontage roads under IH-610 at IH-45 interchange. These roadways and intersections should be designed to also allow safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings as there is not another crossing for approximately ½ mile in either direction. The large radius turn lanes are not typically supportive of safe, comfortable crossings at these locations. c. Consider extending IH-610 Segment east to allow Helmers Street connection across the freeway. Helmers would be a very useful north-south connection, potentially as a minor collector, as it is continuous from Fulton Street on the South to Berry Street on the north, a distance of almost 3 miles. Right now only north connections through here are Fulton and Irvington and Fulton has Red Line impacts.	a. TxDOT will work with COH to refine the termini of North, Woodland, and Farwood Streets during detailed design to ensure safe connectivity. b. Safety is TxDOT's highest priority and thus was one of the primary Purpose and Need criteria used to analyze the alternatives for NHHIP. Per the TxDOT Design Manual, TxDOT follows AASHTO criteria for bicycle facility design. However, for this project, TxDOT looked at a range of bicycle facility guidance including NACTO. 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. The Final EIS includes details on these proposed pedestrian realms. 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. c. Helmers St. is outside the project limits.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 2) Design to Support Walking, Biking and Transit Opportunities* a. Design bikeways for All Ages and Abilities in line with the high-comfort bikeway guidelines set out in Houston Bike Plan. Protected bikeways or side paths set behind the curb should be designed for all bike connections. Lanes should be 6' wide minimum 14' wide outside lanes designed as shared bicycle facilities are unacceptable and should not be included in this project. Intersections such as Main, Cavalcade, Patton and Link are all identified on Houston Bike Plan as bikeway opportunities. Intersections and crossings should be designed to accommodate high comfort bikeways and sidewalks. b. Ensure bridge and approaching roadway widths throughout project include sufficient space for wide sidewalks and high comfort bikeways as called for in COH standards and guidelines, and not be designed to match existing cross section. c. Ensure design allows trail connectivity along Little White Oak bayou, connecting neighborhoods to parks and open space, wherever it crosses freeway including at IH-610 at IH-45 N interchange. d. Assess ability to bring trail underneath Freight Rail Line north of Stoke Road. If trail cannot travel under the freight rail line, integrate trail into frontage road design to cross rail ROW.	**a.** TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads. **b.** TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted. **c.** In meeting with the Houston Parks Board, TxDOT understands there is a vision to extend trails along Little White Oak Bayou. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. **d.** TxDOT understands that there is a desire for the construction of a sidewalk on Stokes Street for pedestrians crossing under I-45 (for example, children walking to the nearby elementary school). TxDOT commits to constructing the sidewalk for that portion of the roadway on TxDOT property. The remainder of the roadway is owned by the City of Houston, who must construct any sidewalk on their property.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 2) Transit Considerations* i. Entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered and stops (and access to stops) would be designed to ADA and METRO standards to support high quality transit experience. For Segment 2, this is most critical for the Cavalcade St. bridge crossing and the operation of the existing 44 Acres Homes which travels on a section of Main St and Houston Avenue impacted by the NHHIP project.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 2) Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunities* a. Proposed design of Cap Park area near Main Street can be greatly improved if it is intended to be a place for people. It will be difficult to access the park with high speed frontage roads. It will also be difficult to connect between sections of the proposed park/open space due to U-Turn lanes. Consider relocation, removal or by pass of these U-Turn lanes and design of frontage roads to allow safe access to the park space.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 2) Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunities* b. Consider designating northeast corner of IH-45 and IH-610 as excess ROW to allow potential development, offsetting impacts in other quadrants of the interchange. Extend streets like Nordland and Melborn to new Frontage roads.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 2) Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunities* *c. Plans should designate where noise walls are proposed to mitigate neighborhood impacts.*	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, including for many areas of the neighborhoods noted in the comment, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 1) Connectivity* a. Trying (and struggling) to envision how the Airline, Victoria Drive and Northbound IH-45 Intersection would operate safely and legibly to people traveling through in any mode of travel. I realize that is largely how it is today but would use this opportunity to look at alternatives. b. Clarify plan for Werner Street in northeast corner of Tidwell intersection with IH-45. Seems like Cul-de-sac with access further north could be better than proposed T shaped design. c. Consider extension and direct connection from IH-45 MaX lanes to Greens Road to serve Greenspoint area. Would help with redevelopment of the area and support potential METRO Limited Stop Downtown to Airport Route (e.g., Downtown> Shepherd> Greenspoint> IAH)	a. Due to the complexity and severe skew of the intersection, the existing configuration is the optimal configuration for safely maintaining access to all movements. We evaluated simplifying the intersection in several ways, one of which would be removing the right turn lane on WB Airline Drive that lines vehicles up with Victoria Drive. Removing this lane would force vehicles to turn right at the intersection, and then a quick left onto Victoria. This movement would not be safe or intuitive. We also evaluated removing the connection from Airline to Victoria, but this change did not provide enough benefit to justify the negative impact to community access of the area. 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. b. Werner St. is proposed to connect to Tidwell St. on the south side to maintain the access that exists today. The existing connection to Tidwell St. on the north side would be removed, but access would still be provided to Tidwell St. via the I-45 southbound frontage road. East of I-45, Werner St. would terminate at a cul-de-sac, but the frontage road would still be able to be accessed from Witcher Ln. c. This area is outside the project limits and not a part of the proposed project. This would be evaluated in a separate study.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 1) Support Walking, Biking and Transit Opportunities* a. Design bikeways for All Ages and Abilities in line with the high-comfort bikeway guidelines set out in Houston Bike Plan. Protected bikeways or side paths set behind the curb should be designed for all bike connections. Lanes should be 6' wide minimum 14-15' wide outside lanes designed as shared bicycle facilities are unacceptable and should not be included in this project. Intersections such as Crosstimbers. Tidwell, Parker, Little York are all on Houston Bike Plan. Intersections and crossings should be designed to accommodate high comfort bikeways. b. Intersection should also be designed with special care for safe, comfortable crossings for pedestrians. Most arterials crossing IH-45 are on METRO's bus network, have significant nearby boardings and will require safe crossings to serve stops for people traveling in both directions. There is also adjacent development that should be safely accessible for people walking. i. In particular the Intersection of Shepherd and IH-45 is directly adjacent to the N Shepherd Park & Ride. This intersection should be assessed to ensure that is safely traversable by people walking. c. Ensure Halls Bayou Crossing north of W. Mt. Houston is design to allow trail crossing under freeway and frontage roads.	**a.** TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads. **b.** TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted. **c.** In meeting with the Houston Parks Board, TxDOT understands there is a vision to extend trails along Little White Oak Bayou. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. **d.** TxDOT understands that there is a desire for the construction of a sidewalk on Stokes Street for pedestrians crossing under I-45 (for example, children walking to the nearby elementary school). TxDOT commits to constructing the sidewalk for that portion of the roadway on TxDOT property. The remainder of the roadway is owned by the City of Houston, who must construct any sidewalk on their property.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 1) Transit Consideration* i. Entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered and stops (and access to stops) would be designed to ADA and METRO standards to support high quality transit experience. For Segment 2, this is most critical for the Cavalcade St. Bridge crossing and the operation of the existing 44 Acres Homes which travels on a section of Main St and Houston Avenue impacted by the NHHIP project. ii. Like the ability for two-way access to N. Shepherd P&R. Coordinate with METRO to consider how this can be part of expanded express bus network providing high speed connection to activity centers. Extension of Max lanes to Greenspoint and IH would also greatly enhance this network. iii. N. Shepherd Transit Center would be logical extension for METRO Red Line. Would think about how that connection could be made and consider that in design so as to not predlude options. For example, consider making West Little York and Parker crossing spans wide enough as these would be potential point for light rail to cross IH-45 to reach N. Shepherd.	I. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards. II. TxDOT will coordinate with METRO in the design of the proposed METRO T-ramp to the Shepherd Park & Ride, for safety and efficiency. With the NHHIP, the I-45 MaX lanes will extend to Beltway 8, in the Greenspoint area. III. METRO has implemented the initial phase of their transit plan in the corridor, including construction of the Red Line to Northline Mall. TxDOT has been working with and will continue to coordinate with METRO to accommodate a planned extension of the Red Line within the NHHIP corridor.
141	Carleton, Geoff	5/18/2017	Email	*(Segment 1) Development/Redevelopment Impacts and Opportunities* a. Plan should designate where noise walls are proposed to mitigate neighborhood impacts.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, including for many areas of the neighborhoods noted in the comment, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners.
142	Holloway, Michael	5/18/2017	Project Website	If I read the project section plans and drawings correctly, the traffic flow design will push thousands of vehicles into a residential area with narrow streets, poor drainage, a school zone, and intersections where a large number of red-light accidents already occur without any clear benefit to the public in either cost or reduced congestion. The plan only adds problems without taking practical measures to improve traffic flow of single occupant vehicles.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

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143	Botts, Eric	5/19/2017	Project Website	The proposal to route the on ramp for the express lane 288 South from Chenevert street is unworkable and dangerous. There is a school on the corner of Elgin and Chenevert and many children walk to school because it is a neighborhood school. Those children would be endangered by the increased traffic. Further, Baldwin park is adjacent to the route and many small children play in the park. Balls have a way of rolling into the street and children are known to chase them. This area is a residential neighborhood and we have seen an increase in traffic over the years due to natural growth. Residents are currently struggling with the current situation and are appalled that one would consider routing even more traffic through this residential area. Placing the on ramp for 288 South in the neighborhood would draw rush hour downtown traffic through the neighborhood. This would result in traffic congestion on neighborhood side streets and increase the potential for traffic accidents including vehicle - pedestrian accidents. The optimal situation for public safety would be to remove or reroute the existing 288 off ramp for downtown traffic from the neighborhood. Doing otherwise is a hazard to public safety.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
144	Cohen, David	5/19/2017	Project Website	I'm reviewing your Community Impact Assessment Technical Report (Appendix F) and Map ID No. 610-619 have been omitted from Table F-3 Page 4. Out of the 666 Map ID Numbers, these are the only ones missing from the table. I need to know why. These Map IDs represented potentially impacted properties at the 288 off-ramp/on-ramp on Chenevert Street. Are these properties impacted or not?	Due to project design changes in the area of Elgin St. and Chenevert St., the properties numbered as 610-619 would not be displaced and were removed from the displacement list instead of renumbering the list.
145	Cole, Linda	5/19/2017	Project Website	I am writing to oppose the 288 on/off ramp at chenevert. This is a.residential neighborhood with kids walking to school and people walking their dogs and walking to the park. I live in between the current entrance and exit ramps for 288 and the traffic and noise is already bad enough. This would make things significantly worse. People speed coming off the ramp now, barely stopping to let you cross the street. Please put this ramp at another location.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
146	Deterling, Melissa	5/19/2017	Project Website	Funneling 288 traffic on to Chenevert- right in the heart of the residential section of Midtown - is an EXTREMELY BAD idea. This is a very quiet, residential, walkable community. The International School and Baldwin Park are at the corner of Chenevert and Elgin - there are children, pets and people everywhere. You want to funnel all that traffic right into the middle of this??? It's inevitable that there will be fatalities of animals, adults and children.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
147	Grimaldi, Phillip	5/19/2017	Project Website	I recently purchased my first home, near the intersection of Tuam and Chenevert. The proposed ramp for 288 on Chenevert would negatively alter my neighborhood. It will increase the amount of traffic on our residential streets, and essentially cut my property off from the rest of midtown. Please do not go forward with this part of the project!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
148	Karner, Xavia	5/19/2017	Project Website	I do not want want an HOV on Chenevert. The neighborhood is residential and this would be dangerous for all the dogs, children and others who walk to our park.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
149	King, Steven	5/19/2017	Project Website	I've been a midtown resident for over 13 years and this project would be a detriment to the neighborhood. Do you realize how many residents use the surrounding streets to walk, push their baby strollers and walk their dogs? This area is quiet, noise free and traffic free and the family of residents would like to keep it that way. It's not meant to be a "convenient" passageway so some motorists can save a few minutes from their commute.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
150	Larimore, James	5/19/2017	Written	TxDOT's planners have done a tremendous job except for one glaring mistake not to have had an Alternative #4 make what is there, better. There is ONE glaring need, the big intersection of I-45 & I-69. Do we really have to spend 7 BILLION DOLLARS to fix it! ALL the roads are very good AND after ALL this envisioned 7 BILLION DOLLAR work, the traffic won't be any better.	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I -45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I -45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high -capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area. Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.

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150	Larimore, James	5/19/2017	Written	Look at all the work on I-10 and the traffic is just as bad (I guess). There, at least, the work expanded the main lanes. Here they are not being expanded! The north section gets an added HOV lane. NO NEW MAIN LANES for 3 BILLION DOLLARS! A lane could be added to the Hardy for 1/100 of the cost. OK, we will have 2 hov lanes going opposite rush hour = NOT NEEDED! OK, we will have better feeder lanes = NOT NEEDED! YES, some work is needed on the north section. There is one huge problem with a very very simple fix! Simply close the Southbound entrance at Crosstimbers. Cars enter and cross 3 lanes of very crowded traffic which creates daily backups. The entrance is not needed. There is another just before it.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
150	Larimore, James	5/19/2017	Written	Make proper breakdowns areas EVERYWHERE. Extend the Hardy to downtown. The problem intersection of I-45 and I-69 is a HUGE problem and needs to be fixed! SO, fix it and keep the Pierce Elevated. This TOTAL redo is way overkill. The planners have done a good job but there is simply one big problem intersection that daily creates problems. BUT THAT IS IT. Otherwise the roads work very good all around downtown.	1. Freeway shoulders are included in the design criteria. 2. Hardy St. is being extended as a separate HCTRA project. 3. Comment noted.
150	Larimore, James	5/19/2017	Written	Downtowns all around America are trying to have places for bicycles and tourists. In the hot, half a year, summer time in Houston, the under-the-expressways of The Pierce and I-69 (and I-45) create a shady space that can be easily converted to beautiful landscaped areas. Currently they are terrible and that is what many people think of these spaces. BUT, urban planners can do wonders to these spaces with just a semblance of investment. They don't have to be crime ridden! Invest and it will be better. That is what money does, it will make it better and it is a ring all around downtown that can become a tourist attraction.	Comment noted.
				TxDOT has built very good roads that we are currently thinking of totally wrecking down and starting from scratch. This is such a HUGE WASTE of money, agony and resources!!! Most of our expressways currently have the one lane DEDICATED hov. It is a great system that we need to use more and more, and especially with park and rides. Most areas of town we have ALTERNATIVES, where one simply looks at the current traffic problems and can choose a path. We need more alternatives (& mass transit). WE DON'T NEED TO DESTROY AND WASTE MONEY.	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high-capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area.

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150	Larimore, James	5/19/2017	Written		Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
151	Paffel, Lisa	5/19/2017	Project Website	Please rethink your highway plans, I don't want HOV on Chenevert St, I live here!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
152	Richardson, James	5/19/2017	Project Website	Absolutely oppose and do not want the ramp at the end of Chenevert St. (near Elgin) converted into a two way OR high traffic ramp. That area is obviously residential. .. and forcing a large volume of traffic through that area is a recipe for disaster. Spend an afternoon on Chenevert (between Elgin and McGowan) and see for yourself. The intersection at McGowan and Chenevert is already a nightmare ... accidents are already a frequent event, increasing the volume of vehicles through that corridor will only exacerbate the problem	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
152	Richardson, James	5/19/2017	Project Website	NOT a rhetorical question: how was it determined that this is the optimal solution?	Starting in 2011, TxDOT began evaluating alternatives for providing additional highway capacity in the North-Hardy Corridor, building on previous studies that recommended adding four (4) managed lanes to the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor from Downtown Houston to Beltway 8 North (North-Hardy Planning Studies, Highway Component, 2005). During the project development process for the recommended highway improvements, the team evaluated traffic projections, regional roadway planning, engineering factors, environmental constraints, and potential project impacts. In addition, Input from the public, agencies, and other stakeholders was considered in the development and analysis of alternative solutions. Section 2 of the Final EIS provides details about the evaluation of alternatives and identification of the Preferred Alternative for the proposed project.
153	Prieto, Herber	5/20/2017	Project Website	Please do not close Jensen exit during this project as this will affect the residents in the East Downtown area. I'll be affected since I reside here as well.	Proposed access improvements include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade.
154	Maraite, Ludwig	5/21/2017	Project Website	We write to you from Europe (Belgium). This Project is awesome, build it as soon as possible.	Comment noted.

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154	Maraite, Ludwig	5/21/2017	Project Website	But one question after having a look on it: Why the new I45 South has only poor 3 lanes through the downtown area, the other side, 45 North has 5 lanes?? We visited Houston in 2007, It is nothing to see, the only reason was driving the Freeways with all her stacks and Spaghetis, absolutly great, we come back after this Project, so God will.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
154	Maraite, Ludwig	5/21/2017	Project Website	Could we have your Newsletter? Go TxDOT, build it :-):-):-) Thanks for an eventually Little answer.	TxDOT published a newsletter in Spring 2019 to provide an update about the project, and will provide another in Spring 2020. Other project information and updates are provided on the project website (http://www.ih45northandmore.com/).
155	Burghli, Deanna	5/22/2017	Project Website	I want to know a time frame for this project to start and for businesses to have to relocate?	TxDOT expects to complete the preliminary engineering phase, including obtaining environmental clearance, in 2020. Construction of the initial phase of the projects is expected to be south of downtown, and could begin in 2022, following design and right-of-way acquisition.
156	Gutierrez, Victoria	5/23/2017	Email	I do not agree with the on /off ramps being at grade when going east or west on 610 at 45 and having to cross Fulton where the metro light rail runs. That will be a high traffic area resulting in long delays due to the trains. This is a safety issue and dangerous with that rail having to be crossed. I am ok with them if they go OVER Fulton!	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
157	Hlavacek, Ian	5/23/2017	Email	For the I-45 North construction project, please consider revising the design to keep Bell, Clay, and Polk open across the freeway in the downtown area. Four streets apparently need to be closed to accommodate the ramp; that could be accomplished by closing the 4 streets between Polk and Rusk, none of which provide connectivity into downtown.	This would eliminate the possibility for the highway cap. Additionally, to maintain all of these city streets as through streets would not allow for the proposed project to be depressed in these sections; this would require elevated freeways, which was strongly opposed by the public.

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158	Zeis, Matt	5/23/2017	Email	I am excited about the expansion of I-45, however I believe increasing traffic across Fulton at the east and west bound access roads will decrease safety instead of increasing safety. Increasing traffic flow across the rail line will create much longer delays. I hope the designers will consider a fly over/ bridge over the rail line.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
159	Cisneros, Romulo	5/24/2017	Written	Must be done sensitive to neighborhood adjacent to freeway, i.e. landscaping, art, noise remediation	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
160	Schneider, Andrew	5/24/2017	Project Website	I am deeply concerned about the proposed renovations to Segment 3, covering the Downtown Loop --specifically, the plan to create a 288 exit ramp that funnels all traffic on Chenevert Street. Chenevert is a relatively narrow street, as are the smaller streets that connect to it. These streets are rendered all the more difficult to traverse safely due to the number of cars parked along them. None of this is assisted by the traffic already feeding into Chenevert, either directly from 288 North's existing exit ramp or indirectly from cars racing off I-45 South via Hamilton. I fear that this segment of the project was drawn up without adequate consideration of its impact on the neighborhood, either in terms of the greater risk of traffic fatalities, the increase in noise, or the damage to local property values. The net effect would be devastating to everyone who lives along or near Chenevert. I urge you in the strongest possible terms to find a better alternative.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
161	Amaral-Arruda, Nathalia Do	5/25/2017	Project Website	I wanted you to know that I think the On-Ramp that is proposed on Chenevert st is a horrible idea. The city thinks they can walk all over minority districts with no one standing in their way. How does it make sense to put the on-ramp between a school and a park rather than farther out??? Baldwin park has recently seen massive improvements in the last few years and I'm afraid this will absolutely ruin the park and the walkability of the area. There is no reason the on-ramp needs to be in this location. It will be dangerous for the students in the area with the massive increase in traffic. I urge the team to reconsider this part of the proposal. I agree with most of the planned improvements but this part just seems very off and not worth the risk/rewards of creating a dangerous situation for kids trying to attend school.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
162	Jewell, Beau	5/25/2017	Project Website	I would like to strongly disagree with a part of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project that falls will create an extremely dangerous situation for a local school and park. Specifically the Exit/On-Ramp proposed for Chenevert St near Elgin and Stuart. It is called out in the proposal as: "Segment 3: SH 288 from Southmore Blvd to I-45 Interchange Plan and Profile (1 of 1)" This on-ramp is directly between the Houston Academy for International Studies and Baldwin Park. These are two foundations of the neighborhood and putting an Exit/On-Ramp there with an expected 40 cars per minute (2200 per hour) will be very dangerous for the students walking to school, visitors to the park, or any pedestrians trying to enjoy one of the most walk-able neighborhoods in the City. The current setup that has an On-ramp coming from Francis St and the exit on Chenevert is not perfect but far superior to the current proposal.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

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163	Greer, Kathy	5/27/2017	Email	I am a resident of Lindale Park. I believe the proposed change for westbound entrance to 610 at street level west of Fulton is problematic. Waiting at the light at Fulton is very, very slow due to the rail. A dedicated elevated ramp that would go over the Fulton intersection onto 610 would alleviate the potential problem.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
164	Martin, Sherry	5/30/2017	Project Website	My home is one on the list that will be in the way. I wonder what is done when the buy out happens because i owe more than what the home is worth and I am on a very limited income	TxDOT's relocation assistance program for the NHHIP will provide the opportunity for residents who would be displaced by the proposed project to relocate within the community if they so choose. Additionally, enhanced counseling and assistance for displaced residents will be available to facilitate the planning and transition associated with the relocation process. This program is outlined in Section 5.1.2.2 Residential Relocation Assistance discussion in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.
165	Gentile, Joseph	6/1/2017	Written	Thank you for this project. I am a homeowner in Midtown and removing the Pierce Elevated section of I-45 will greatly benefit my neighborhood. Houston faces two challenges:mobility and livability. In the short term keeping traffic moving (mobility is important but the longer term livability, making Houston a place people want to live, is an existential challenge for the city. Properly funded and executed I think this project addresses both. Please find the money to do this and do it right.	Comment noted
166	Hoffman, Kevin	6/1/2017	Written	I can not support the project as presented. The lack of an overpass over Fulton street at the Metrolite rail at the planned I-610 service roads, will not create a safe transport route for those traveling on this at grade service road that would handle both I-45 and I-610 traffic into Lindale Park, North Lindale, Ryon, and other Northside residents. In fact the traffic levels with the MetroRail could cause this area to be rated "F" at the end of the project. It would also hinder ambulance services to our closest hospital. Local safety needs must come first.	In response to community comments about traffic congestion along the westbound frontage road and entrance ramp to westbound I-610 in this area, the design of the proposed frontage road/entrance ramp was revised to elevate the westbound I-610 frontage road over the METRORail line along Fulton St. The eastbound frontage road design could not be revised to include an overpass at the rail line, due to design constraints. With the proposed NHHIP roadway improvements, the overall operations of the highway will be improved, which will provide better access to communities by emergency vehicles. The eastbound frontage road design could not be revised to include an overpass at the rail line due to the location of the I-45 to I-610 eastbound direct connectors. A frontage road overpass at this location would conflict vertically with the direct connectors. To accommodate an overpass, the frontage road would have to go over the direct connectors which would sever the connection of the frontage road to Fulton Street. As such, the frontage road was kept at-grade
167	Wong, Edward	6/5/2017	Project Website	I wish to inquire about when the city of Houston will try to assume the property located on 907 Chartres Houston, TX 77003 for the North Houston Highway Improvement Project.	The right-of-way acquisition process for most properties in the Segment 3 area of the project is expected to begin in 2020, following project environmental clearance (Record of Decision). TxDOT considers advance acquisition on a parcel by parcel basis. You may contact the Director of Advanced Project Development, TxDOT Houston District to discuss your property.
168	Bailey, Corry	6/6/2017	Email	I am writing about my concern to move I-45 from the pierce elevated to run parallel to HWY 59. The cost alone is a serious concern. This money would be used to help fix existing problems with the 45/59 interchange. The freeway should have been widened during the pierce elevated project in the late 90s.	Alternatives with other configurations, including widening the Pierce Elevated, were considered and were determined to be not feasible based on the traffic modelling results. Also, the I-45/I-69 interchange could not accommodate a widened Pierce Elevated structure.
169	Culpepper, Trina	6/6/2017	Email	Demolishing the Pierce Elevated isn't a good idea for the City of Houston. The Pierce elevated is idea for the city because you can go that route to get to the other side quicker. If you demolished it, the traffic will be worse , trying to get to 45north from 59North to I10-west is not good for the city, that sharp curve to I10-west is terrible.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
170	Fields, Doris	6/6/2017	Email	I for one commute daily on the pierce elevated. Since the re-route of the entrance from Allen parkway the commute on I-45 has improved in my eyes. The stretch of 59 south between Hamilton and I-45 needs work. Does Houston need need to spend more money on freeways? Keep the pierce elevated alive!	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
171	Mehner, JC	6/6/2017	Project Website	Please tell me that you are not seriously considering building these roads below grade. Hwy 59 and Hwy 288 already flood whenever anyone dumps there coffee cup out the car window. Please Please leave us a way out of town during tropical storms.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The COH has designated the I-610 Loop as a hazardous materials route. Hazardous material vehicles transporting hazardous materials product must use the I-610 Loop route and not travel through the city.
172	Seidl, Scott	6/6/2017	Email	In addition to rerouting 45 to run parallel to 59/69, why not keep the Pierce Elevated as well to serve as an alternate route or run all 45 northbound traffic on the Pierce Elevated and route all 45 southbound traffic on the new route being constructed parallel to 59/69.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
173	Johnson, Aaron	6/8/2017	Email	I'm highly against rerouting I-45 around the east side of downtown. The current Pierce has congestion partly because of the hard curves in the existing highway, causing traffic to brake, with the "replacement" having even more awkward curves that would introduce more congestion without fixing problems, as well as uneconomical ROW acquisitions.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. The proposed design would eliminating the traffic weaving locations that are currently on I-45 along the west and south sides od Downtown.
174	Lenotre, Alain	6/8/2017	Written	We have been carefully reading your draft of the Environmental Study regarding the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. In the Community Impact Assessment portion of that project, it is stated on pages 5-16 and 5-17: The proposed right of way would displace two schools In the Northside/Northline neighborhood: • Alpha and Omega Christian Academy (5621 North Freeway) • The Culinary Institute LeNotre (7070 Allensby Street) The Culinary Institute LeNotre is a specialty school that serves students throughout the city of Houston and beyond. Other culinary schools in the Houston area with similar curriculums include: • The Art Institute of Houston (4140 Southwest Freeway; located approximately 12 miles southwest of the Culinary Institute LeNotre) • Houston Community College (3100 Main Street; located approximately seven miles south of the Culinary Institute LeNotre). The report implies that in case CIL does not survive the Eminent Domain current process, the Houston community could be served by these above two smaller institutions that are thought to offer similar curriculums as CIL. WE ARE REFUTING TXDOT CLAIM THAT OUR CURRICULA ARE SIMILAR. WE ASK YOU TO REVISE THE TEXT OF YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY BY REMOVING THE PART WHERE YOU MENTION THAT: "OTHER CULINARY SCHOOLS IN THE HOUSTON AREA WITH SIMILAR CURRICULUMS ARE ..." THE COMPARATIVE TABLE ENCLOSED (SEE PAGES 1-6) DEMONSTRATES OUR ARGUMENT. In addition: • The Art Institute and HCC do not offer similar advantages for the students as offered by CIL (See pages 7-8 of the enclosed table)	The description of and impacts to the Culinary Institute have been revised in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report, included in the Final EIS, based on the comments from the owners. To reduce the impact to operation of the Culinary Institute LeNôtre, TxDOT is proceeding with advance acquisition of right-of-way, per the property owner's request. During the relocation process, the school will be able to remain in the existing facility for an amount of time negotiated with TxDOT. TxDOT will assign a relocation assistance counselor who will provide current listings of other available properties (if requested).
174	Lenotre, Alain	6/8/2017	Written	Consequently, we are asking you to modify the contemplated freeway design to avoid the Taking of CIL (or maybe to close it if the indemnifications and cost reimbursement are not adequate financially for our stockholders which include all of our employees). We thank you for having given us the opportunity to present our comments.	After extensive evaluation by TxDOT's design consultant, it has been determined that it is not geometrically feasible to avoid this building. Little White Oak Bayou prevents moving the freeway farther west in this area.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*GENERAL COMMENTS* 1. I support the North Houston Highway improvement project. 2. I would like to thank TxDOT and its consultant for the substantial improvements in the design since the original design was presented in 2015. 3. Due to the high cost and construction disruption of this project, TxDOT should continue efforts to refine and improve the design.	Comment noted.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	4. The section of the project between Interstate 10 and Loop 610 has numerous design concerns due to the narrow right-of-way. The properties along both sides of the freeway in this section are lower-tier commercial properties, none historic or worthy of preservation. It makes no sense to compromise an important section of a $7 billion project to preserve these low-grade properties. For example, widening to the west at North Main (across from the Hollywood Cemetery) would affect an Exxon gas station, a McDonalds, a pawn shop, an old house used a commercial office, a real estate office and the Houston Food Bank warehouse. All these properties are easily relocatable to other locations. North of the Hollywood cemetery, additional right-of-way can be acquired on the east side of the freeway. TxDOT should look at all options for widening the corridor in this section. .. 6. On the following pages I have listed 12 design concerns. The project design in the areas of these concerns can be improved with simple to moderate design changes. I urge TxDOT and its consultants to take a close look at these spots for potential	4. The proposed design meets current design criteria and provides an improved roadway facility while minimizing ROW acquisition. In addition to the historic Hollywood Cemetery on the east side of I-45, the Germantown Historic District is west of I-45. Analysis shows the proposed project will improve operations and safety. The proposed project balances needs for freeway mobility and local mobility. 6. Thanks for your comments. Again, TxDOT appreciates your engagement over the years and you have provided thoughtful and comprehensive comments, many of which have been integrated into the schematic design. As noted in our responses to your letter in July 2015, this section of NHHIP between I-610 and I-10 is constrained by Hollywood Cemetery and the Germantown Historic District on the south end and Independence Heights on the north end. Our detailed traffic operations analysis required by FHWA shows that our current configuration will operate efficiently and safely.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	5. Avoiding the Cheek-Neal building in the downtown area forces a swerve in the alignment and also introduces design compromises, including item 9 in my list of concerns. The Cheek Neal building was built in 1917, has been vacant and unused for decades, and was designated as historic in 2015. It seems very suspicious and opportunistic that the structure all of a sudden became historic when plans for a deck park were revealed in 2015. Of course, being immediately adjacent to the park will drastically increase the value of the building. It appears that the historic designation will greatly benefit the real estate developer, while compromising the design of the freeway. Since the building was not considered historic prior to 2015, the historic designation should be reconsidered so this property can be used for the project.	Cheek Neal was recommended NRHP-eligible by project historians in 2015, along with approximately 25 other properties that had previously not been designated (likely because they had never been surveyed). These recommendations were concurred with by the Texas Historical Commission. Cheek Neal was later listed in the NRHP, a process that involves not only the Texas Historical Commission but also the National Park Service. TxDOT does not have the authority to designate historic buildings, and this designation was determined based on the historic significance of the building itself; it had nothing to do with any potential economic development in the area.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **1. Southbound IH-69 exit Midtown: the Fannin exit ramp needs to be restored** Problem • The existing exit to Fannin is eliminated and replaced with an exit to Almeda Road. This will force vehicles through six traffic signals to reach Fannin using a route with two turns. • Using Wheeler to reach Fannin will exacerbate congestion in the area, and Wheeler does not have a left-turn lane to southbound Fannin. • Proceeding to the west from the Almeda exit using routes other than Wheeler will be difficult and inconvenient since east-west streets are not equipped to handle through-traffic. • Without the Fannin exit, there is a distance of 2.3 miles on southbound IH 69 with no exit. This will likely contribute to extra weaving for people trying to reach the Almeda exit, see issue 10 • With the currently existing exit to Fannin, traffic coming from SH 288 can exit to Fannin. If the Fannin exit is eliminated, SH 288 traffic will need to take a much longer route on surface streets to get to the west side of Midtown. Potential Solution • Restore the exit to southbound Fannin • The option shown in the diagram provides 400 feet to bring the ramp up to ground level. This is a 5% grade, which should be acceptable for an off-ramp where traffic must slow down. The benefits of this exit can justify a design exception, if an exception is needed.	TxDOT understands the importance of this ramp and attempted to add the subject southbound Fannin St. ramp to the proposed design, but could not get it to fit and meet required design and safety criteria. Understanding the challenges, TxDOT will continue to work with the COH and stakeholders to optimize the traffic operations in the area between the Almeda exit and Fannin.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **2. IH-45 northbound, entrance/exit to the managed lanes at Loop 610 is poorly situated and jammed into a constricted space** This design issue was introduced in the May 2016 schematics and was carried forward with no changes to the May 2017 schematics. Problem • The northbound entrance/exit to the MaX lanes is located at the exit for the connections to the North Loop. Traffic congestion usually occurs at interchange exit points. Now to further complicate this location, the MaX lane entrance is added at this spot. • Vehicles positioning to enter the managed lanes will be weaving to the left, causing more lane-switching in an already congested area, likely worsening congestion. • Both the northbound and southbound entrance/exit zones are very tight with no shoulders and minimal buffers. There is minimal space between the edge of the lane and pylon separators. (Pylons would likely have a short life.) It will be safer to have a shoulder and/or wider buffers, like the well-designed entrance/exit zones on the Katy Freeway managed lanes. Potential Solution • Move the northbound managed lanes entrance/exit southward to be between Cottage Street and Patton Street (shown in the second diagram below), since properties are already being acquired and widening the right-of-way would have no additional impact. Or, a thin strip of right-of-way can be acquired on the west side, since only lower-tier commercial establishments would be affected. Also add buffer space and/or a shoulder along the managed lanes entrance/exit. • Or, remove the northbound slip ramp entirely and replace with direct connections, as suggested in item 3 below. • For the southbound entrance/exit zone, widen the bridge to provide a wider buffer and/or shoulder to improve safety and driver comfort. Possibly move the entrance/exit zone north to be farther away from the merge point of the connections from Loop 610.	TxDOT agrees that there is need to improve this access point. TxDOT is looking into direct connections to/from I-10 and the MaX lanes to replace the existing HOV/HOT access points near Quitman that will eliminate these slip ramps. If these slip ramps must remain, TxDOT will implement your solution during the during the FEIS phase as it will require additional Right of Way on the southeast corner of the IH 610 interchange.

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175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **3. IH-45 Northbound Managed Lanes: Insufficient Access Inside the Loop** This item has existed on all prior versions of the schematics. But I still believe there is a need for at least one additional northbound entrance inside the loop, and there are potentially feasible options to be considered. Problem • There is only ONE definite access point to the northbound managed lanes inside the loop, from Travis Street downtown. The May 2017 plan shows a potential connection from the IH 10 eastbound express lanes. • Traffic on the northbound IH-45 main lanes, northbound on the downtown spur and westbound on IH-10 cannot get on the managed lanes until the entrance at the North Loop. • Since there is normally a heavy traffic backup inside the Loop between downtown and Loop 610, motorists should have the option of better access to the managed lanes to avoid the traffic jams Potential Solution • Ideally, both the northbound downtown Spur and IH-45 northbound main lanes should have access to the managed lanes in the downtown area. • It appears to be feasible to add access to the northbound managed lanes from both the IH 45 northbound main lanes and the northbound Spur. See the diagrams below. • If both options above are not feasible or not cost-effective, shifting the northbound managed lanes access point to the area south of Patton as suggested in item 2 would help mitigate this problem, and may in fact be the best solution since it would also solve design concern #2.	TxDOT agrees that it would be good for motorists traveling northbound on IH-45 to have direct access to the northbound MaX lanes. TxDOT looked extensively into adding access from both the Spur and IH-45, but there are too many levels/movements to make this a direct connection. TxDOT also looked at providing a direct connection between IH-10 westbound and the MaX lanes in earlier versions of the schematic, but would not work for the same reasons. As noted in responses to your previous comments, TxDOT is looking into direct connections for the MaX lanes to/from IH-10 eastbound (toward the Galleria) that will eliminate the slip ramps south of IH-610 and provide better access. Metro also commented on this and we met with their leadership the week of 6/13/16 to brief them that we were looking into removing the slip ramps and replacing with direct connections.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **4. IH-45 between IH 10 and Loop 610: design standards are compromised, especially the shared shoulder** Due to constricted right-of-way width in this section, the design standards are compromised. Because the west side of the freeway is lined with lower-tier commercial establishments and some vacant lots, it makes no sense to constrict the width and introduce design compromises. Problem • The managed (MaX) lanes don't have a dedicated shoulder due to the constricted right-of-way width • It is unclear from the schematics if there is an adequate merging zone for the northbound entrance ramp just south of Main Street (see issue 6 diagram). This entrance ramp is at the tunnel entrance, and the transition to the tunnel may distract drivers' attention from merging. Ideally an auxiliary lane should be maintained for a distance, possibly all the way to the Loop 610 exit. • The merging distance for the southbound entrance ramp from Cavalcade also appears to be very short. Potential Solution • Ideally, the right-of-way width should be widened to provide standard-width shoulders for both the main lanes and the MaX lanes. • Add a northbound auxiliary lane for at least a short distance for the northbound entrance ramp just south of Main Street, and a southbound auxiliary lane for at least a short distance for the southbound on-ramp from Cavalcade. • Consider using extra right-of-way on the west side which is currently listed as a potential detention area. Replacement detention acreage can be obtained around the truck stop.	The conceptual design was developed with a goal in mind to maximize available existing ROW and minimizing ROW acquisition wherever possible. The current design concept minimizes ROW acquisition needs by reducing the shoulder width and maintaining a uniform width in the managed lane corridor. The TxDOT Roadway Design Manual (RDM) recommends that there be uniform clearance between traffic and roadside features such as bridge railings, parapets, retaining walls, and roadside barriers to maintain a consistent driver experience. The general purpose lanes do have full width shoulders throughout this section. The current design has 630' of accelerating distance and 298' taper distance for the northbound entrance ramp just south of Main St. TxDOT RDM requires a 600' acceleration distance and 265' taper for this ramp. The proposed ramp meets design criteria. The current design has 667' of accelerating distance and 600' taper distance for the southbound entrance ramp from Cavalcade. TxDOT RDM requires a 600' acceleration distance and 265' taper for this ramp. The proposed ramp meets design criteria.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **5. Connections from IH 45 to Loop 610 westbound: Transition zone is too short** Problem • There are six lanes of traffic going westbound including the Loop 610 main lanes and lanes on the connections from IH 45, and these six lanes are reduced to four lanes in too short a distance • This is similar to the present-day situation, where the merging transition zone is too short. Potential Solution Extend the transition zone by adding a westbound auxiliary lane over Main and Yale	The proposed design includes a 2-lane direct connector that merges to 1 lane and eventually adds the 4th lane to I-610 WB mainlanes. The merge occurring at this location is due to the defined project limits for these improvements being at the Main St bridge which would not allow for the mainlanes to be widened over Main St due to potential bridge clearance issues that would be introduced. TxDOT will be procuring a contract that will look into proposed improvements for I-610 from Ella Blvd to Main St. That project will incorporate the NHHIP improvements at the I-45/I-610 interchange.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **6. The connection ramp from IH 10 eastbound to IH 45 northbound has a narrow merge point with the on-ramp from Quitman, and the merge distance with the main lanes appears to be very short** Problem • There appears to be little or no merging zone for the on-ramp from Quitman • The merge zone into the northbound IH 45 main lanes appears to be short or non-existent • The merge zone into the northbound IH 45 main lanes is at the tunnel entrance, and changing lighting conditions may cause additional motorist distraction and stress, potentially making this a dangerous on-ramp if there is not a dedicated auxiliary lane. Potential Solution • The on-ramp from Quitman should have a dedicated lane • The merge into the IH 45 northbound main lanes should have an auxiliary lane, and at the minimum a sufficient transition zone	The design has 182' of taper distance for the northbound entrance ramp from Quitman. TxDOT Roadway Design Manual (RDM) requires a180' taper for this ramp. The ramp meets design criteria. The projected traffic volumes for the I-10 EB to I-45 NB movement are projected to be low and traffic operations for this ramp were confirmed from the traffic model runs that were performed.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **7. The connections from BW8 have only one lane to the southbound IH 45 main lanes, and the transition zone is too short** Problem • On the connection ramp from Beltway 8 to IH 45 southbound, there is only one lane connecting to the IH 45 regular main lanes • The transition/merging zone of the lane coming from Beltway 8 is too short Potential Solution • Have two lanes from the Beltway 8 connection ramp connect to the main lanes • One lane should exit to West Road • The second lane should continue as an extended auxiliary lane across West Road • Additional changes in this area are needed to fix the short frontage road merge distance for the exit/entrance ramp, see issue 8.	The SB ramp from BW8 is two lanes until it splits to one-lane to the MaX lanes and one-lane to I-45. Because of the proximity to the I-45 SB West Rd exit, TxDOT does not have enough weaving distance to merge two lanes of BW8 traffic onto I-45 without introducing a potential backup on the freeway lanes.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **8. Some frontage road off/on ramp merging zones are too short** Problem The length of the auxiliary lane on the frontage road between exits ramps and entrance ramps is short in these locations • Southbound, between West Road and Fallbrook, about 600 feet • Southbound, between Little York and Parker, about 900 feet • Southbound, between Yale and Tidwell, about 1600 feet • Northbound, between Parker and Little York, about 1400 feet Potential Solution • Adjust ramp locations to lengthen the frontage road transition zones • Braided ramps could be warranted in both directions between Parker and Little York • The southbound ramp north of West Road may need major rearrangement in conjunction with a fix for the issue with the lanes from the Beltway 8 ramp (issue 7). I'm thinking that the on-ramp should be included in the ramp to the MaX lanes, but then the currently-planned ramp will have a split point where traffic chooses between the MaX lanes and the main lanes (see diagram).	The merging zone at the location shown meets design criteria. We looked at connecting to the MaX lanes as you show with the red dashed line, but cannot meet required design criteria.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **9. Connecting from southbound IH 69 to southbound IH 45 requires weaving across three lanes in 2200 feet in the tunnel** Problem • Southbound IH 69 traffic connecting to southbound IH 45 must move three lanes to the left in 2200 feet. • Traffic coming from the ramp on the left side will also be moving to the right, causing a weaving zone. • This will be in the tunnel just after entering the tunnel, and people's vision will be adjusting during the day, probably causing some delay in response time, making the connection more stressful for motorists. • In my experience, viewing signage and changing lanes in a tunnel is more difficult than outside of a tunnel, which is another reason to move this connection outside of the tunnel. Potential Solution • Move the connection northward (see diagram). Ideally an auxiliary lane should be maintained on IH 45 southbound, but if an auxiliary lane won't fit, I still think it will be better to move the connection north. • The existing connection should be maintained to serve traffic coming from IH 10 which needs to connect to IH 45 southbound. This change should have a minimal cost. The only potential problem is the auxiliary lane on IH 45, for which there may not be sufficient space.	TxDOT tried to avoid this situation, but could not move the ramp further north because of the other movements between I-45, I-10, Hardy Toll Road Extension, and I-69. Based on the H-GAC model, the I-69SB to I-45SB movement is not projected to be a high-volume movement (same as today), so this situation, while not ideal, is not projected to create a heavy weaving area.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **10. Exit from northbound IH 45 to southbound IH 69: potential for motorists to make a five-lane weave in a short distance** Problem • Vehicles connecting from IH 45 northbound to IH 69 southbound may try to exit to Almeda, making a five-lane weave to the right in 1900 feet. • Traffic entering the freeway from the Webster Street on-ramp will be moving to the left, creating a weave zone. Potential Solution • There appears to be no feasible way to prevent the 5-lane weave from the ramp from IH 45. • The best solution is to minimize the number of vehicles attempting to exit to Almeda. Restoring the exit ramp to Fannin will provide another option for vehicles looking to reach the Midtown area. Without the Fannin exit, it will be 2.3 miles to the next exit at Shepherd, and this long distance will surely cause vehicles from IH 45 to try to reach the Almeda exit. This is another reason to restore the exit to Fannin (see concern #1).	Providing access points along a freeway system is high on the priority list from a design philopshy point of view, however too much access can also introduce conflicts into a system especially when an improvement is being designed in an urbanized location. The concern you stated here has been looked at from both the engineering and traffic perspectives. The proposed traffic models have not identified this access point as being an issue in the proposed configuration. The Fannin exit was looked at in more detail, however, due to the I-69 mainlanes being below grade, there is not sufficient distance to be able to place a ramp to go from below grade to at-grade between cross street, especially between San Janinto and Fannin.

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175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **11. The merge-weave zone for northbound SH 288 connecting into northbound IH 69, and for the exit to Gray Street, is very short, around 1500 feet** Problem • The right lane of the two lanes coming from SH 288 must move to the left • IH 69 northbound traffic exiting to Gray Street will be moving to the right • The merge/weave zone is only around 1500 feet, about the same that exists today, and the lane weaving will be about the same as exists today. The existing weave zone is too short. Potential Solution • Since the SH 288 lanes go over Alabama Street, there is a geometric constraint since the lanes must drop about 45 feet • Move the merge point as far south as possible, possibly by using slim beams on the Alabama overpass and also possibly by a design exception of downgrade percent. A steeper than usual downgrade is preferable to a short and dangerous merging zone. • The westbound Woodall Rodgers Freeway in Dallas has an 8% downgrade for a similar drop, with no negative effect. • By using a 4% downgrade after the Alabama overpass, the connection ramp can be dropped 45 feet in about 1100 feet, which would increase the weave zone length by 500 feet. I think a design exception (if needed) can be justified to get the benefit of a longer weave zone	TxDOT agrees that this is the most challenging weaving segment in the project and it was thus a big focus on developing an overall solution to reduce the associated congestion. As noted on earlier responses, the most beneficial improvement implemented is swapping the positions of US 59/IH 69 and SH 288. However, TxDOT could not remove all weaving sections and the one you noted is the last remaining weave. A longer weaving distance would be ideal in the noted areas, but are constrained by the SH288 northbound vertical and horizontal geometry. TxDOT tested this section with the detailed traffic model (VISSIM) does not show a major weaving issue in this area due to the additional access points provided to/from downtown by the Proposed Recommended Alternative.
175	Slotboom, Oscar	6/8/2017	Email	*LISTING OF THE 12 DESIGN CONCERNS* **12. IH-45 Northbound at Loop 610 is Reduced to Three Main Lanes, the Same as Currently Exists** There is normally traffic congestion south of Loop 610 due to this bottleneck location. The managed lanes will help with this problem, but the managed lanes have poor access in the current plan (see concern #3). Problem • IH-45 Northbound is reduced to three main lanes at Loop 610 • Access to the northbound Max lanes is poor, so most motorists won't be able to bypass backups using the MaX lanes Potential Solution • Maintain four northbound main lanes across Loop 610 • The northbound entrance ramp from the frontage road just south of Loop 610 would not have a dedicated lane	As noted in the previous response, TxDOT is looking into direct connections for the MaX lanes that will eliminate these slip ramps and allow for an additional lane while limiting the additional Right of Way.
176	Tidwell, Larry	6/8/2017	Written	This involves the planning to do away with I-45 through Downtown Houston. I think this would be an insane idea for a couple of reasons. #1. There is nothing wrong with the Pierce Elevated that warrants doing away with it. It's not perfect but it allows traffic to flow that has no other place to go.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
176	Tidwell, Larry	6/8/2017	Written	#2. For anyone to suggest that I-69 just east of GRB Convention Center is able to take on any extra traffic is beyond belief. During the week, on weekends, whenever, this stretch is one of the most heavily congested in all of Houston. For anyone to think this stretch can handle I-45 Pierce Elevated traffic is beyond insane. Makes me wonder does anyone at TXDOT ever drive this stretch? To me this smacks of nothing more than social engineering (having money to spend on road construction and searching for a place to spend it). Of all the crazy things I've seen on Houston freeways/construction, this suggestion takes the cake. You're wanting to take a mass flow of cars from I-45 and divert them to a stretch that already is bumper to bumper, crawling traffic. Just insane. You cannot be serious. There is so much wrong with this idea I can't begin to descrive them all.	Comment noted.
176	Tidwell, Larry	6/8/2017	Written	Pierce elevated has exits on/off to downtown that work. Yes they are overtaxed but it is manageable. Where will that traffic go needing to exit downtown & Allen Parkway? Will they have to drive all across downtown to get on I-69?	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times.
176	Tidwell, Larry	6/8/2017	Written	There are not enough words for me to describe my feelings about how poorly managed TxDOT is when it comes to freeway repairs changes. [TxDOT] seems to have the same approach to rework as my mother would rearrange the furniture. The freeway system is no your toy box to play musical exit and on ramps. Your job should be fix the roads and keep traffic flowing -- period.	Comment noted.
176	Tidwell, Larry	6/8/2017	Written	I've seen roads tore up and repaired that had no damage to them at all. Some roads get fixed super fast (Katy Freeway) while blue collar areas like Hwy 225 bridge repairs took months past the end date and no one working weekends or at nights.	Comment noted.
176	Tidwell, Larry	6/8/2017	Written	You don't consider for one minute the economic impact of closing down a road, the environmental impact of bumper to bumper cars crawling. You have tax dollars searching for a spending home and you don't care who it affects. You will do whatever you want in the end regardless of feedback because you are smarter than everyone. But that's just my opinion.	Comment noted.
177	Joplin, Michael	6/9/2017	Project Website	This website is a great concept and well laid out. Do you have a similar site for the changes that are ongoing for I-45 south from the Beltway to NASA 1?	TxDOT does not have a website for the ongoing I-45 construction projects between Beltway 8 and NASA Road 1. TxDOT is currently conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study for I-45 from US 59/I-69 to Beltway 8, for which TxDOT will have a website and upcoming public meetings.
178	Nguyen, Michael	6/9/2017	Project Website	I am on contract to purchase this lot on 306 Payne St. Since this lot is adjacent to I-45 I was curious to know how my immediate area would be impacted. I am not able to tell from the pdf for SEGMENT 2 how the area is impacted.	The property parcel is not within the proposed project right-of-way.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
178	Nguyen, Michael	6/9/2017	Project Website	It appears the freeway will be wider near my lot is that correct? .. and therefore will a lot more road noise. If so will there be considerations for putting up a tall fence/masonry wall along the neighborhood? Thanks you so much for your time and timely attn to this.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. Between Houston Avenue and White Oak Drive, along the west side of I-45, noise barriers are proposed to mitigate for predicted traffic noise impacts.
179	White Oak Bayou Association	6/9/2017	Written	WOBA would like to express its concerns with respect to the potential for significant environmental impacts of the proposed reconstruction of I-45 on Houston's bayous and adjacent wetlands along the full reach of the project, and in particular on White Oak Bayou, its tributary Little White Oak Bayou, and its receiving stream, Buffalo Bayou. Our major areas of concern are the potential for the project to exacerbate flooding, further disrupt surface water hydrology and shallow groundwater discharge, cause further deterioration of water quality and wildlife habitat, and create potential barriers to pedestrian and wildlife mobility. On the other hand, we see the potential for improvements in some of these area by proper deign and implementation of the project. Houston's ever-expanding freeways are an immense source of stormwater runoff into the bayous and significant contributor to flooding. Runoff from roads impacts water quality, and therefore aquatic habitat, in the immediately receiving streams and in downstream water bodies, including Galveston Bay. Water quality impacts include the presence of oil and other pollutants, trash and, during summer, excess heat which reduces the water's capacity for dissolved oxygen. The subgrade sections of the project could potentially result in such impacts even in dry weather if pumping is required to prevent road flooding by shallow groundwater seepage.	The project would not significantly impact the bayous. The roadways would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou, White Oak Bayou, Halls Bayou, and areas of Little White Oak Bayou. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. TxDOT is coordinating with Harris County Flood Control District and the COH regarding regional drainage and flooding issues. See Section 3.8.3 of the Final EIS for additional information about studies that will be conducted by TxDOT during project design. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures will be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT minimizes potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices.
179	White Oak Bayou Association	6/9/2017	Written	The project's design should mitigate for these impacts by incorporating vegetated detention basin, engineered wetlands and any other appropriate elements to reduce the flow rate into the bayous and remove pollutants. The project should include mitigation not only for the currently proposed construction, but also for past freeway construction projects that predated mitigation requirements.	Detention basins will be vegetated. Wet bottom detention basins will be considered if a partner entity agrees to maintain them. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures would be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. TxDOT will comply with its statewide permit for discharges of stormwater, which was issued by TCEQ in November 2016.
179	White Oak Bayou Association	6/9/2017	Written	The project design, especially in the subgrade sections, should take into account the potential disruption of stream flow, and should not impose barriers to future improvements to the lower reaches of White Oak Bayou, which may include removal of concrete paving and restoration of a meandering channel. When concerns about runoff and flood potential were raised with one of TxDOT's representatives at a 2015 public meeting, the response was that some of the "kinks" (i.e., meanders) in the channel "might have to be straightened out" in order to move the water downstream faster and prevent flooding. This is absolutely the incorrect approach and it is hoped that this response does not in any way reflect TxDOT's actual intended mitigation strategy.	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for the hydraulic impacts of the project. Realignment of channels in the project area is not proposed by TxDOT as part of this project. HCFCD is proposing the North Canal project near the confluence of White Oak and Buffalo Bayous, but this project is separate from the NHHIP.
179	White Oak Bayou Association	6/9/2017	Written	Finally, the project design should safely accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic adjacent to and crossing the freeway, and especially along the waterways. Houston's Bayou Greenways 2020 project has begun a program of major enhancements to and expansion of our parks along the bayous, including improvements to neighborhood access to the parks and connectivity between them. The proposed project should provide for improved access to the parks and should not result in barriers to pedestrians, bicyclists or wildlife. In particular, the project should be designed to accommodate shared-use trails along Little White Oak Bayou from its confluence with White Oak Bayou to the upstream limits of the project, with a connector to Moody Park, as outlined by the Houston Parks Board in its letter to TxDOT dated 3 December 2013.	The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
180	Velgakis, Christina	6/10/2017	Written	In April of 2013, I called FEMA about the retention pond across from my property, since no notice was given to nearby owners. The new school fronting Victoria at Oxford made a small retention pond of their own too, but I found no new changes, designations/updates in Fema's LOMR map. The school also elevated their property but I was denied by the City when I called about elevating mine. I feared water run-off from the school's elevated property would flood my property. I left my concerns with FEMA. Soon after, I received a telephone call from "Matt", who worked at FEMA' s mapping department, in Alexandria Virginia. (I did not obtain his phone number). He sounded upset about not having been contacted about the retention pond project. He said FEMA was never notified or given approval of the retention pond as it related to their Mitigation pond abutting White Oak Bayou and the elevation of its school ground. He recommended I call the COH and/or HCFCD and inquire how permission was obtained. When I called, both denied needing to go thru FEMA. Unfortunately, when I called FEMA to obtain Matt's phone number regarding Project No. 0808, it was not provided and was told I was not allowed to contact the mapping department. During your meeting of May 11th, I gave a reduced version of my concerns with retention ponds, and asked if the State will be contacting FEMA prior to the State's retention pond on Victoria at I-45. I was told to send my concerns to you. When I first purchased my land in 2001, it was not in the floodway according to the Harris County Appraisal District. It was in Zone X. In later years, in 2006 I noticed HCAD placed part of it in the I 00 year flood plane and appears to have expanded. I thought having two Retention ponds on Victoria should lessen the chance of flooding of my property, but it never will – if FEMA doesn't know about them. Today, I checked your website and was surprised to find FEMA's letter to Sylvester Turner, City of Houston Mayor (stamped January 6, 2017, Case No. 06-06-Bl82V) regarding one property belonging to Caitlin Mahoney, in Independence Heights, who purchased vacant land from Innerloop Homes, Inc. [Filed 7/24/2013, Harris County Real Property Records, File No. 20130370746]; who subsequently built a home there in 2014. Although your letter to the Mayor encouraged disseminating information throughout the community, I never received a letter from the previous mayor about the elevation of the new school, their retention pond nor the one fronting Victoria along White Oak Bayou	The community official or agency responsible for floodplain management is usually the official or agency responsible for engineering, public works, flood control, or planning in the community. For the City of Houston, the Director of Public Works and Engineering, working through the Floodplain Management Department, is the official responsible for administering the regulatory system related to flood protection and flood risk reduction. The Director's authority to implement and review ordinances, codes, and official determinations relative to flood protection and flood risk reduction is provided pursuant to Chapter 19 of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances. The City of Houston also coordinates floodplain issues with the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD), which is a Cooperating Technical Partner with FEMA that reviews floodplain modeling and mapping. Therefore, TxDOT does not coordinate directly with FEMA for approval of flood mitigation plans for the proposed project, but will coordinate with Harris County Flood Control District and City of Houston. TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. The retention pond near a school, referenced in the comment, is not a TxDOT detention basin. TxDOT proposes a detention basin north of Victoria Dr., west of I-45. This is a preliminary location and is subject to change when detailed design and drainage studies are prepared.
181	Hagerman, John	6/12/2017	Email	I was furnished the below copy of the proposed taking of 4001 N. Freeway for a detention pond in the expansion of I-45. My tract is the middle tract with an "arrow" pointing toward it saying "potential detention pond". This tract is owned by Rabbit Hill Properties LLC which is my Family Limited Partnership of which I and my wife are the majority owners. This tract is at the northwest quadrant of I-45 and the 610 loop and this is a very central location for quick and easy access to a large part of Houston within minutes. We acquired this 3.8 acre tract some years ago with the thought of building a large multi story office building as the area transitions to a commercial office location. Although we are in the 100 year flood plain, our engineers have said that we can build by raising the office building 3 and one half feet off the surface. When the bayou behind us floods, only a small part of a small dip on the tract gets a few inches of water which runs off quickly; and I have not seen the remainder of the tract have water on it. In contrast, the tract immediately to the south[originally a Howard Johnsons Motel and now a city low income housing project] often gets one to two feet of water into the building and requires extensive repair each time. This southerly adjoining tract is one to two feet lower than our tract. I have ask my engineers,Dannenbaum Engineers, to work with you to see if there is an alternative to the condemnation of our tract for detention purposes. It is possible that the tract to the immediate south of me could be deepened enough to handle the detention required without going to the expense of condemning our tract. On the enclosed condemnation map, there appears to be a wooded tract which is just south and adjoining the old Howard Johnson Motel and the current city housing project which could be added to the detention pond area at lower condemnation cost. If our tract has to ultimately be condemned, we would like to present a proposal where you could get a detention pond easement on the part that you need and that we could retain office or commercial building rights on support columns above your detention pond easement. This alternative could be a win/win in that the detention pond easement would be a lot cheaper to condemn and we could retain elevated commercial building rights on a tract that has minor flooding on a very limited time basis.	TxDOT met with your engineers from Dannenbaum to discuss your property, and determined that it is not possible to avoid the property. TxDOT would not allow construction of columns or a building above a stormwater detention basin.
182	Whitten, Jill	6/12/2017	Email	I think the sky park is a terrible idea and that it should be over I-45 next to the Woodland Heights. There is already a park below the Pierce elevated.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
183	Swinea, Jessie	6/13/2017	Project Website	Has a RFP been released for Design Build Teams?	TxDOT issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to Industry in December 2019. Responses are currently due April 29, 2020. It is anticipated that short-listed teams will be determined this summer from responses to this RFQ. A Draft Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued to the short-listed teams during Summer 2020, but the final RFP is currently anticipated in the beginning of 2021 with proposals due in the Summer of 2021.
184	Razzaghi, Arash	6/14/2017	Email	This project is closing down (Jensen ramp) and limiting entrance/exit access points in my area. Doing so would stunt the growth of this community and it would destroy home values [because] the main reason this community is growing is [because] of its quick access to the major highway. We need the McKee entrance and I-10W feeder road to be enhanced in order to offset the loss of Jensen exit. Perhaps you can add some lanes, fix drainage, add stop lights, etc. This is very important to us and we will fight for these until the very end. Please do no stunt our growth and destroy home values in my area without compensating for the entrance/exit point closures Thanks	Proposed access improvements include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade.

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185	Tyrrell, W	6/14/2017	Project Website	On ramp needs to be retained for 610 east and west bound as well as access to 45 N and S. Irvington at 610 is a major commercial strip for the neighborhood of Lindale Park. Irvington has been labelled as a major collector by the Major Highway Improvement Plan. Limited access to this intersection would greatly restrict North South Mobility in the area within the community as well as bottlenecking traffic on a street containing a light rail. Irvington is the current major artery for neighborhood traffic to and from the neighborhood.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
185	Tyrrell, W	6/14/2017	Project Website	Include beautification elements for freeway siding plant shade trees under freeway along pedestrian crossing for safety as well as to act as a sound barrier for pedestrians crossing to the other side.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
185	Tyrrell, W	6/14/2017	Project Website	Ensure bike and pedestrian lanes easy to use landscaped and provide a sense of beauty and security to those crossing under and around a freeway overpass. This includes lighting art and landscaping of a professional nature. (see midtown/hermann park/discovery green.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project. Lighting design is part of the final design process. TxDOT plans to coordinate with outside groups and organizations to seek input during detailed design. Safety is always a primary concern and is considered at all stages. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
186	Tyrrell, W	6/14/2017	Project Website	The removal [of] Irvingron on and off ramp is seriously ridiculous. You are forcing entrance on the opposite side of the freeway. If this is the preferred options please provide elevated bridge over light rail so as not to impede traffic or bottleneck flow through fulton. Or depress 45 AND 610 and provide capped greenspace so that Heights and Lindale Park neighborhoods will connect. On and off ramps can be provided above grade.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
187	Tyrrell, W	6/14/2017	Project Website	Solution to Segment 2 issue prohibiting access and economic growth along Irvinton Blvd for Lindale Park and North Lindale Residents. Provide Raised frontages on/off over Fulton Blvd to bypass LRT and reduce traffic strains. Have this raised frontage tie into 610 east/west and NEW proposed north-south weaves onto I-45 if possible. This would increase new I-45 interchange lanes to 3 lanes on- and 3 lanes offbound. Alternatively create a raised frontage crossing nw.sw over Fulton Blvd to enter 610 e/w. N/S access can be maintained by accessing 45 from Calvacade, however, access to Irvington east of Fulton by connecting to 610 underneath new I-45 n/s 610 connectors but before proposed on ramp locations west of Fulton.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
188	Parrish, Michelle	6/15/2017	Email	The proposed highway would bring far to much traffic to Chenevert Street between Tuam and Elgin. The street is nowhere near large enough to handle the added traffic and would be dangerous for near by residents and students at the high school, please consider the neighborhood and property values of those of us living here	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
189	Tyrrell, W	6/15/2017	Project Website	Segment 2 pertaining to Calvacade and 45 cross over Link and 45 overpass/Fulton and 610 overpass/Irvingron and 45 overpass. Increase Pedestrian Features along highway. Provide pedestrian bridges where possible including crossing over LRT on Fulton.	There will be sidewalks along the frontage roads in this area. A pedestrian bridge is not proposed at the Fulton - LRT crossing.
189	Tyrrell, W	6/15/2017	Project Website	Sidewalks in 3D visualization are located adjacent to frontage with no landscape barrier.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
189	Tyrrell, W	6/15/2017	Project Website	Coordinate with Walkable Places and Complete Communities within City of Houston to match existing Street Scape plans requiring 6ft bike lanes and 15ft of pedestrian realm, including trees on both sides of sidewalk to provide protection and sound deflection between roadway and sidewalk. Use permeable material for sidewalks.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. TxDOT notes that the City's policy contemplates the inclusion of the City's own Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan. And the policy acknowledges that "Complete Streets" do not mean that all streets are identical. The scope of the City's policy (executive order on Complete Streets) describes the goal that transportation entities (such as TxDOT) will partner with the City, which TxDOT has done. The policy also states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. As described in the Final EIS, the function of the frontage roads on the project is different for different locations. In some locations there are no frontage roads. TxDOT must propose a design that is safe and efficient for the function of the roadway. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. Landscaping on city streets is the responsibility of the COH. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
189	Tyrrell, W	6/15/2017	Project Website	… Trees must be low maintenance and local in nature. Provide shade trees along pedestrian path underneath freeway overpass along with permeable paver walkway so walking path is made clear and safety is increased.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
189	Tyrrell, W	6/15/2017	Project Website	Sufficient lighting to be required along all pedestrian pathways. Bike lanes preferably contain a 1 ft landscaped median between roadway and bikeline. Street Scaping order on frontage road from centerline of street should be as such: Roadway-1ft wide landscaped median with natural grasses, trees, or bioswale/rain garden- 6ft bike lane green in color- (begin pedestrian realm) 6ft tall tree lined (15 ft spacing), landscaped between trees with local grasses and succulents or rain garden/bioswale section in between trees (Trees are to be in line with on another set 2ft back from back of curb to provide utility location and alignment) (Utilities must be aligned together offset from tree line; installed on aesthetically pleasing concrete cutouts)- permeable paver, clearly defined sidewalk or walkway- 3ft landscaped tree lined property line buffer- property line. Pedestrian signals required at all major intersections and freeway underpasses unless aesthetically pleasing landscaped bridges are provided as an alternative.	TxDOT acknowledges the concern raised of bicycle safety and in response has coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. TxDOT would note, however, that both the City's executive order on Complete Streets ("Complete Streets do not mean that all streets are identical.") and Bike Plan provide a framework for improving the functioning of bicycle facilities. They do not mandate certain design standards for every street as they relate to bicycles. With respect to NHHIP, the operation of frontage roads is different from segment to segment, and so the incorporation of bicycle design standards will be different depending on location and operation of the frontage road. It should be noted however, that although the bicycle facilities may vary depending on location, TxDOT is no longer proposing an outside 15' shared use lane. Bicycle facilities will be dedicated facilities and will be detailed during design. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping.
190	Garza, Hector	6/16/2017	Email	Will the new I-45 expansion have the quiet road grooves to keep road noise out of neighborhoods? I've seen it being used on the 290 project and now Katy fwy is being redone to have that implemented.	Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
191	Gabriel, Christine	6/19/2017	Project Website	How do I find out if my property will be impacted by this expansion. The address is 1003 Edwards Houston TX, 77007. I can be reached at 713.703.1378.	The property noted is not in the area of proposed new right-of-way.
192	Joseph, James	6/20/2017	Email	How will the proposed hwy affect the Lyons Ave. exit on the north and south feeder roads of hwy 59/69?	The proposed project will not impact Lyons Ave exits.
192	Joseph, James	6/20/2017	Email	What are the proposed dates of construction and completion?	TxDOT expects to complete the preliminary engineering phase, including obtaining environmental clearance, in 2020. Construction of the initial phase of the projects is expected to be south of downtown, and could begin in 2022, following design and right-of-way acquisition
193	Jean, Terrell	6/23/2017	Project Website	I am the President of Midtown Investment, Inc, that owns the Chenevert Arms Apts located at 3911 - 3933 Chenevert. The maps appear to show this property in the pathway of Seg 3 SH288 to Southmore project.I would like to speak to someone about this project and the aforementioned property.	You may contact the Director of Advanced Project Development, TxDOT Houston District to discuss your property. The noted property is within the proposed new right-of-way for the project.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
194	Pena-Cancino, Daniel	6/23/2017	Written	I looked at the project that you are proposing, and after looking at it for a while, it didn't look appealing on my opinion; I spent the past few months trying hard to come up with a plan that doesn't demolish as many businesses. (Although in the end, I had to demolish some that I didn't want to demolish, but at least I kept some.) I would change nearly everything of the Segment 3, only what's south of Almeada Street would be the same as the original plan with some small changes maybe. I would make changes to I-45 North from Beltway 8 to Main street, but I didn't think that it mattered much, so I did not include it. One of the main things I would do is to keep the Pierce Elevated, I would not reconstruct it unless it's absolutely necessary. I would make the option to put an express lane on I-45 through downtown, but that would be optional. There would also be direct connectors from I-45 and I-10 to US-59, which would go parallel to the I-10 (they would be similar to the US-290 and I-610 to I-10, which are currently under construction), there would also be a collector distributor lanes system at the US-59 from TX-288 to I-10 which would carry traffic to downtown as well as traffic going to/from I-45 and I-10 (you can see the map to understand better). Some benefits that I think my project has would be that I take less ROW than the original plan in some areas, even though I would take some in the areas East of downtown; specifically at the convention center area. There are some areas in which I would add more lanes than in the original Plan. For example, at the I-45 and US-59 combined at the Pierce Elevated I did a total of 26 lanes at its widest point (13 in each direction, three for I-45 at the Pierce Elevated, one Express lane, and three through traffic lanes at US-59 and six lanes for the collector distributor system that would lead US-59 traffic to and from I-10 and I-45), while the original TxDOT plan has 20 lanes (six for US-59 in each direction, three for I-45 south bound, and five for I-45 northbound). I-10 would have four lanes in each direction, the only difference is that the traffic going from US-59 to I-10 and I-45 would go in the four lane connectors that I explained earlier. There was something on which I struggled, it was the McKinney exit from I-45; I came up with something to fix that issue, but I didn't include it because I did not have time to put it here on drawings. That was all the important stuff that I proposed and thank you for reading through here if you did.	Thanks again for your thoughtful analysis and taking the time to draw up your alternatives. As we discussed with you in 2016, we had previously looked into several of your ideas, including keeping the Pierce Elevated as express lanes and/or a MaX lane system. What we found through our detailed traffic study and engineering analysis was that the I-45/I-69 interchange was the bottleneck in the downtown freeway system and was causing the majority of the congestion and resulting high crash rates. Therefore, we had to rethink the routing of traffic into and through downtown for all three interstates in the downtown freeway ring. Keeping the Pierce Elevated as an express/MaX would not work with I-45 rerouted to the north side of downtown as there was no way to tie the lanes back to the existing freeways without impacting operations and sensitive receivers. The solution shown in our 2015 schematic is similar to what is integrated into the US 290/I-610/I-10 interchange as you noted, and our analysis shows this to work efficiently in reducing crashes by up to 60% and increasing flow of traffic by 20 MPH. The number of proposed lanes in this downtown ring solution was carefully selected using the latest H-GAC travel demand model and then with VISSIM microsimulation.
195	Torres, Juan	6/23/2017	Email	While I believe it's a good idea, I also believe you need to be more forward thinking. For example: San Antonio has a double stack freeway for entering and exiting downtown. You should consider a double stack bypassing the downtown exits--for persons driving through. Send the bypass traffic going north past the near Northside. Send the South bound bypass south to the South loop 610. This would help with Reliant stadium event traffic--maybe a Special exit/entrance for Reliant.	The intent of the proposed improvements is to separate the driver's decision points outside of the downtown freeway system, which will reduce the weaving movements and improve traffic flow into and around downtown. An element of this concept includes separating the local and through traffic along I-10. These I-10 Express Lanes will allow for traffic desiring to pass through downtown to do so without interacting with the local movements. This will be supplemented by a signing and driver communication plan to alert drivers of the decision points.
196	Cho, Peter	6/24/2017	Project Website	We do not need more properties affected by this project! You do not need to take more land for the "Potential Detention Pond Location". City of Houston needs to take care of drainage problem with the money we paid each month in the water bill! What happened to the money we paid to City of Houston in water bill the "Drainage Charge" that was supposed to fix drainage problem? Why do we need Detention Pond Locations? The less land and ROW needed the better for citizens of Houston. I do not agree for the need of more land for "Potential Detention Pond Location".	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increases in impervious surface. TxDOT plans to mitigate for more impervious surface than required but will not mitigate for all existing pavement. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure tha the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties.
197	Parker, Wendy	6/24/2017	Project Website	The Germantown Historic District residents (west side of North St.) are not in support of keeping the North St bridge. The majority of North St on the east side of I45 are commercial businesses which are a nuisance to the residents of the west side regarding parking on a weekly basis. The majority of residents on the east side live south of North St., are not affected by the commercial traffic and parking issues, and can utilize either Quitman or N. Main to access Woodland Park.	Comment noted.
198	Crocker, Maureen	6/26/2017	Email	I was just flipping through the IH-45 DEIS and came across something that needs to be corrected in the Historical appendix. Table 1 lists the Navigation underpass as under METRO. It is under the Houston Belt & Terminal Railway.	Comment noted. Information has been corrected in the Final EIS.
199	Harbers, Scott	6/26/2017	Email	I support the removal of the Peirce Elevated, it forms a"grey barrier" dust dirt and trash underthe roadway will remain no matter what is plaed on the top. The "skypark" fails any objective test of realistic urban planning.	Comment noted
200	Korompai, Edward	6/26/2017	Email	I object to the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project. 7 Billion dollars to add a toll lane a waste of tax dollars. "Managed lanes, MAXX lanes and HOV lanes" are a failed academic/government policies and double taxation. It is not worth the effort/inconvenience. Don't overthink this, just build another free lane in both directions.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
201	Lancaster, Karen	6/26/2017	Project Website	I attended the 6/26 meeting at the Cape Center and vehemently protest closing off Polk Street between the East End and Downtown. This essentially cuts off the East End community from downtown. Access to downtown via BOTH Leeland Street and Polk Street need to remain open. The TxDOT rep stated that the reason for closing Polk Street would cut out some of the green space. I don't care about green space. Given a choice between closing Polk and having extra Green Space, I vote for eliminating the green space. East End residents were obviously not taken into consideration in these TxDOT plans. I'm sure this meeting tonight was not the first time that TxDOT heard that the East End residents opposed their plans for cutting off the Polk Street access to downtown, yet no alternative was even considered. It is obvious that TxDOT doesn't care about the East End residents. All TxDOT cares about is getting folks from the Galleria and West side in and out of downtown. I would greatly appreciate this hearing back from someone at TxDOT with a clear plan for leaving Leeland and Polk Streets open between the East End and downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. St. Emanuel St. and the extended Hamilton St. will be designed as city streets with appropriate pedestrian and bicycle accommodations to connect to the greenspace.
202	Large, Monte	6/26/2017	Email	Please focus on the design for the new I-10 freeway interchange on the north side of downtown between I-45 and Hwy 59 bordering the Near Northside and incorporate: - Noise reducing materials, including sound walls and the surface of highway (similar to the I-10 between 610 and Gessner Rd portion)	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
202	Large, Monte	6/26/2017	Email	- A beautiful design that creates an interchange that focuses on aesthetics, including lots of plants and trees	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
202	Large, Monte	6/26/2017	Email	- Designs that reduce the profile (or massiveness) of the interchange The west, east, and south sides of downtown are all benefitting from above ground removal or reduction of freeway infrastructure and unsightliness, while the north side is seeing a significant increase.	Comment noted.
202	Large, Monte	6/26/2017	Email	Since TXDoT will likely not consider burying the freeways here, aesthetics and sound reduction are of imminent importance for sake of environmental justice for the Near Northside. The Near Northside is a historic neighborhood of largely underserved communities of Black and Hispanic people, but deserves the same attention that the Whiter communities on the west, south, and gentrifying east have received. Please design the freeway here with the same care and consideration those other communities have received.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
203	Quijada, Carol	6/26/2017	Project Website	We request the project team reconsider whether the taking of our property is necessary for the expansion. In speaking with the draft team members at one of the hearings, they had a hard time explaining why the sudden change of trajectory right at our property. We hope the project team can review this point so that we are not displaced from our newly purchased home. This area is a highly desired area and finding something similar to what we already have is next to impossible. Additionally, while we understand that the expansion is suppose to help relieve traffic congestion, part of the appeal of this home is its' proximity to the rail which I use daily for work and events.	Additional right-of-way is required in this area in order to accommodate the proposed I-610 direct connectors. It is not possible to avoid acquisition of this property. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
204	Trujillo, Daniel	6/26/2017	Project Website	7710 N Shepherd is not a vacant lot. there is a fully operational, fully independent bakery established here for 3 years.the property was purchased in 2014 and we Employ 45 people. this project will ruin our business and the lives of our employees.	This parcel would be impacted by the proposed project. When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
205	Alsarraf, Faisal	6/27/2017	Project Website	Driving is dangerous. There are people who probably won't move to Houston simply because you have to drive here. Whatever you do, it's time to start thinking about public transportation options. I'm not even a liberal and I love driving. I just think it's getting ridiculous how spread out we are, and having to drive 1 hour to get anywhere is a comment complaint I hear about this city. We are America, why are we falling behind? We should be on top. Houston is being laughed at.	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
206	Bailey, Denise	6/27/2017	Project Website	No to the Polk street closure! Those of us that use It need Polk street! We don't want to be diverted to Leland. The green space your proposing is not easily accessible and therefore not a better alternative to using Polk street	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. St. Emanuel St. and the extended Hamilton St. will be designed as city streets with appropriate pedestrian and bicycle accommodations to connect to the greenspace.
208	Barney, Jonathan	6/27/2017	Email	I think moving I-45 to the east side of downtown Houston will not help at all, and will make traffic worse for everyone.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of Downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated, and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
208	Barney, Jonathan	6/27/2017	Email	I commute south on 59/I-69, through downtown, to southbound on 288. It is far worse than I-45. In fact, I go west on I-10, then south on I-45 to 288, a "shortcut" to avoid 59/I-69 east of Houston, because it is so bad. Fix that.	Comment noted.
209	Boy, James	6/27/2017	Email	The Pearce Elevated was okay in the Early 1960's, however with 6 million people in the Metroplex, it's past time to reroute I 45 and Bypass the center of Houston. Tourism leads to Galveston which adds to the local traffic congestion. Bypassing Houston and widening I-45 is the smart thing to do.	Comment noted
210	Casey, Joseph	6/27/2017	Project Website	Have you considered keeping the Pierce elevated and making it a two tiered road with one tier north bound and one tier south bound?	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
211	Compson, Tom	6/27/2017	Project Website	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity while keeping high-speed transit within the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
212	Cooke, James	6/27/2017	Email	Facing to the north: Double deck I-45 over I-69/US-59, matching the same number of lanes. Prior to the overlap, have traffic for I-10 and I-69/US-59 exit and merge with the I-69/US-59 lanes. Swing the I-45 lanes to the north right after downtown, increasing the number of lanes (vice versa for the southbound lanes).	A double-deck alternative was considered, but was not feasible because movements between all three interstates coming into downtown could not be accommodated.
213	Coursey, Jack	6/27/2017	Project Website	this is the stupidest thing I have ever heard of. Somebody is crazy. Do not do this under any circumstances.	Comment noted.
214	Criner, Sanford	6/27/2017	Email	Moving I45 east of Houston's CBD and depressing it below grade is the best idea I have heard from TXDOT in a long time. It accomplishes the mobility improvements that are so critical while also improving the quality of Houston's built environment and creating the possibility of a better quality of life for Houstonians.	Comment noted.
215	Dalgity, Michael	6/27/2017	Email	Running 45 alongside 59 is a good idea to relieve congestion on the roads. The idea that speeds will increase by 20 mph is far fetched considering that curves and interchanges are what bogs our traffic down. With out proper design of interchanges, traffic will be the same if not worse no matter how big you make it.Clearly mark them well in advance.	Comment noted
216	Dean, Mieschia	6/27/2017	Project Website	Please do not remove pierce elevated, downtown is difficult to commute in and out of anyway and starting construction in this area will lead to more issues. I want to get home to my family as soon as possible so please no construction.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
217	Fehl, Michael	6/27/2017	Project Website	Please do not run 45 and 69 parallel behind the GRB. This will severely impct the Eado neighborhood and make the areas around the stadiums less pedestrian friendly. I do agree that something needs to be done about the Pierce Elevated. If it is to be re-routes to the East side of GRB please double-deck the freeway like sections of I-35 through Austin.	Currently, the freeway in this section is elevated. The proposed project would include I-45 and US 59/I-69 as depressed in this section, allowing for the addition of greenspace above portions of the roadways. Streets crossing the freeway would have pedestrian and bicycle accommodations per the COH bike plan.
218	Franklin, Tonita	6/27/2017	Email	Please provide a simple explanation of the proposed changes. It is hard to follow the diagrams of the I-45 Downtown changes.	A summary of the proposed design changes is included in Section 2 of the Final EIS.
219	Fruge, Ernest	6/27/2017	Email	The need for a public-transit connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles). TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project. As part of a separate project, TxDOT is studying incorporating transit into the I-10 corridor in between I-610 and downtown.
219	Fruge, Ernest	6/27/2017	Email	TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to preserve or reconstruct the Franklin Street ramp.	The existing Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. The connector would be replaced with a dedicated bus lane along I-10.

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220	Garza, Nicholas	6/27/2017	Project Website	Adding more lanes to the freeway would hurt business even more for wrecker services that do not have a safe clear contract and make the ones who do have the contract richer.	Comment noted.
221	Hoffman, Michael	6/27/2017	Email	The relocation of I-45 does a disservice to the historically disenfranchised East End. The new plan cuts off vital road ways into downtown (Polk St.) and eliminates thriving East Side businesses.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. The proposed project requires new right-of-way between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St. in the EaDo area. Businesses on those parcels would be displaced. It is not expected that economic development forecasts for the EaDo area would change due to the proposed project. Businesses or tenants of properties impacted by the project will be offered relocation assistance.
221	Hoffman, Michael	6/27/2017	Email	Focus on alternative modes of transportation!	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.
221	Hoffman, Michael	6/27/2017	Email	Graphics which show an unfunded park on top of the road way to increase community support are misleading.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
222	Hoffman, Michael	6/27/2017	Project Website	The relocation of I-45 does a disservice to the historically disenfranchised East End. The new plan cuts off vital road ways into downtown (Polk St.) and eliminates thriving East Side businesses. Graphics which show an unfunded park on top of the road way to increase community support are misleading. Focus on alternative modes of transportation!	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the decks to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
223	Janet	6/27/2017	Project Website	Closing Polk St. is a bad development for neighborhoods in the East End of Houston. We have watched our access to downtown disappear street-by-street for the past 20 years. I wish to protest the closure of Polk St. which will further close off our part of town from downtown Houston and areas on the other side of downtown. Our population, our enterprises and our businesses will suffer.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
224	Jones, Ervin	6/27/2017	Project Website	I like the idea. The Pierce Elevated area always has bad traffic no matter when you drive thru there.	Comment noted
225	Joseph, Courtney	6/27/2017	Email	Please leave the 45 downtown exchange as it exists. There's NO reason to move it.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
225	Joseph, Courtney	6/27/2017	Email	Improve cross city mass transit but leave the freeways alone for those of us that rely on it daily.	Comment noted.
225	Joseph, Courtney	6/27/2017	Email	Or if you're gonna mess with it, finish the rest of the projects. All the concurrent construction is awful for those of us working and have to commute.	Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
226	Kandyce	6/27/2017	Project Website	Please move 45 S to downtown .. Driving 2 hours in the morning and three coming back home. Moving this would save drivers more time	I-45 south of Downtown is not part of the current project, and will be evaluated as a future project.
227	Kathryn	6/27/2017	Project Website	please don't	Comment noted.
228	Kleiber, Matthew	6/27/2017	Email	Rather than demolishing the Pierce Elevated, you should consider converting it to managed lanes as described here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9Ygq5Ilh865b09XMWQyLWc0M2s/view	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
229	Lancaster, Karen	6/27/2017	Email	I attended a meeting last night whereby TxDOT presented their plans for the highway project in Houston. (http://www.ih45northandmore.com) This project is an absolute insult to the folks that reside in East End. We always seem to get shafted. At the meeting it was suggested that an alternative was to close off Leeland instead of Polk; still insulting us East Enders further. We need to stand up to these bullies at TxDOT. This is a plan that has been in the works for years. George R. Brown Convention Center and the Greater Houston Partnership's input was considered -- these are the moneymakers. Input from the East End residents seemed to be nonexistent. It is obvious that we do not bring in the big bucks nor do we line the pockets of the folks that will benefit from this project. All we do is work, reside and pay taxes in this City. Additionally, they talked about choosing between a green space or closing Polk. NOT CLOSING POLK is FAR MORE IMPORTANT than a green space. The green space is useless because folks would have to cross a feeder with 50 mph traffic to even use. This is ridiculous! Please do what you can to get this project halted until the Polk Street closure is resolved! Thank you very much for your kind attention to this very important issue, as going forward with this plan will affect our East End community in a very negative way.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. St. Emanuel St. and the extended Hamilton St. will be designed as city streets with appropriate pedestrian and bicycle accommodations to connect to the greenspace. Speed limits on city streets will not signed for 50 mph.
230	Larson, Gary	6/27/2017	Email	Polk and Leeland shouldn't be cut off (we were told it was one or the other; Polk was chosen to be disconnected). Surely there's a way. Polk and Leeland are the only continuous routes into downtown from the East End.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
230	Larson, Gary	6/27/2017	Email	If it *[cutting off Polk and Leeland]* means sacrificing a green space (where you have to cross a feeder to even get there), then there shouldn't be a green space.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. The proposed project will not affect access to east downtown via Leeland Avenue; Leeland Avenue will remain.
231	Martorell, Michael	6/27/2017	Email	The idea is good, but to spend $7 billion just to increase traffic flow by a dismal 20mph is a total waste of time, energy, and money. For that cost, you mind as well build a bullet train down the middle of I-45 from Houston to Galveston that goes 150mph. That would be money well spent.	Comment noted.
232	Mischnick, Kara	6/27/2017	Project Website	Please don't remove the Pierce Elevated!!!	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
233	Nicosia, Paul	6/27/2017	Email	TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way, as well modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity between downtown the 290/610 area.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
234	Ojeda, Joseph	6/27/2017	Project Website	Short and simple ... NO!!! It will clog an already congested rush hour. I do not want to have to pay to get to work, via toll roads.	Comment noted.
235	Park, Matthew	6/27/2017	Email	Yes please do move the I45 it needs to be bigger.	Comment noted.
236	Phillips, Jennifer	6/27/2017	Project Website	This will not help traffic at all. Just add another HOV lane going in both directions at all times (like I-10) and add lanes. I drive the road every day, traffic will be there no matter what. Construction will make my commute worse for many, many years and add unwanted mileage to my car once all is said and done. Re-routing a road make absolutely no sense at all. Just a waste of tax payers money.	Comment noted.
237	Pohl, Robert	6/27/2017	Email	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
238	Powell, David	6/27/2017	Project Website	I-10/I-45 Relocation Comments Summary • Need to improve Near North Side (or NNS, north of UPRR tracks) access to I-10. Only way to get to/from I-10 without waiting for a train is through the Hernandez tunnel on North Main. North Main is useless as a main vehicle corridor and wait times at stop lights on North Main are excessive.	TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street.
238	Powell, David	6/27/2017	Project Website	Suggestions • I-10 WB exit to NNS appears to be missing - this currently occurs under Hardy St overpass. • U-turn is needed under I-10 to permit NNS I-10 WB traffic to easily switch to I-10 EB. • There's a plan to eventually connect San Jacinto to Fulton. Now is the time to make provision for this SJ-Fulton road to be main traffic collector permitting NNS residents to easily access I-10 EB and WB. As an interim option, would be helpful if the Elysian Viaduct project could include a SB exit ramp (south of UPRR tracks) to allow NNS resident to access I-10. • Routh I-10 over top of North Main Park-N-Ride lot (moving I-10 adjacent to the UPRR tracks) to flatten the curve. The North Main Park-N-Ride lot could be located south (closer to the UHD buildings) or even stay under the elevated I-10 to provide covered parking. Rumored that a UHD STEM center was to be built at this location, but shifting of I-10 north would permit the STEM center to be shifted south closer to the main UHD buildings.	1. The I-10 westbound exit that allows NNS access is located just west of Meadow St. (just east of US 59/I-69). This exit will span over US 59/I-69, goes under Jensen Dr. and the railroad, and then connect to Providence St. westbound. 2. A proposed U-turn from Providence St. to the proposed Rothwell St. improvement (eastbound parallel to I-10) is located just east of North Main St. A connection from Providence St. to North Main St. has also been added based on public comments. 3. This option was evaluated and was found to not meet design standards. 4. TxDOT has been closely coordinating with the University of Houston Downtown regarding their plans for expansion and have come to an agreement regarding accommodating this expansion. Additionally, railroad ROW grading makes this area unusable for the proposed project.
239	Pritle, Robert	6/27/2017	Project Website	I travel the Texas highways frequently. Thank you, TxDOT for the great job you do! Although there have been a lot of objections to high speed rail, it is needed now and will be extremely valuable in the future. Many in Houston voiced objections to the rail going downtown, but ii was not one of them. It would be great if you could make it happen!	TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project. If this separate project moves forward, TxDOT will accommodate its design where possible, and will coordinate with the lead agency.
240	Rabie, Shareef	6/27/2017	Email	I support moving I-45 to run parallel to US-59. There isn't enough space to keep it where it is now. I vote yes to move forward with this excellent project.	Comment noted.
242	Raine, Justin	6/27/2017	Project Website	I oppose the current proposal to demolish the Pierce Elevated and reroute Interstate 45 to the east side of Downtown. While the effort to remove an elevated freeway is commendable, the benefits do not outweigh the costs - the aesthetic benefits of removing the Pierce are overstated, as Midtown and Downtown have grown around and adapted to the viaduct over the decades; meanwhile, East Downtown will be monumentally disrupted by the right-of-way takings required to reroute I-45. The capacity added by this project is not sufficient to solve the congestion problem (no amount of new lanes really could), and serious bottlenecks still exist, as mentioned in the Purple City analysis of the proposal. Re-configuring the Pierce Elevated into a one-way freeway carrying the southbound lanes of I-45 would add capacity without consuming excess ROW. I-45 could essentially form a "loop" around downtown, with the northbound lanes running along the east side. Urban freeways are unfortunate, but it is financially inefficient and harmful to give up existing ROW and then consume so much new ROW somewhere else. Existing ROW should be used as much as possible. Otherwise, I generally support the other major project proposals to shift I-10 to run along the southern boundary of Hardy Yards and to trench I-69 through Midtown. Any trenching proposals should aim to incorporate an overhead park as much as possible.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
243	Randazzo, Daniel	6/27/2017	Email	I would like to see what seven billion dollars would do to our public transportation situation instead.	Comment noted.
244	Reinhardt, Chris	6/27/2017	Project Website	It seems that the most cost effective and most feasible solution to downtown Houston's traffic mess it to make the I45/I10/I69 interchange into one big one way traffic circle. Traffic enters from the right and exits to the left. No merging of on and off traffic to deal with. Anywhere from 8 to 10 lanes in the same direction. And most importantly, no need to tear down existing freeways, just modify existing entrance/exits. Imagine TxDOT doing something that saves money, unlike the demolish and completely rebuild mentality that TxDOT is addicted to	This alternative was studied extensively in 2015, but was found to not provide enough weaving distance to allow access to the three intersecting interstates and thus would create more congestion in the downtown freeway ring.
245	Rios, Rosie	6/27/2017	Email	I think this whole construction stuff is all a waste of time making traffic worst than it already is so why move a I-45 from where it has been for a very long long time, it should just stay in place finish the construction yall have started and quit wasting money on things we dont need and spend it on thing we do need, Leave I45 alone.	Comment noted.
246	Robertson, Thomas	6/27/2017	Project Website	I am a resident of Houston just west of Downtown, and I would like to express my support for the project as planned. The benefits of reconnecting Downtown to the rest of the city will be manifold, and the capacity increases strike a fair balance between traffic needs and the reality that cities will always have a base level of congestion with thriving activity. The valid concerns of Ea Do residents notwithstanding, we will not be missing the Pierce once it is gone. While my personal preference would be to create some sort of signature bridge complex over Buffalo Bayou, nevertheless there is no need to let the perfect be the enemy of the good	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
247	Rodriguez, Elynn	6/27/2017	Email	Whie it's impossible to decipher the diagrams on your website, I want to tell you that your plans to cut off the east end of Houston's access to downtown are terrible. You will be inconveniencing the commute downtown for thousands of residents and hurting the revitalization happening this area. Also comment cutoff date on your website is incorrect	Anyone with questions about the project may contact TxDOT for additional information. You may also visit with TxDOT. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. The proposed project requires new right-of-way between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St. in the EaDo area. Businesses on those parcels would be displaced. It is not expected that economic development forecasts for the EaDo area would change due to the proposed project. TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. In response to a request from an elected official**,** TxDOT extended the comment period after the Draft EIS Notice of Availability and Public Hearing was distributed (changed from June 27, 2017 to July 27, 2018).
247	Rodriguez, Elynn	6/27/2017	Email	Also comment cutoff date on your website is incorrect	The comment period on the DEIS was extended after the public hearing per a request from elected officials.
248	Smith, Irv	6/27/2017	Project Website	Urge you to retain connectivity options from Dallas HSR terminal NW of CBD into the CBD. Essential for future flexible transportation.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
249	Swinburne, Olinda	6/27/2017	Email	Connecting the Hardy to 45 itself, before and after 45 would relieve a lot of traffic. And of course city and county can profit from drivers paying to take this alternate route.	Connections to the Hardy Toll Road were previously evaluated during the alternatives analysis, however, traffic modelling results indicated this alternative would not achieve the desired mobility improvement. Extending the Hardy Toll Road to Downtown is a separate project that would be sponsored by the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA).
250	Taylor, Kelly	6/27/2017	Project Website	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity while keeping high-speed transit within the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
251	Tidwell, Larry	6/27/2017	Project Website	To even consider this idea of closing down I-45 is absurd. Like all the other freeways are so wide open they beg to take in more traffic.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Traffic studies for the proposed project showed that in 2011, travel speeds on I-45 (Pierce Elevated) and US 59/I-59 in the Downtown area were typically less than 30 mph. The Preferred Alternative would provide the greatest improvement to mobility by increasing travel speeds around the Downtown Loop System by 20 to 25 mph. The increased travel speeds would be achieved by means of reconfiguring the Downtown Loop System, which would allow through traffic to bypass Downtown via the I 10 express lanes and the I 45 general purpose lanes on the east side of Downtown. Local traffic would have improved access to Downtown.
251	Tidwell, Larry	6/27/2017	Project Website	TXDOT should consider the harm to the traveling public while construction is going on vs what good is gained. In the end, no freeway will flow more freely and at the expense of years of construction and hassle to commuters. But I don't think you really care,you're going to do whatever you want anyway.	Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction. The project plans and specifications will include provisions requiring the construction contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems. TxDOT contractors and developers shall comply with local construction noise ordinances. During construction, TxDOT will maintain a comparable number of travel lanes as currently exist. Some portions of the proposed project would be on new location, which will allow some construction to take place without impacting existing traffic. Traffic studies for the proposed project showed that in 2011, travel speeds on I-45 (Pierce Elevated) and US 59/I-59 in the Downtown area were typically less than 30 mph. The Preferred Alternative would provide the greatest improvement to mobility by increasing travel speeds around the Downtown Loop System by 20 to 25 mph. The increased travel speeds would be achieved by means of reconfiguring the Downtown Loop System, which would allow through traffic to bypass Downtown via the I-10 express lanes and the I-45 general purpose lanes on the east side of Downtown. Mobility would also improve on other highways in the project area.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
251	Tidwell, Larry	6/27/2017	Project Website	I-59 going by George R.Brown is a nightmare now with cars jockeying to take exits off to downtown.figuring out which lanes to get into 288/59 south. Same thing for the north side.The whole idea tells me you do not ever take this stretch of road at least during peak times	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
252	Tiu, Lyndon	6/27/2017	Project Website	I fully agree with removing the Franklin Street HOV lane beside the old PO, as the immediate west side of downtown is rapidly becoming residential/light commercial and we do not need the daily rush hour traffic going through our neighborhood with the added noise and exhaust pollution.	Comment noted.
253	Tompkins, Michael	6/27/2017	Email	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be needed once the high-speed rail station is operational.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
253	Tompkins, Michael	6/27/2017	Email	TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection.	The existing Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. The connector would be replaced with a dedicated bus lane along I-10.
254	Turner, David	6/27/2017	Project Website	I am really against removing the Pierce Elevated. The Pierce Elevated provides good access to the downtown from any direction as it is. Removing it would seem to push more traffic to surface streets and make the downtown harder to access via freeway. Also, this plan is ridiculously expensive. Why not just add ramp lanes to 69/10, sign those sections as 45 so through-traffic bypasses the Pierce, and leave it in place? Any way about it, I do not like this plan at all.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
254	Turner, David	6/27/2017	Project Website	Also, this plan is ridiculously expensive. Why not just add ramp lanes to 69/10, sign those sections as 45 so through-traffic bypasses the Pierce, and leave it in place? Any way about it, I do not like this plan at all.	Starting in 2011, TxDOT began evaluating alternatives for providing additional highway capacity in the North-Hardy Corridor, building on previous studies that recommended adding four (4) managed lanes to the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor from Downtown Houston to Beltway 8 North. During the project development process for the recommended highway improvements, the team evaluated traffic projections, regional roadway planning, engineering factors, environmental constraints, and potential project impacts. In addition, input from the public, agencies, and other stakeholders was considered in the development and analysis of alternative solutions, including the preferred alternative documented in the Final EIS.
255	Brandau, Stephen	6/28/2017	Email	Please please please, if you're going to pick between Leeland or Polk going over the new mega freeway, make it Polk. If you stop Polk from crossing over the freeway you're only widening the wall that is the GRB separating the two sides.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
257	Brents, Sarah	6/28/2017	Email	Please reconsider cutting the east end residents off from downtown by eliminating access from Polk on the I-45 expansion plan in Houston. The area has seen drastic improvement and property values have increased due to it's close proximity to downtown and attractive businesses/residents for young professionals. Cutting off Polk is detrimental.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
258	Hinson, Colton	6/28/2017	Email	I think instead of moving 45 to mirror 59 we need to make an additional elevated that would be a complete bypass of all of downtown from one side of 610 to the other. A majority of the traffic downtown is nothing but a pass through, and having a set of lanes that completely bypass all exits downtown, would be very beneficial.	The intent of the proposed improvements is to separate the decision points outside of the downtown freeway system which will reduce the weaving movements and improve traffic flow into and around downtown. The key element of the proposed project in the downtown area includes physically separating the local and through traffic movements along each of the three interstates entering downtown. The section of I-45 that is in the same corridor as US 59/I-69 would be physically separated from US 59/I-69 under the highway cap. This is the same for I-45 along the north side of downtown where it is in the same footprint as I-10. I-10 Express Lanes will allow for traffic desiring to pass through downtown to do so without interacting with the local movements. The decision points for all three interstates will be supplemented by a signing and driver communication plan to alert drivers well in advance.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
259	Jana, Sucharita	6/28/2017	Written	I own a home just southeast of the I-10/I-45/I-59 interchange. I am opposed to the proposed project because not only does the proposed project not include any improvements to access to this area, but rather, makes access to the area substaintially worse. This area is currently growing, and the upcoming Midway project will add thousands of residents and business traffic to the area. I'm hoping, at this point, to merely maintain the status quo.	Existing access at the southeast corner of the interchange will be maintained, with the improvement of adding a continuous frontage road on the south side of I-10 from Gregg St. to Waco St. This will improve access from the proposed Midway development.
259	Jana, Sucharita	6/28/2017	Written	I request that TxDOT: 1. Maintain the Gregg I-10 East entrance ramp, 2. Keep Nance St. as a two-way frontage road between Jensen and Meadow (not one-way), and 3. Maintain the Jensen exit on I-10 West. If TxDOT were to consider increasing access to the area, I request: a Clinton Dr. exit from 59 North and US 59 South exit ramp to Lyons.	1. The design has been revised to maintain the Gregg St. entrance ramp. 2. Nance will be maintained as a two-way city street between Jensen Dr. and Meadow St. 3. The existing Jensen St. exit had to be moved further west to avoid conflicts with the proposed I-10 at US 59/I-69 interchange. A railroad underpass has been added to the design. 4. We looked into connecting NHHIP to/from Clinton Drive, but could not make a ramp work due to the elevation differences and the proximity of the railroad tracks. We have to maintain at least 23.5 feet over the railroad tracks, so this does not give us enough horizontal distance to bring a ramp from Clinton Dr to or from NHHIP. The same access points to and from the southeast corner of the I-69/I-10 interchange will remain after NHHP. We are also adding a missing section of eastbound frontage road between Gregg St and Waco St to improve local circulation.
260	Lawrence, Ray	6/28/2017	Project Website	I am strongly in favor of tearing down the Pierce Elevated and rerouting I-45 around the east side of the CBD. Pierce Elevated is an ugly Boa Constrictor that impedes views of Downtown from the west. It should be replaced by a beautifully landscaped elongated park and at grade boulevard with esplanades along which apartment and condominium towers can be built to make Houston a more walkable, more cosmopolitan, higher density city.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
261	Mears, Ed	6/28/2017	Written	We support the project to improve traffic and reduce traffic congestion in Houston. This project will improve the corridor for Economic Development and benefit the employees of our firm. Further, we strongly recommend the use of Design-Build contracting to accelerate construction and provide a variety of design and construction solutions for TxDOT. Lastly, the project will provide needed jobs for our industry, jobs which provide local economic benefit.	Comment noted.
262	Ontiveros, Jemima	6/28/2017	Project Website	I propose to make I-45 like in New York. They have two levels- the top is incoming traffic and the botttom is outgoing traffic with multiple lanes.	A double-deck alternative was considered, but was not feasible because movements between all three interstates coming into downtown could not be accommodated.
263	Ruiz, Estela	6/28/2017	Email	Instead of redirecting I-45 to parallel I-69, add express lanes over I-45 as it already exists. This would decrease congestion but not eliminate the current I-45 as it currently exists.	Elevating lanes is strongly opposed by the public. Additionally, elevated lanes are not feasible in this area because support structures would interfere with connections to local streets and other freeway systems.
264	Samson, Britney	6/28/2017	Email	Please, please do not close Polk or Leeland or eliminate our access into downtown. My husband and I, both in our early 30s, purchased a home in the East End at Polk & Baird last year. We are first time home buyers and this would simply be detrimental to our commutes. Please consider alternate options. We deserve access to downtown and its offerings	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
265	Simmons, Philip	6/28/2017	Email	We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. Do not demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
266	Volkmer, Jamie	6/28/2017	Written	Closing Polk Street will aggrivate parking problems at events at the Convention Center and Toyota Center. If the project included a walking/biking bridge over where polk currently is, it would allow parking on the EaDo side without forcing people to walk at lease six blocks out of their way to get to events. It would also allow businesses on the EaDo side to benefit from those events by getting more people near their businesses.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with Houston Sports Authority and Houston First and their consultant team during design and construction.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
267	Welch, David	6/28/2017	Email	I am appalled by the expansion of the R.O.W. at the cost of low-income housing communities, valuable downtown apartment properties, and the further physical separation of minority communities from the downtown business district.	TxDOT coordinated and will continue coordinating with the Houston Housing Authority and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses used by low-income and/or minority populations, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Documentation of the coordination and outcomes is included in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report and Final EIS. When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
267	Welch, David	6/28/2017	Email	The only efficient and effective way to handle the movement of more people is to add transit to the corridor.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
268	Witmer, John	6/28/2017	Project Website	As a resident of the East End the connection to downtown must be maintained so we do not deal with the same problem with now face with Midtown being separated from downtown by the Pierce Elevated. I would like the project team to consider multiple access points to downtown, including maintaining Polk and Leeland St. I do not believe one connection at Leeland will be enough when we think about 30-40 years down the line and the rapid growth of EaDo.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
269	Cromer, Walter	6/29/2017	Project Website	This project is folly. You are talking about closing down and remodeling a major throughfare in Houston for a minimum of 2 years. Those who use 45 to travel through town would now have a much longer commute for a very minimal gain in speed at peak hours only. Given the history of construction "projects", I think it would be a folly to try to reroute a major highway.	Construction of the proposed project will be conducted in phases and no highways will be "closed down". Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design. When construction timelines are established, TxDOT will work to accurately and thoroughly communicate important information, such as temporary lane closures. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Traffic studies for the proposed project showed that in 2011, travel speeds on I-45 (Pierce Elevated) and US 59/I-59 in the Downtown area were typically less than 30 mph. The Preferred Alternative would provide the greatest improvement to mobility by increasing travel speeds around the Downtown Loop System by 20 to 25 mph. The increased travel speeds would be achieved by means of reconfiguring the Downtown Loop System, which would allow through traffic to bypass Downtown via the I 10 express lanes and the I 45 general purpose lanes on the east side of Downtown. Local traffic would have improved access to Downtown.
270	Naff, Lorne	6/29/2017	Project Website	I think that the DOT should seriously consider the Purple City plan located at: http:l/purple.city/2016/03/10/a-better-plan-for-the-downtown-ring/ It is more cost-effective and does not require as much space to be carved out of the new and fairly vulnerable development that has sprung up around the east side of I-59 near downtown. Additionally, it makes further use of the fairly new revamp of the Pierce Elevated.	The innovative Purple City Plan was extensively reviewed by the design team and carefully evaluated. The Plan was found to have design conflicts at the major interchanges and did not account for the required railroad grade separations. These conflicts were presented to the Purple City engineer over several meetings during the alternatives development.
271	Klein, Barry	6/30/2017	Email	In response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the NHHIP, would like to see a more through investigation done of costs and benefits that may flow from the No Build Alternative than we see in the DEIS for the North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP). For instance, as congestion grows in the No Build Alternative we can expect to see slower speeds on I-45 and thus fewer vehicular accidents that lead to physical injuries and fatalities. I do not think the DEIS shows that outcome of the No Build alternative as a benefit, though it clearly would be.	TxDOT has made every effort to minimize adverse impacts to neighborhoods and associated quality of life issues of the residents of neighborhoods. An important purpose of the EIS process is to identify potential impacts resulting from a proposed project, including beneficial and adverse impacts, and to identify measures that may avoid, minimize, or mitigate unavoidable adverse impacts. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) implementing regulations and related guidance, the EIS considered various environmental, socioeconomic, and other impacts for each reasonable alternative considered.

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271	Klein, Barry	6/30/2017	Email	Secondly, if the capacity of I-45 and the downtown freeway network is not expanded then we are likely to see less urban sprawl and a larger portion of future growth settle on older parts of the road system in the closer-in areas of Houston and Harris County. Therefore the No Build Alternative will likely preserve more of the Houston and county tax base than alternatives that make travel easier to the northern parts of the region including adjoining Montgomery County which is competing with Harris County for regional growth.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.
271	Klein, Barry	6/30/2017	Email	Thirdly, the projected taking of 331 commercial locations and 1200-plus residential units (single family and apartments) will mean a loss of property tax and sales tax revenue that may never be recovered. The DEIS does not squarely address this risk, nor does it discuss the reduced tax revenue from properties that are not taken for the project but would still be impacted by a loss of customers and potential buyers.	The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. Negative and positive economic impacts are possible, depending on where displaced residents and businesses relocate, and future redevelopment and economic growth (see Section 5.3 in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report). The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction.
271	Klein, Barry	6/30/2017	Email	Fourthly, The DEIS does not make an effort to measure or quantify the shrunken quality of life that will be an unavoidable outcome from years of unpredictable congestion that will result from the many years of construction, including loss of safety lanes, narrowed travel lanes, and the frequent changes in travel lanes road users will have to adapt to.	Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's traffic mobility goals. TxDOT has made every effort to minimize adverse impacts to neighborhoods and associated quality of life issues of the residents of neighborhoods. An important purpose of the EIS process is to identify potential impacts resulting from a proposed project, including beneficial and adverse impacts, and to identify measures that may avoid, minimize, or mitigate unavoidable adverse impacts. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) implementing regulations and related guidance, the EIS considered various environmental, socioeconomic, and other impacts for each reasonable alternative considered. The analysis of quality of life considerations included evaluation of existing neighborhood resources (for example, residences, businesses, parks, churches and other places of worship, historic properties, public land, visual/aesthetic characteristics) and the potential impacts of construction, traffic noise, air emissions, changes in access, right-of-way acquisition, etc. Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project are evaluated.
271	Klein, Barry	6/30/2017	Email	Fifthly, The DEIS does not deal with the safety and economic consequences of a terrorist attack or thousand year flood event (See "Off The Charts" Allison-type storm: https://www.hcfcd.org/media/1351/ts-allison_pubreportenglish.pdf) on the expanded freeway section placed below grade in the Central Business District. I ask that the FEIS investigate those possibilities.	The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design.
271	Klein, Barry	6/30/2017	Email	Lastly, speaking more generally, besides the direct impacts of the project I would like to see indirect and cumulative effects fully explored; by this I mean (borrowing from the 2009 TxDOT document, Guidance on Preparing Indirect and Cumulative Impact Analyses, page 3) "growthinducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate in the regional economy, and the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions." I ask that the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the NHHIP include discussion of all these concerns.	The Final EIS includes an updated indirect and cumulative impacts analysis with additional information regarding growth inducing effects. The indirect and cumulative impacts analysis included in the Final EIS was prepared in accordance with TxDOT and FHWA requirements. The updated technical report were posted on the project website as they were developed and were also available at the TxDOT Houston District office.
272	Crocker, Maureen	6/30/2017	Email	"3.4.1.2 Railroads Three freight rail lines traverse the general vicinity of the proposed project area: -The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) parallels the Hardy Toll Road from north of Beltway 8 to I-610, then parallels the Elysian Viaduct and continues to I-10 and US 59/I-69. The rail line passes under I-10 and US 59/I-69 then veers to the east near Franklin Street. -The Southern Pacific Railroad has two rail lines in the general vicinity of the proposed project area. One rail line runs north-south between I-610 and I-10 on the west side of US 59/I-69 and parallels the UPRR tracks. The rail line has an underpass at I-10 then veers west, paralleling Washington Avenue beyond the study area. Another Southern Pacific rail line enters the proposed project area approximately one-half mile north of the I-10/US 59 interchange and continues westward on the north side of I-10. -The Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad is an east-west rail line paralleling the north side of I-610." Lines 6 and 9 reference Southern Pacific tracks that are now owned by UPRR. Line 12 track is owned by the Houston Belt and Terminal Railway (HB&T).	Comment noted. Information was corrected in the Final EIS.
273	White, Joe	6/30/2017	Project Website	What happens to the old I-10 ROW east of Main Street between Rothwell and Providence? Any chance some of the land could be donated to a non-profit?	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
276	Brown, Mathew	7/3/2017	Project Website	Widening I-45 will not reduce congestion. I encourage you to consider the affects of "induced demand". If more lanes are added to I-45 then people will do one of the following things: 1) stop taking public transit and begin driving a personal vehicle, 2) stop carpooling and begin driving solo, 3) stop commuting prior to rush-hour and begin commuting during rush-hour, 4) stop choosing a residence with an X mile commute and begin choosing a residence with an X + 10% mile commute. Commuters will always choose the most convenient method of commuting. More lanes increases the convenience of solo personal vehicle travel and thus will increase the popularity of this method. Every dollar spent on Houston's public transit system will be made less effective with the widening of I-45 due to the decrease in ridership. I would like to see this considered in your analysis.	The proposed project would help manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. The proposed MaX lanes on I-45 from Beltway 8 to Downtown are for use by HOV traffic, including buses. METRO is implementing transit improvements in the corridor, including planned extension of the LRT, and extending the Hardy Toll Road to Downtown.
276	Brown, Mathew	7/3/2017	Project Website	Widening I-45 encourages people to live further from work which increases the likelihood of people living outside of the City of Houston's Tax Base. That means less Taxes for Houston. I ask that the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the NHHIP include discussion of all these concerns.	The Indirect Impacts Technical Report in the Final EIS addresses potential induced growth impacts that could be attributed to the proposed project.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
277	Leland, Mary-Kae	7/3/2017	Project Website	1) The process by which individual property owners were made aware of this project is, in our opinion, severely flawed. As out-of-town property owners/managers of 1120 Naylor Street, we did not have access to local public notices nor did we receive direct written notification of this project by any participating agency until 2017. And that was only after receiving solicitation letters from eminent domain attorneys, one of which added us to the contact list. During the many years we were left "in the dark" of a potential taking of our property, we missed numerous public hearings and other opportunities to learn about the project and have a voice in the process. This has had a negative impact on our ability to: • Make informed decisions about the property in light of any potential taking of the property • Take any necessary steps to prepare for any potential taking of the property Without proper notice of this project, our rights as property owners have been disregarded and irreparably damaged.	The project alternative that would impact the property at 1120 Naylor St. was developed following the 2013 public meetings and the property address was not on the project mailing list prior to the development of the alternative. The owner of the property at 1120 Naylor St. was added to the mailing list for the next public meeting (April 2015) and a meeting notice was mailed in to the property owner in April 2015. This property address was also on the notification list for the May 2017 public hearing. A hearing notice was mailed to the property owner in April 2017.
277	Leland, Mary-Kae	7/3/2017	Project Website	2) In the Draft EIS, our property/building is labeled on maps/site plans as "potentially impacted" by the proposed alternative plan. Further, the EIS states that the impact is expected to be "de minimus." For our property/building to be considered minimally impacted, we expect the following measures will be taken by the agencies and contractors involved in the project. • During Construction, the property owner and tenant will: o Receive a minimum notice of 48 hours prior to utility service interruption o Not experience utility interruptions longer than one hour o Maintain access to the building's entrances including driveways, doors and loading docks via Naylor Street or proposed Rothwell Street on the north side of our building and Vine Street on the east side of our building • After Construction: o Access will be maintained to pre-construction building/property entrances including driveways, doors and loading docks via Rothwell Street on the north side and Vine Street on the east. o Private and public property (building, landscaping and sidewalks) will be returned to pre-construction condition. o There will be no overhead structures or utility lines, cables, etc. directly above property and or building.	The former Bottling Works building at 1120 Naylor St. is a contributing resources to the Houston Warehouse Historic District and is located on the south side of the proposed project right-of-way. The Preferred Alternative for the proposed project would take 0.07 acre of land from the property parcel, and the Texas Historical Commission agreed that the right-of-way acquisition would have no direct adverse effect to the property. Regarding the measures you listed: During Construction: o Utility adjustment schedules and durations of potential interruptions are determined by the utility companies. o TxDOT will maintain access to buildings, including driveways, doors and loading docks o TxDOT's construction contractor will be required to comply with specific project commitments for avoiding impacts to the building at 1120 Naylor Street during construction. Because final design will be contingent upon subsequent processes by a design-build contractor to be selected in the future, TxDOT is executing a project-level Programmatic Agreement (PA) for historic properties with the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The PA for historic properties sets procedures and practices in place designed to mitigate for known adverse effects such as demolition (building at 1120 Naylor will not be demolished) and buffers other historic properties in the Area of Potential Effects (APE) and adjacent to the APE from unanticipated additional adverse effects. Prescriptives to protect the building at 1120 Naylor include conducting construction activities in a manner to avoid damage to the building, with restrictions on vibration and requirements for monitoring vibration. After Construction: o Building/property entrances including driveways, doors and loading docks will be accessible after construction. o No overhead structures or utility lines, cables, etc. would be installed directly above the building as a result of the NHHIP.
278	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	7/5/2017	Written	TxDOT has designated three segments for the proposed project, each with its own separate alternatives. Alternatives advanced for further evaluation are referred by TxDOT as the "Reasonable Alternatives". Since the DEIS has not identified a preferred alternative for each segment, EPA has ranked the Reasonable Alternatives for each segment from least impactful/damaging, to most. • Segment 1 - EPA ranks the alternatives in the following order: Alternative 7, Alternative 4, Alternative 5. Alternative 7 has the lowest number of single and multi-family homes displaced within environmental justice communities (around 77 displacements compared to 153 for Alternative 4 and 169 for Alternative 5), and Alternative 7 impacts less streams and wetlands. • Segment 2 - EPA considers all Reasonable Alternatives for Segment 2 as having nearly the same minimal environmental impacts. • Segment 3 - EPA ranks the alternatives in the following order: Alternative 10, Alternative 11, and Alternative 12. Alternative 10 has significantly less displacements of homes within environmental justice communities (roughly 625 less displacements than Alternatives 11 and 12), and Alternative 12 has the highest number of displacements (around 909 homes compared to 900 for Alternative 11). Alternative 12 also has the greatest impacts to streams (around 10,109 linear feet compared to 8,741 linear feet for Alternative 11, and 9,393 linear feet for Alternative 10). Lastly, Alternative 10 will impact the lowest number of historic resources (5 buildings) all of which will remain intact, whereas Alternative 11 will impact 6 historical buildings, demolishing 3 of the 6, and Alternative 12 will impact 9 buildings, demolishing 5 of the 9.	In the Draft EIS, TxDOT identified a recommended Build Alternative. The Proposed Recommended Alternative was the combination of the alternatives identified as the most desirable of the three reasonable alternatives per study segment, based on many evaluation criteria. These were: Segment 1, Alternative 4; Segment 2, Alternative 10; Segment 3, Alternative 11. Considerations included adverse and beneficial impacts, which are discussed in the Draft EIS. The Final EIS identifies a Preferred Alternative and includes updated information on the project design, project impacts, proposed mitigation, and coordination with agencies and the public.
278	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	7/5/2017	Written	The DEIS states the project area includes residential, commercial, industrial, public institutions, and parks/open space. Potential impacts to community resources include displacement of residences and business, loss of community facilities, isolation of neighborhoods, changes in mobility and access, and increased noise and visual impacts. All alternatives considered would require new right-of-ways which would displace homes, schools, places of worship, businesses, and other resources. All alternatives will have high adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations. Recommendation: • To supplement the applicable requirements for considering and analyzing impacts to environmental justice populations for the proposed action EPA recommends TxDOT utilize the following reports/guidance: • *Promising Practice Report* , available at: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-08/documents/nepa_promising_practices_document_2016.pdf. • *Environmental Justice: Guidance Under the National Environmental Policy Act* available at: http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-02/documents/ej_guidance_nepa_ceq1297.pdf	Section 2 of the Draft EIS describes the alternatives analysis process in detail. Following publication of the Draft EIS, the study team considered comments received and the project design was revised, as discussed in Section 2 of the Final EIS. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report was updated to include input from outreach efforts to EJ communities, organizations, and businesses. The updated analysis is included Final EIS. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report and the Final EIS were prepared under the FHWA's policies and procedures in Section 771 of Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations; the FHWA publication Community Impacts Assessment: A Quick Reference Guide; and, the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Environmental Handbook: Community Impacts, Environmental Justice, Limited English Proficiency and Title VI Compliance (January 2015). The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
278	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	7/5/2017	Written	The DEIS refers to the use of culvert extensions at various water body crossings when roadway improvements require new right-of-way. Recommendation: • EPA recommends the consideration of spanning structures in lieu of the planned culverts in order to limit impacts to aquatic resources. Spanning structures assist with maintaining full hydrologic exchange and aquatic access, and prevent upstream impoundment or downstream down-cutting of these streams	The type and size of proposed drainage structures will be determined during detailed design. The final drainage and mitigation analyses will be reviewed by HCFCD to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding upstream or downstream of the crossing.

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278	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	7/5/2017	Written	The Draft EIS does not have adequate information about consultations pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. EPA understands that TxDOT is or will engage with the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer at the Texas Historical Commission, and the appropriate field office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife to complete the required consultations under the above mentioned statutes.	TxDOT conducted required consultation with the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), as documented in the Final EIS. TxDOT has coordinated with Texas Historical Commission/SHPO throughout the Final EIS process. As documented in the Biological Resources Technical Report, no suitable habitat for any federally listed threatened or endangered species was identified within or adjacent to the proposed project area; therefore, no effect to any federally listed species is anticipated as a result of the proposed project. Measures to avoid harm to any federally protected species would be taken should any such species be observed during construction of the proposed project. No coordination with the USFWS was required.
280	Wilson, Bill	7/6/2017	Project Website	The need for a public-transit (METRORail) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity while keeping high-speed transit within the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
281	Crowell, Hensleigh	7/7/2017	Project Website	"If it ain't broke, don't fix it." The massive costs and community displacement required by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project do not justify its marginal returns.	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high-capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area. Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
281	Crowell, Hensleigh	7/7/2017	Project Website	I live and work in downtown Houston and drive on the Pierce Elevated/I-45 almost every day. It works great and moves hundreds of thousands of cars throughout the city. While the highway could be slightly improved, it would add more time to my commute to drive on the East side of Downtown rather than the West side. Moreover, I-45 would then be redundant of I-69 rather than adding an alternate route on the West side of the city.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Traffic studies for the proposed project showed that in 2011, travel speeds on I-45 (Pierce Elevated) and US 59/I-59 in the Downtown area were typically less than 30 mph. The Preferred Alternative would provide the greatest improvement to mobility by increasing travel speeds around the Downtown Loop System by 20 to 25 mph. The increased travel speeds would be achieved by means of reconfiguring the Downtown Loop System, which would allow through traffic to bypass Downtown via the I 10 express lanes and the I 45 general purpose lanes on the east side of Downtown. Local traffic would have improved access to Downtown.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
281	Crowell, Hensleigh	7/7/2017	Project Website	The multiple years of construction will unduly burden Houston residents and take a particularly hard toll on poorer residents and students at the University of Houston, who rely on I-45 each day. While this project will certainly be good for road construction companies and real estate developers, it will displace thousands of residents and frustrate many more.	Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction. TxDOT will maintain access to adjacent properties. The project plans and specifications will include provisions requiring the construction contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work-hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems. TxDOT contractors and developers shall comply with local construction noise ordinances. During construction, TxDOT will maintain a comparable number of travel lanes as currently exist. Some portions of the proposed project would be on new location, which will allow some construction to take place without impacting existing traffic.
281	Crowell, Hensleigh	7/7/2017	Project Website	It also contains no plans to add rail lines connecting Downtown Houston to both major airports. This seems to be a significant oversight that could greatly lessen traffic congestion throughout the city. Rather than throwing money at re-building perfectly adequate highways, we should reduce congestion by opening up new modes of transportation.	TxDOT has been working with METRO to accommodate light rail within the NHHIP corridor. METRORail is the responsibility of METRO and expansion of the system would be a METRO project. Section 1 of the Draft EIS and Final EIS detail the need for the proposed NHHIP.
282	Fernandez, Guadalupe	7/7/2017	Email	Please make sure that all of this construction doesn't take as long as the US-290 construction has been taking.... In the interim, please expand metro rail to reach to both airport as it will be a nightmare to traverse downtown during this construction.	TxDOT has been coordinating with METRO to accommodate light rail within the NHHIP corridor. METRORail is the responsibility of METRO and expansion of the system would be a METRO project. Construction of the proposed project will be conducted in phases and no highways will be "closed down". Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design. When construction timelines are established, TxDOT will work to accurately and thoroughly communicate important information, such as temporary lane closures.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	I applaud TxDOT for pursuing innovative transportation projects like the Downtown Loop Realignment, but I have major concerns about the current designs. These projects will profoundly impact transportation and development in the Houston region for the next 50-100 years, and it is critical that we get the details right. The Downtown Loop Realignment has the potential to decrease regional transportation delays, improve roadway safety, and increase connections between communities. However, the costs – both direct project delivery costs as well as community impact costs – will be substantial. More distressingly, it appears that most of the negative externalities and indirect costs of the project will be born primarily by residents and businesses in the East End. Some of these impacts appear to be unavoidable. The depressed freeway section proposed to run along the east side of Downtown will require demolishing a significant amount of private property in the EaDO neighborhood. The impacted property owners have worked hard over the past few years to create a vibrant community with residences, restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues, and their progress to date has been remarkable. A lot of that effort will be annihilated instantly with this project. Unfortunately, the current project vision appears to fundamentally require this real estate for successful implementation. However, other impacts to the East End appear to be avoidable. Balancing the costs associated with the project will require avoiding those impacts wherever possible and mitigating them elsewhere. In these comments, I will present what I see as several major impacts that I believe can be avoided. I encourage TxDOT to explore these ideas fully and consider options for mitigation where appropriate. I believe that doing so will result in a better product that will more comprehensively serve the region for generations.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. The proposed project requires new right-of-way between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St. in the EaDo area. Businesses on those parcels would be displaced. It is not expected that economic development forecasts for the EaDo area would change due to the proposed project.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Issues with the Downtown Loop Realignment** Outside of the direct project costs – which are projected to be in the billions of dollars – the negative externalities of the proposed Downtown Loop Realignment are numerous and significant: • Destruction and eminent domain takings of prime real estate in the EaDO community • Removal of Pierce Elevated, thereby eliminating major East-West connectivity option • Lack of Polk Street connection, thereby eliminating major East-West connectivity option • Lack of provision for westbound Leeland Street connection into Downtown, thereby eliminating major East-West connectivity option • Removal of East-West connectivity options will concentrate traffic on local roads and increase congestion in neighborhoods • Increased roadway congestion will make streets less supportive of healthy modes of transportation like walking and biking • Potential decrease in local roadway safety by relying on high-speed frontage roads to provide local connectivity Traffic models have shown that the freeway realignment will benefit roadway capacity and safety for freeway drivers. However, the combination of this and other TxDOT projects will have the net effect that fewer local Houston drivers will be able to utilize the freeway system for many of the trips that they currently make and will thus be unable to enjoy the operational benefits. Ultimately, the freeway projects will largely benefit suburban drivers coming into and passing through the inner-city neighborhoods; on the other hand, the projects stand to destroy local properties, increase local travel times, increase local traffic congestion, decrease local roadway safety, and diminish local prospects for supporting walking, bicycling, and transit usage. To ensure that this project serves the entire region and its diverse communities, the final design will need to distribute the project benefits and costs more fairly to all impacted populations. For the East End, this will require maintaining and enhancing east-west, cross-town access, which is currently slated to be significantly degraded.	**1.** TxDOT coordinated with City of Houston and EaDo representatives during the project development process. TxDOT has worked closely with the City of Houston, HDMD, and EaDo to optimize the project design. Additional coordination will be performed as the project is further developed in detail design. **2.** TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. **3.** TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. **4.** Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. **5.** TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. **6.** The proposed project design includes comparable access points to existing conditions, therefore there should not be a significant increase in congestion as compared to existing conditions. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. **7.** Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	To understand why the removal of any East-West connectivity options is highly undesirable, and why it is critical to maintain all existing options, it is helpful to review the history of transportation between Downtown and the East End. Downtown and the neighborhoods around it were originally constructed with a seamless, structured grid roadway system. Distinctions between these communities existed primarily by what people and businesses did, not by external physical boundaries. Grid roadway networks efficiently handle traffic by: • Providing many route options for every origin-destination pair • Dispersing traffic over a wide roadway network so that no road becomes particularly congested • Supporting healthy modes of transportation like walking and biking by providing safe routes for these vulnerable road users Figure 1 shows an aerial of Downtown and its grid roadway network in 1953. The only freeway at the time was the Gulf Freeway, shown in the lower right corner of the image. Numerous roadways provided connections between Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods, including the East End. Over several decades, the grid network that tied together and strengthened the inner-city communities of Houston has slowly disintegrated on all sides of Downtown – especially for the East End. Between Pierce Street on the south and Runnels Street on the north, there are approximately 23 potential crossing locations between Downtown and the East End for the proposed IH-45 project. However, the crossings are not all equally useful or desirable. In this analysis, roadway crossings are categorized as followed: • BLUE: Highly desirable crossings; roadways extend at least 5 blocks into both Downtown and the East End. These crossings are important for regional connections. • ORANGE: Local crossings; roadways extend at least 5 blocks in either Downtown OR the East End but only extend 3-5 blocks on the other side. These crossings provide local connections that are important for providing alternate routes and for tying neighboring communities together. • RED: Blocked crossings; roadways either do not cross the proposed freeway, or they extend for 2 or fewer blocks on either side of the proposed freeway. Using Google Earth historical aerial photography, it is possible to track the change in access type over the years. The chart below shows the distribution of the 23 access streets at 4 specific years and identifies the land use changes that resulted in the shift.	Comment noted.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	By 1978, some access roadways were already blocked on one side or the other by either IH-45, railroads, or gaps in the local street network. However, over 50% of access roads served regional connections (BLUE), and only 17% were fully blocked (RED). Gradual changes in land use and associated abandonment of street right of way accompanied construction of the George R Brown Convention Center, Minute Maid Park, GRB expansion, and Dynamo Stadium. As it stands today, only 7 of the 23 crossings provide any kind of regional connectivity (BLUE), and over 50% of crossings are blocked (RED). The evolution of access between Downtown and the East End is summarized in the images on the next page.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Existing Roadway Connections** The list below summarizes the existing connectivity characteristics of the various streets that drivers on either the Downtown or East End side could conceivably believe would connect them from one neighborhood to the other. Currently, only seven street provide full access. However, even these streets provide varying levels of regional connectivity. Furthermore, it is important to remember that Downtown streets are one-way; therefore, none of these streets provide direct, logical access in both directions, thereby further increasing the important of all of them.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Roads that provide full access between Downtown and East End (BLUE)** These roadways are important access points and extend at least 5 blocks into both Downtown and the East End. • Commerce. Dead-ends 1.2 miles to the east at Drennan Street and 0.6 miles to the west at Milam Street. As such, it does not provide a deep connection into the East End, and it does not provide access across Downtown to the neighborhoods on the west side. Commerce crosses the West Belt freight rail line at-grade; traffic must stop for passing trains. • Franklin (via Navigation/Canal/Jensen). Provides access to the far north side of the East End; provides an important connection to the neighborhood on the west side via Washington Avenue. An underpass is provided under the West Belt freight rail line. • Harrisburg/Texas/Capitol. These streets provide an important connection in the East End as well as across Downtown to Memorial; however, traffic movements are complicated by light rail operations and are especially complex for westbound traffic, which must enter Downtown via a circuitous route utilizing Prairie Street, Bastrop Street, Texas Avenue, Hamilton Street, and finally Capitol Street. An underpass provides access under the West Belt freight rail line. • Polk. Provides a connection deep into the East End and provides access across Downtown to Dallas Street. Traffic operations are complicated at Avenida de las Americas because of unusual roadway geometries. An underpass is provided under the West Belt freight rail line. • Leeland. Provides a connection deep into the East End; however, it dead-ends at Louisiana Street 0.8 miles to the west. It crosses the West Belt freight rail line at grade; traffic must stop for passing trains. • Pease. Mainly provides cross-town access for IH-45, directly serving ramps east of Emancipation Avenue and west of Brazos Street. East End traffic can utilize the northbound IH-45 frontage road; however, traffic operations are complicated at Emancipation Avenue because of interactions with the freeway ramp and at Scott Street because of interactions with the light rail. • Pierce. One-way eastbound only; provides access to far south side of Downtown and the East End.	Comment noted.

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283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Roads that provide partial access between Downtown and East End (ORANGE)** These roadways provide local access into and out of Downtown and extend at least 5 blocks in either Downtown OR the East End but only extend 3-5 blocks on the other side. • Congress. This road dead-ends on the east at Emancipation Avenue. • Jefferson. This road serves an off-ramp for the Gulf Freeway on the west side of Downtown and on-ramp at Emancipation Avenue, effectively dead-ending on either side for local access. • St. Joseph Parkway. This road serves an off-ramp from the Gulf Freeway at Emancipation Avenue and an on-ramp on the west side of Downtown effectively dead ending on either side for local access	Comment noted
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Roads that do not provide access between Downtown and the East End (RED)** These roadways either do not cross the proposed freeway, or they extend for 2 or fewer blocks on either side of the proposed freeway. • Runnels. Currently dead-ends on the west at McKee Street; under the proposed plans, it will dead-end at the West Belt Freight rail line, west of Jensen. • Canal Street. Dead-ends west of Franklin at the West Belt Freight Rail line. Vehicles can utilize Franklin Street to enter downtown; however, that access is being counted for Franklin Street. • Ruiz Street. Dead-ends at Crawford on the west and Chartres on the east. • Preston Street. Dead-ends at Hamilton on the west and Emancipation on the east. • Prairie Street (downtown side). Dead-ends at La Branch on the east. • Capitol. Dead-ends at the Dynamo Stadium. Traffic is complicated by light rail operations. • Rusk. Dead-ends at the Dynamo Stadium. Traffic is complicated by light rail operations. • Walker Street. Dead-ends at Chartres on the west and Dowling on the east. • McKinney Street. Dead-ends at Chartres on the west; crosses West Belt Freight Rail line atgrade. • Lamar Street. Dead-ends at Chartres on the west and York on the east. • Dallas Street. Dead-ends at Chartres on the west and Velasco on the east. • Clay Street. Dead-ends at Jackson on the west and Hutchins on the east. • Bell Street. Dead-ends at Chartres. On downtown side, provides connection from Leeland, but that access is being counted once	Comment noted.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Importance of Polk Street** It should be clear with the degradation of the once-robust grid network in the area that every street that provide full access (BLUE) is of utmost important to the regional transportation network. Polk Street is a particularly important access road for several reasons. It provides cross-Downtown access, serves high-frequency bus lines, will serve a high-comfort bicycle facility, and provides direct access to important Downtown destinations. Polk provides cross-Downtown access. Currently, East End residents utilize the Pierce Elevated to access neighborhoods on the west side of Downtown via connections to Allen Parkway and Memorial Drive. With the proposed removal of the Pierce Elevated, drivers need alternate ways to access those neighborhoods. Very few of the streets crossing IH-45 make the entire connection across Downtown. Polk is one of the few that do. Figure 3 shows the ability of various roads to provide cross-Downtown access. Out of the seven roads identified as providing significant access between Downtown and the East End, only three connect the East End to the neighborhoods west of Downtown: Navigation, Harrisburg, and Polk. All three of these roads provide imperfect connections (e.g. Navigation/Franklin and Polk are eastbound only in Downtown; the westbound movement along Harrisburg into Downtown is convoluted; Polk has a challenging geometry at Avenida de las Americas); therefore, the importance of having all three options increases in importance. The solid red lines in Figure 3 show where the other four full-access roadways dead-end, limiting their ability to provide cross-downtown access. Additionally, the East End's current primary access to the neighborhoods west of Downtown—the Pierce Elevated connection to Allen Parkway/Memorial Drive— is shown in dotted blue. The East End will lose this option for regional mobility entirely with the removal of the Pierce Elevated, and all East End drivers currently utilizing that route will have to find alternative routes primarily on surface streets through Downtown. This shift will result in an automatic and significant traffic demand increase on these roadways. Other routes will provide cross-Downtown access through combinations of other roadways, especially with the proposed north-south frontage roads. However, they will all require detours involving additional, unintuitive turning movements, which will further increase travel times for East End drivers over the increases already expected with the removal of the Pierce Elevated.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluate alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of Downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated, and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Polk serves high-frequency bus lines** METRO runs high-frequency bus lines (the 40 and 41) on Polk. These buses may experience excessive delays, especially during peak periods, if a straight connection across the freeway is not provided. They already experience some operational difficulties entering and exiting Downtown because of the need to utilize Avenida de las Americas to access Lamar Street and Dallas Street. **Polk will serve a high-comfort bicycle facility** The City of Houston is planning to construct a high-comfort, signature bicycle facility along Polk Street (see image on next page). The facility will connect the Lamar green bike lane in Downtown to bike lanes in the East End. When constructed, it will be the only designated, high-comfort bicycle facility between Downtown and the East End. It is expected to be utilized by bicyclists of all ages and skill levels; therefore, providing a logical, easy, and safe crossing into and out of Downtown is imperative.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Polk provides direct access to Downtown destinations** Polk is the most direct route to numerous important destination in Downtown. For example, Discovery Green is a park of regional importance that is tantalizingly close to East End neighborhoods but that is walled off by the George R Brown Convention Center. The GRB itself is an important destination, as is the Toyota Center. Many people drive and bicycle along Polk to reach these destinations; others still park in EaDO and walk along Polk into and out of Downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.

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283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Problems with the Proposed Polk Street U-Turn** The IH-45 concept proposes to provide a U-Turn for Polk traffic on the proposed frontage roads to maintain access. This is an insufficient and potentially dangerous proposal to preserve Polk access. The northbound frontage road directly serves a proposed off-ramp from US-69. This off-ramp will be the primary access point for Downtown, the GRB, Toyota Center, and Discovery Green for people coming from the south along IH-69 and SH-288. This traffic will likely be very heavy, very fast, and constant throughout the day, every day of the week – and those vehicles will all be passing by Polk Street and utilizing the same U-Turn that drivers on Polk Street are expected to use. It is unreasonable to expect that roadway users along Polk will be able to safely and efficiently find a suitable gap in the frontage road traffic, merge in with the traffic, and cross several lanes in just 2 blocks to be able to utilize the closest U-Turn. Additionally, the difficult traffic operations associated with this U-Turn are not limited to just private automobiles. Polk Street serves many modes of travel: high frequency bus lines, bicycles (with current bikes lanes and upcoming high-quality bike lanes), and pedestrians. These modes of transportation will have to negotiate the challenges of the proposed intersection of Polk Street and the frontage road. The mixing of these multiple modes at this single location will greatly complicate and endanger traffic operations for all modes. At the very least, this intersection will need to be signalized. But signalization would not rectify the fact that the U-Turn will create a new detour for one of the very few roads that provide access between Downtown, the neighborhoods west of Downtown, and the East End.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Design of the Frontage Roads** As discussed above, the proposed frontage roads will become an essential component of the local roadway network. As a result, they will need to be designed unlike any other frontage road in the Houston area. Whereas most frontage roads are designed first and foremost to serve high-speed freeway traffic, these frontage roads must safely and efficiently serve adjacent businesses, numerous side streets, and a fully multimodal local traffic mix composed of buses, bicycles, and pedestrians. The frontage roads should be designed to encourage speeds that are compatible with an urban context, in the range of 20-30 MPH instead of 40-50 MPH. Although encouraging these kinds of urban speeds on one-way frontage roads can be challenging, there are several tools that can be helpful, including: • Narrower lanes, such as the 11-ft City of Houston standard instead of the 12-ft TxDOT standard, can slightly lower vehicle speeds as well as decrease the distance pedestrians must traverse when crossing the road. • Raised intersections, which are constructed at the same level as the pedestrian realm, act like speed humps to moderate travel speeds and further improve safety for pedestrians by making them more visible when crossing the road. • Right number of lanes, depending on capacity needs for particular segments instead of a standard cross section for the entire corridor. Providing more lanes than needed can encourage higher vehicle speeds and increase pedestrian crossing distances. The fewest number of lanes required for meeting capacity needs should be provided on every block. • Curb extension/bulb-outs to decrease pedestrian crossings distances and encourage lower vehicle speeds at intersections where on-street parking is provided. • Other traffic calming strategies, including standard speed humps and speed cushions.	TxDOT has coordinated with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations, as well as the COH local street design standards, on city streets where appropriate. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets, will be used for street design. With respect to Segment 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. Another matter, TxDOT acknowledges that the segment does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavy retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and we must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly with crosswalks at all street crossings and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. The proposed project includes improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and allows for additional trail connections. All project improvements will be designed to meet standards for safety.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	Encouraging urban speeds on the frontage roads will be critical for maintaining the feel of EaDO. The businesses in EaDO that are currently served by St. Emanuel Street will open directly onto the proposed northbound frontage road under the proposed conditions. St. Emanuel feels like an urban street with on-street parking, low vehicle speeds, and bidirectional travel, and maintaining this roadway feel will be critical for maintaining the integrity of the neighborhood. Shifting to a standard high-speed frontage road will fundamentally alter the feel of EaDO and make it feel less safe and less amenable to the type of inter-business pedestrian travel that currently exists and helps strengthen and define the area. Appropriate frontage road speeds will also be critical for intersection safety. If direct access into/out of Downtown is not provided on Polk, Leeland, and other streets, vehicles will be forced to make U-turns onto the frontage roads. These U-turns will require negotiating with frontage road traffic and will be unsafe with standard 40-50 MPH frontage road speeds. Many people will also be walking and bicycling across the frontage roads between Downtown and the East End. Many of these individuals will have to cross mid-block without the assistance of a traffic signal and will have to judge and identify appropriate gaps in frontage road traffic. Identifying an appropriate gap in high-speed traffic can be exceptionally difficult, and the consequences for misjudging such a gap can be disastrous. Finding gaps in 20-30 MPH traffic can be much easier and the consequences much less severe.	TxDOT will evaluate the application of 11' lanes on a case-by-case basis, taking in to account factors including: safety, facility type, geometry, connecting facilities, design speed, traffic volume, lane usage by vehicle type, etc. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH, Harris County, METRO, and other agencies during detailed design.

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283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Importance of Pierce Elevated** The freeways in Houston have had profound impacts on transportation patterns and land use development in the region. The Pierce Elevated is no exception. When it was constructed in 1967, it not only provided a direct connection for long-distance travel along IH-45, it also provided connectivity options for local traffic (see dotted line in Figure 3). Whether this local travel option was originally intended or desired, the availability of this option has been ingrained in regional transportation patterns. Furthermore, its availability has enabled the dismantling of other East-West transportation options over the years through land use changes such as the construction of the GRB and Dynamo Stadium. These land use changes have cemented the importance of the Pierce Elevated for local connectivity. The removal of the Pierce Elevated at this point would undermine the regional transportation and land use structure that has grown up around it and that relies on the connectivity it provides. For residents of the East End – as well as for drivers from Galveston, Clear Lake, and other destinations to the south along IH-45 – the Pierce Elevated is one of the most important, heavily-used routes to access: • West Downtown destinations, including the Theater District and City Hall • Buffalo Bayou Park, which has recently been renovated and has become a regional destination • Memorial Park/Memorial Drive • Montrose, especially destinations in the northern parts such as the Waugh Whole Foods • River Oaks • The Heights • Washington Ave • Allen Parkway The reverse route is just as important for drivers coming from those communities, enabling them to access EaDo, the Greater East End, and destinations south along the Gulf Freeway.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	As a result, the removal of the Pierce Elevated will substantially increase travel times for all drivers traveling between neighborhoods west of Downtown and those east/southeast of Downtown. The removal would force those drivers to utilize local streets in the East End and Downtown, increasing traffic congestion in those areas. The increased local traffic volumes would degrade the ability of these neighborhoods to create safe and attractive urban streets that support walking and bicycling. The images on the next page show Google Maps route recommendations to various destinations from the City of Houston Learning and Development Center, a relatively centrally-located destination in the East End at the intersection of Lockwood Drive and Leeland Street. For each of these origin/destination pairs, Google has determined the Pierce Elevated to be the preferred route. It is worth noting that many of the secondary route recommendations also utilize the Pierce Elevated, as do the reverse commute recommendations. Although maintaining the Pierce Elevated or a similar structure is important for continuing to accommodate cross-town travel, it does not necessarily need to look like it does now. For example, it would no longer need to accommodate freeway traffic and would thus not require 3 lanes and a shoulder in each direction. Cross town traffic could likely be accommodated with 1-2 lanes in each direction, and the remaining space could be repurposed for other uses including bike lanes, trails, or elevated park space. The park space could look something like New York's High Line park or Paris' Promenade Plantée and could become a defining feature of Houston.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Combined Impacts of Other TxDOT Projects** The Downtown Loop Realignment project is not the only ongoing or upcoming TxDOT project that will impact local traffic patterns in and around Downtown. Additionally, TxDOT is currently reconstructing the section of IH-45 South near Downtown to eliminate unsafe traffic freeway weaving operations. As part of this project, the northbound ramps at Cullen Street and Scott Street onto IH-45 will no longer provide connections to IH-69/US-59 South or SH-288 South. These ramps are currently major freeway access points for many people in EaDO, the Second Ward, the Third Ward, and the Greater East End. Once the project is complete, the sole ramp to IH-69/US-59 South and SH-288 South for the East End communities will be provided at the northeast intersection of Cullen Street at IH-45. Access to the ramp will only be provided from the south on Cullen Street and the IH-45 Northbound Frontage Road (NBFR). Local traffic will be unable to access the ramp from the north along Cullen Street. The net impact of this ramp configuration on local traffic will be the redistribution of freeway traffic onto local streets through neighborhoods to the south for access along the IH-45 NBFR or to the west to access the freeway system via Downtown access points. For many drivers who currently use the ramps at Cullen or Scott, the Downtown access points will be preferable. These drivers will be diverted to the same select few roads that other drivers are using to access Downtown destinations, and they will have to contend with the same U-Turn challenges at the proposed frontage roads. In short, the two TxDOT projects will work in tandem to divert vehicles from the freeway system to local streets that serve residences, businesses, and multimodal travel and that offer the sole but imperfect access routes into Downtown and destinations on the west side of Downtown.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. Analysis shows the proposed project will improve operations and safety. The proposed project balances needs for freeway mobility and local mobility.

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283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Leeland Street Connection** Assuming the project proceeds as currently proposed and access into/across Downtown is diminished, the importance of Leeland Street increases as a route for cross-town transportation. Currently two bridges exist for Leeland Street across US-59; one serves eastbound traffic and the other connects westbound Leeland to Bell Street in Downtown. Bell Street provides a circuitous, indirect connection onto West Dallas using a series of local roadways west of Smith Street; eastbound Leeland Street starts at Louisiana Street and does not provide access through Downtown for origins west of Louisiana Street. Under the Downtown Loop Realignment plan, the westbound connection from Leeland to Bell is not proposed to be reestablished. Westbound traffic on Leeland would need to use the proposed frontage road to access other streets into Downtown. In effect, the project would push traffic from other East- West access routes onto Leeland Street; it would then remove the direct access that Leeland provides and force all traffic on Leeland Street to negotiate with high-speed frontage road traffic to access circuitous routes into Downtown. It is not sufficient to claim that this new problem will need to be solved by the City of Houston because Leeland is a local street. If a TxDOT project is creating a new problem, the TxDOT project must also solve that problem. City of Houston taxpayers should not be responsible for mitigating TxDOT projects.	A two lane exit from I-69 southbound to Bell St. has been incorporated into the schematic.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**How Much Park Space is Needed?** One of the purported benefits of the Downtown Loop Realignment is the potential construction of park space on up to 10 blocks above the freeway. It is hard to argue that additional park space is not typically Beneficial – but it is likely that the park space in this area would be far less beneficial than the same amount of park space in many other parts of the City. It is not clear that EaDO is particularly lacking in park space in the first place. Discovery Green is a major regional park directly on the other side of the GRB from these blocks. Additionally, several blocks of Hutchins Street adjacent to Dynamo Stadium have been converted into open space, and the East Downtown Management District is currently in the process of converting several blocks of Bastrop Street right-of-way into park space. On the other hand, providing too much park space, particularly in this area, will be challenging to maintain as a welcoming space for all instead of becoming a campsite for the homeless. Strategic park programming has helped make Discovery Green a success and will be critical to the success of any park space on these blocks; however, the more park space provided in an area, the more difficult activity programming becomes. For example, consider James Bute Park at the nearby intersection of McKee at Runnels. It suffers from underutilization because of challenges related to maintenance, lack of access and chronic homeless populations. If we think we can make ten blocks of additional park space appealing, perhaps we should prove it first with the park space that we already have. In terms of benefit to the local community, the additional park space would not seem to offset the destruction of actively redeveloping private property or the removal of transportation connections. If the proposed park space comes into conflict with providing local transportation options, the transportation options should prevail.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions. TxDOT can only purchase ROW for transportation purposes, not for open space.
283	Hlavacek, Ian	7/7/2017	Email	**Conclusion** Thank you for providing me the opportunity to comment on the Downtown Loop Realignment conceptual plan. Although the plan is grand in scale and shows an eagerness to explore innovative solutions, I ultimately believe the current design would not be a cost-effective use of valuable taxpayer resources or even necessarily a net boon to the Houston region. In summary, my recommendations to increase the positive impact of the project and improve the equitable distribution of costs and benefits are: 1. Maintain direct access into/out of Downtown along Polk Street. 2. Maintain direct access into/out of Downtown along Leeland/Bell streets. 3. Maintain the Pierce Elevated for local east-west travel. Consider repurposing extra pavement for bike lanes, trails, and/or elevated park space. 4. Design proposed frontage roads for vehicle speeds compatible with an urban context. 5. Conduct a full, multi-modal traffic analysis that consider all proposed impacts to the local road network. Include at minimum an analysis of: a. Travel times between key local destinations and communities b. Impacts to multi-modal transportation components, including walking, biking, and transit. c. Local roadway safety, including interaction of high-speed frontage road traffic with local traffic making any U-turns that would be required by the proposal The analysis should use all available projections for land use changes within the Houston region to ensure that this project is the right project for serving the community for 50-100 years. The report should provide recommendations for fully mitigating all identified impacts. In short, it should guarantee both that overall projects benefits outweigh project costs and that costs and benefits are fairly distributed to all impacted communities. I believe with these recommendations, the Downtown Loop Realignment project can benefit both suburban commuters as well as inner city residents, business owners, drivers, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians.	Please see the response to your other comments for specific responses.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
284	Klosterboer, Brian	7/7/2017	Project Website	"If it ain't broke, don't fix it." The massive costs and community displacement required by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project do not justify its marginal returns.	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high-capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area. Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
284	Klosterboer, Brian	7/7/2017	Project Website	I live and work in downtown Houston and drive on the Pierce Elevated/I-45 every day. It works great and moves hundreds of thousands of cars each day. While the highway could be slightly improved, it would add more time to my commute to drive on the East side of Downtown rather than the West side. Moreover, I-45 would then be redundant of I-69 rather than adding an alternate route on the other side of the city.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route.
284	Klosterboer, Brian	7/7/2017	Project Website	The multiple years of construction will also unduly burden Houston residents and take a particularly hard toll on poorer residents and students at the University of Houston, who rely on I-45 each day. While this project will certainly be good for road construction companies and real estate developers, it will displace thousands of residents and frustrate many more.	Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction. TxDOT will maintain access to adjacent properties. The project plans and specifications will include provisions requiring the construction contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work-hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems. TxDOT contractors and developers shall comply with local construction noise ordinances. During construction, TxDOT will maintain a comparable number of travel lanes as currently exist. Some portions of the proposed project would be on new location, which will allow some construction to take place without impacting existing traffic.
284	Klosterboer, Brian	7/7/2017	Project Website	It also contains no plan to add rail lines connecting Downtown Houston to both major airports. This seems to be a significant oversight that would greatly lessen traffic congestion throughout the city. Rather than throwing money at re-building perfectly adequate highways, we should reduce congestion by opening up new modes of transportation.	TxDOT has been working with METRO to accommodate light rail within the NHHIP corridor. METRORail is the responsibility of METRO and expansion of the system would be a METRO project.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
285	Baker, April	7/9/2017	Email	Polk street is a major street that people use on a day to day basis. This new plan to close Polk and make it a part of the way that North I-45 is going will change the community of East End and change people's day to day routes. We need to keep Polk Street from becoming another dead end toward Downtown Houston and the East End community. Polk Street is a very important access road for several reasons. It provides cross-Downtown access, serves high-frequency bus lines, will serve a highcomfort bicycle facility, and provides direct access to important Downtown destinations. I have lived in the East End my whole life and with all the changes that have happened, roads closing off, new metro rails etc.. some of these things have helped the people of Houston and some have not helped anyone at all but the builders. I am excited to hear of new changes for Houston, but I believe that this expansion/turning Polk street in to a dead end street is not going to help the community of East End or the Downtown area. With the high level of the bike community and people needing to get into downtown for buses it will just be another cut of street that they can not get to downtown. Please find other ways that we can keep Polk street from becoming a dead end street.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
286	Simpson, Tharen	7/9/2017	Email	**Use of Property during buyout and before construction:** Issue – Loss of Tax Revenues Solution – Lease back to tenants directly to continue revenues It is my understanding that consideration is being given to lease back the property after the buyout for the period prior to construction. It is also my understanding that there has not been a decision made as to whether it will be leased back to the tenants or the landowner from which it was purchased. The real estate taxes which the land owner pays for the property from Chartres to St. Emanuel and from Rusk St. to Walker St. is $276,563 annually. The MB taxes the state collects for MB Gross Receipts tax at 6.7% and the MB Sales tax at 8.25% amount to $854,827.43 for the past 12 months for five (5) tenants only. This does not take into account the Sales tax revenue remitted by those tenants on food nor Sales tax revenue collected for those tenants without a MB license, but only a Beer/Wine license. Using the construction time frame on HWY 290 completion which started in 2013 and is not projected to be completed until 2018 – five (5) years – the revenue loss on MB taxes alone to the state for these 5 tenants in EADO would be a minimum of $4,274,137 given they have no increase in sales. I believe, therefore, that economically it would be advantageous to lease the property back to the current tenants at the time of buyout – the landowner should not be able to release the land they no longer own and collect bumped up rents from the tenants. It is also economically advantageous for the State to continue to collect the nearly $5 million in MB taxes by keeping the tenants in control so that these revenues continue.	During the property acquisition process, TxDOT will negotiate the date that the property must be vacated.
286	Simpson, Tharen	7/9/2017	Email	**Infrastructure Concerns:** We do not believe that any construction activities including buyouts should occur before all the infrastructure needs have been addressed and a written plan is presented on how these will be accomplished, including a time table. <u>Water and Sanitary Systems:</u> Issue – No written and approved plans Solution – Research and submit plans for approval to the City Engineers The current water main for most all of EADO is located at the intersection of St. Emanuel and Rusk. We have been told repeatedly that the DOT recognizes it needs to be moved, but no plans have been presented. This water main affects the properties that will be purchased by DOT as well as the adjacent properties that will not be purchased thru eminent domain. Until the plans have been presented and approved by the authorities in control of these, it would be detrimental for the businesses that will remain. <u>Parking:</u> Issue – Loss of Existing Parking; Solution – Lease the current property to the City of Houston for controlled parking The DOT will be buying out the one and only existing parking lot in EADO. It is located on the square block of Chartres to St. Emanuel and Rusk to Texas. This is the only parking lot that serves EADO. The parking in EADO has been an issue from inception. The only other parking are two lots owned by Houston Sports Authority which are three blocks North of EADO and utilized for Astro's games. While the TIRZ has attempted to buy land to build parking to accommodate the EADO businesses and Dynamo stadium, it was instructed to sit back until Houston First completed their building which included a parking lot. Their building is now completed, however, until the DOT issues are resolved for what streets will remain open for access into EADO (see below) nothing can be considered. To resolve, we suggest the DOT purchase thru eminent domain the parking lot and lease it back to the City of Houston for controlled parking. City of Houston has diminished funds and this would assist in providing funds to the City; and the current land owner is charging prohibitive rates from $40 to $100 per space whenever there is a special event such as Astros and Dynamo games.	As a general rule, before TxDOT can acquire any property, the project must obtain environmental clearance. Although ROW acquisition typically occurs after a Record of Decision, TxDOT has been partnering with property owners years before construction starts to minimize hardships and work closely with those that have complex relocation requirements. Construction would not commence without approved design plans, including utility relocation plans. TxDOT is coordinating with Houston Sports Authority as they evaluate building a parking garage. During detailed design, construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed. TxDOT will provide safe and efficient connections to and around neighborhoods, including Downtown, during construction for all modes of transportation, including bicycles and pedestrians. TxDOT will provide advanced notice of temporary road closures and traffic detours and will maintain access to properties during construction.
286	Simpson, Tharen	7/9/2017	Email	**Freeway Drainage:** Issue – Hwy 59 will be underground and the drainage issues have not been resolved.; Solution – Prepare environmental and drainage plans and have approved by the engineer. While underground roadways have been built in Dallas; Houston is closer to sea level than Dallas. It is our understanding that DOT has acknowledged the issues but no studies have been performed or approved by an engineer. This study and approved plans should be developed before construction begins. Buying out the land and not being able to start (and timely complete) construction is detrimental to the businesses existing in EADO	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. The plan is to detain water so that the flood levels of White Oak Bayou and Little White Oak Bayou will not change. TxDOT will comply with its statewide permit for discharges of stormwater, which was issued by TCEQ in November 2016. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.

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286	Simpson, Tharen	7/9/2017	Email	**Access to EADO:** Issue – Loss of Polk Street/Loss during construction on Rusk for access to Dynamo Stadium Solution – Readdress the entry points from Downtown into EADO Currently the main two entries into EADO are Rusk Street and Polk. The plans currently call for Polk to be closed and substitute Leeland and for Rusk to be opened after all construction. It is our understanding that the entrance into Dynamo will be moved from the front to the back where the players and staff currently enter. The moving of the Dynamo entrance completely shuts Rusk St off and all of the businesses on Rusk and St Emanuel. Five years of construction will completely shut these businesses down. It will also hurt attendance at the Dynamo games. We suggest that Rusk remain open at all times. As to Leeland – you need to walk the area. Leeland is far south of EADO. The pioneers to the EADO restructuring were Lucky's Pub and Warehouse Live – which are on St. Emanuel between Rusk and Walker. These businesses were the pioneers in 2005 and 2007 from which the concept of EADO was borne. Prior to this time the area was known as Old China Town and the Warehouse district. It was full of crumbling buildings without utilities and many of the businesses were 'houses of pleasure'. The areas from Polk to Commerce have been revitalized and are apartments and reputable businesses where the structures have been rebuilt (by the tenants not the land owners) into viable business entities bringing in not only tax revenues, but people from all parts of Houston. However, south of Polk and on towards Leeland, is a completely different story; it is filled with falling down empty buildings covered in graffiti and those buildings that may be occupied, either legally or otherwise are gang oriented. It is unsafe to drive south of Rusk towards Leeland at night. If there is no other south entry point available for access into EADO, then the area needs to be totally cleaned up BEFORE construction commences with the buildings demolished, sidewalks installed/repaired and adequate street lighting.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
286	Simpson, Tharen	7/9/2017	Email	**Buyouts:** Issue: Moving/Relocating Tenants Solution: Shared buyout negotiations between DOT with the Tenants and Landowners For the reasons stated earlier, Buyouts should not be conducted without having the Tenants have a seat at the table when numbers are discussed. Construction, in its' self, will be disruptive to the neighborhood and relocating tenants to "another location" will not be easy or in some cases, even possible. The tenants that "began the EADO area" or "the reconstructing of Old Chinatown" are the ones that put out the money to build and improve the neighborhood; and relocating tenants from adjacent to the Dynamo Stadium and near Minute Maid – is going to be an impossible job. It took 5 years plus for these tenants to start breaking even; moving a business from either of these areas into another area that has no draw or is saturated with other bars/restaurants is not going to work. None of the tenants from Chartres to St Emanuel / from Rusk to Walker had buildout money from the landowner. It is all one land owner (including the sole parking lot in EADO) and the tenants paid for every infrastructure improvement including connecting to the Water Main at St. Emanuel and Rusk with their funds, not the landowner's funds.	When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion. Relocation assistance is available to individuals, families, businesses, farmers, ranchers and nonprofit organizations lawfully present in the United States who are displaced as a result of a state highway or transportation project. This assistance applies to tenants as well as owners occupying the real property needed for the project.
286	Simpson, Tharen	7/9/2017	Email	Summary- I respectfully request that these issues be reviewed and resolved before any construction and/or buyouts are started. It is imperative that the construction not totally wipe out the EADO neighborhood and that during the lengthy five-year plus construction period, our business and the other businesses in EADO be able to continue. While we understand travel time on Hwy 45 & 59 is a concern, the restructuring of highways should include a plan not to destroy an entire neighborhood and maintain the taxpayer's rights to continue their source of income as well as minimize the removal of tax revenues to the State.	As a general rule, before TxDOT can acquire any property, the project must obtain environmental clearance. Although ROW acquisition typically occurs after a Record of Decision, TxDOT has been partnering with property owners years before construction starts to minimize hardships and work closely with those that have complex relocation requirements. TxDOT is coordinating with some property owners regarding advance acquisition of properties, per the property owners' request. Advance acquisition provides additional time for relocation and reestablishment. During detailed design, construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed. TxDOT will provide safe and efficient connections to and around neighborhoods, including Downtown, during construction for all modes of transportation, including bicycles and pedestrians. TxDOT will provide advanced notice of temporary road closures and traffic detours and will maintain access to properties during construction. Efforts will be made to accelerate/expedite construction, and access to businesses will be maintained.
287	Poll, Nigel	7/10/2017	Project Website	I live in an apartment close by the proposed ramp. I think it is a great idea for traffic flow purposes. It will need to happen in the future so why not now. Yeah the construction will be annoying, but we need to invest in Americas infrastructure.	Comment noted.

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288	Ford, Nathan	7/11/2017	Project Website	Current plans will significantly damage the burgeoning economy of East Downtown Houston. Lots of money is being poured into houses and businesses in the area between St. Emanuel St and Scott St. These premises will lose considerable value and some will be outright destroyed to make way for frontage roads servicing the new 45/59 highway. The economic gain to Midtown and Downtown that results from removing the Pierce Elevated will be dwarfed by the economic loss from curtailed activity between East Downtown and Downtown. The Toyota Center, Minute Maid Park, BBVA Compass Stadium, The George R. Brown Convention Center, and Avenida De Las Americas are located near the nexus of East Downtown and Downtown. These businesses represent the lifeblood of Downtown's economy, and they will see significant economic harm if East Downtown is isolated from Downtown. On the other hand, St. Joseph's Hospital, the Greyhound Station, the Metro Downtown Transit Center, and the abandoned Days Inn Hotel are located near the nexus of Midtown and Downtown. These businesses represent an infinitesimal share of Downtown's economy, and they will see little to no impact by expanding Midtown residents' access to their establishments. I understand that congestion needs to be relieved along 45, however the current plan to isolate East Downtown from Downtown would significantly damage Downtown Houston's economy. I urge you to modify the North Houston Highway Improvement Project to prevent isolating East Downtown from Downtown.	Connectivity between the east side of Downtown and central Downtown is currently limited due to the George R. Brown Convention Center, where several east west streets do not extend from the east side of US 59/I-69 into Downtown. The proposed project would reconstruct Hamilton Street to be a continuous southbound street adjacent to US 59/I-69 between Commerce Street and Leeland Street. This would reestablish connectivity of four streets (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker streets) across US 59/I-69, which was previously cut off when the George R. Brown Convention Center was constructed. This would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (Second Ward, East End, and Greater Third Ward). Design constraints related to elevating I 45 from the depressed Section between Lamar Street and Commerce Street necessitated the closure of the Polk Street over the highways. Per coordination with the City of Houston, the Polk Street dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton Street and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail Trail via Walker Street. Neighborhoods east of Downtown have been revitalizing over the past several years, and improved connectivity to the Downtown central business district would support economic development. TxDOT will provide a highway “cap” of approximately 20 acres over the proposed depressed lanes of I-45 and US 59/I-69 from approximately Commerce Street to Lamar Street. Future use of the highway cap area for another purpose would require additional development and funding by entities other than TxDOT. This configuration would create the opportunity for improved connectivity in the area of the depressed Section of the freeway between east Downtown and central Downtown. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
289	Nemec, Tim	7/12/2017	Project Website	Segment 3 of this project is an appallingly absurd concept that should be scrapped altogether due to its flagrant wastefulness of the estimated $3 billion it would cost.	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high-capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area. Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
289	Nemec, Tim	7/12/2017	Project Website	The segment proposes the destruction of the center of an economically productive neighborhood without any reason whatsoever. This is a disturbing throw-back to the highway projects of the 1950s and '60s which destroyed inner city neighborhoods for the benefit of suburban commuters.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.

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289	Nemec, Tim	7/12/2017	Project Website	Instead of wasting money to accommodate and subsidize the lifestyle choices of people who choose to live a ridiculous distance from Downtown, TxDOT should focus on projects that increase transportation capacity for the right-of-ways that they already own. Automobile transportation which TxDOT seems to solely design for is wasteful of space. Rather, TxDOT should use its money to build more diverse transportation options that do not force people to use an automobile. IfTxDOT is so determined to spend money to help commuters in the Woodlands get into Downtown easier, they should do it in a way that doesn't destroy neighborhoods and that actually moves away from automobile-dependency.	Comment noted.
290	Pollard, Chris	7/12/2017	Project Website	I strongly disagree with this project. I would not like to see a freeway expanded through the center of our city. I am worried about hurting existing businesses and pollution.	The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. During detailed design, construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed. TxDOT will provide safe and efficient connections to and around neighborhoods, including Downtown, during construction for all modes of transportation, including bicycles and pedestrians. TxDOT will provide advanced notice of temporary road closures and traffic detours and will maintain access to properties during construction. Efforts will be made to accelerate/expedite construction, and access to businesses will be maintained. Potential air quality and water quality impacts were evaluated and mitigation measures to avoid and minimize adverse project impacts are discusses in the Final EIS.
291	Cuevas, Jacob	7/13/2017	Project Website	This is the dumbest ******* idea ever. Good job finding a way to destroy the East End and its businesses. The nearsightedness of this agency is ******* ridiculous. You guys really think this will ease congestion??? By the time this **** is done, you're back to square one. Why not think about funding commuter rail in this city??? Oh that's right you ******* idiots are filling your pockets. **** you guys and anyone at TxDOT. You guys are ruining Texas with your ********. Sincerely **** off!	Comment noted.
292	Green, Susan	7/14/2017	Project Website	My comments specifically concern the proposed merger of I45 and I 59 as it passes though the east downtown area that is behind the George R Brown convention center. (1) it is difficult for the average person to review the maps and understand the scope of the project. It is not clear how many lanes of freeway and feeder lanes are being proposed. It seems excessive. Taking entire blocks between Chartres and St. Emanuel Street will greatly alter this revitalizing neighborhood. I think most new business owners envisioned that 1/3 or 1/2 of these blocks would be taken.	In the area east of the convention center, the proposed project generally includes 20 thru lanes: 8 lanes on I-45 and 12 lanes for US 59/I-69. The proposed alignment of I-45 and US 59/I-69 was selected as the Recommended Alternative following extensive public involvement, including coordination with local groups and agencies. Proposed right-of-way in the noted area was shown at public meetings in April 2015 and again at the public hearing in May 2017. Property owners (as identified by county appraisal district records) were notified of the project and public meetings/hearing. Proposed new right-of-way has been minimized as much as possible. Visualization videos of the proposed project (4 videos showing different areas of the project) were posted on the project website at the time of the public hearing, and were based on the project design at that time (http://ih45northandmore.com/pub_hear_doc.aspx). The Segment 3 visualization includes the area of the project east of Downtown, and shows I-45 and US 59/I-69. Note that the project design has been revised in some areas of the project, as discussed in the Final EIS.
292	Green, Susan	7/14/2017	Project Website	Taking entire blocks between Chartres and St. Emanuel Street will greatly alter this revitalizing neighborhood. I think most new business owners envisioned that 1/3 or 1/2 of these blocks would be taken.	Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. The preliminary schematic design prepared in 2015 was shown at the public meetings in April 2015, and was available for viewing online and at TxDOT. Since then, as the design was further refined, the proposed right-of-way width increased slightly in part of the area between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St., and decreased slightly in other areas.
292	Green, Susan	7/14/2017	Project Website	(2) Closing Polk street is problematic. I observe many people walking and riding bikes on Polk to get to the GRB and Discovery Green. At least consider a pedestrian and bicycle bridge to permit access to this type of traffic.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets.
292	Green, Susan	7/14/2017	Project Website	(3) Not clear how the existing bus lines (40/41) and rail lines will be disrupted. How will public transit from the east into downtown be affected?	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
292	Green, Susan	7/14/2017	Project Website	(4) How many lanes are proposed behind the GRB?	In the area east of the convention center, the proposed project generally includes 20 thru lanes: 8 lanes on I-45 and 12 lanes for US 59/I-69. The proposed alignment of I-45 and US 59/I-69 was selected as the Recommended Alternative following extensive public involvement, including coordination with local groups and agencies. Proposed right-of-way in the noted area was shown at public meetings in April 2015 and again at the public hearing in May 2017. Property owners (as identified by county appraisal district records) were notified of the project and public meetings/hearing. Proposed new right-of-way has been minimized as much as possible. Visualization videos of the proposed project (4 videos showing different areas of the project) were posted on the project website at the time of the public hearing, and were based on the project design at that time (http://ih45northandmore.com/pub_hear_doc.aspx). The Segment 3 visualization includes the area of the project east of Downtown, and shows I-45 and US 59/I-69. Note that the project design has been revised in some areas of the project, as discussed in the Final EIS.
292	Green, Susan	7/14/2017	Project Website	(5) No one expects a normal feeder lane running through downtown. Keep this in mind as a 50 mph feeder would have many accidents as pedestrians might spill into the street from the possible "park" section.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
292	Green, Susan	7/14/2017	Project Website	(6) The neighborhood east of downtown already has access problems, few grocery stores, few other stores, and one frequently needs to cross into downtown/midtown/Montrose. How is this going to work? (7) It seems unfair to reduce the concrete profile on the west side of downtown to pile it up on the east side of downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
293	Mendoza, Arturo	7/14/2017	Project Website	By tearing down the entire block between St. Emmanuel and Chartres, TxDot will not only destroy entire businesses, houses and nonprofits, but will also damage entire neighborhoods (Ea Do/East End districts) that have struggled a lot during year to finally find a way to develop and attract people and business to them. A 10-15 year project will represent the dead of rising neighborhoods. The park on top will never be built and the area will be full of homeless people.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
294	Kerns, Katherine	7/15/2017	Email	The project the make the 59 and the 45 fwy, run parallel and to do away with the Pierce Elevated is a big waste of taxpayers money. It will not elevate traffic, and will cause many businesses to be displaced. It will ruin the downtown district, and make much more streets flood. Please scrape this plan immediately. Spend this money elsewhere.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
295	O'Sullivan, Paul	7/15/2017	Project Website	As there are few alternatives to get into and out of downtown from the East End, I am not in favor of the closing of Polk, which would force the majority of traffic in that corridor onto Leeland. Despite being a two lane road, parts of Leeland (between Columbia Tap Bike Trail and Emancipation) are rough enough to render Leeland a one lane road. Additionally, Polk is the only east west thoroughfare that is unaffected by UPRR crossing traffic. Hamilton is going to be a more prominent street, as it is planned to take traffic from downtown to Leeland.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
295	O'Sullivan, Paul	7/15/2017	Project Website	I have already made a request of COH-PWE to synchronize the lights on Hamilton at Leeland/Bell eastbound with Leeland westbound, as northbound traffic on Hamilton sometimes is focused on the second light creating a dangerous situation for cyclists and drivers going east on Leeland/Bell.	Intersection signalizations, multi-modal connections, and traffic control measures will be determined during detailed design.
296	Wilkinson, David	7/16/2017	Project Website	Segment 3 is amazing! We definitely need a segment of buried freeway with a park overhead to really connect Discovery Green, GRB, the stadiums, and downtown/EADO. Great plan!	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
297	Alvarado, Carol	7/17/2017	Written	I have been receiving numerous complaints from constituents concerned about the current plans for the reconstruction of IH 45 in our area. The major concerns relate to connectivity with Downtown. It is critical to maintain the Polk Street connection across IH-69 I IH-45. This is currently the major interchange for all traffic between the East End and Downtown, in part because it includes an underpass for the West Belt Subdivision rail line. Additionally a Tiger grant currently proposes that the separated bike lane on Lamar continue along Polk to connect to light rail on Main Street, Buffalo Bayou, and the downtown business and recreational area. Polk Street also connects Harrisburg to the Columbia Tap trails. There is connection needed likewise from Runnels to McKee or Canal to Ruiz. Otherwise the only access to Downtown for residents north of the West Belt subdivision rail line and Buffalo Bayou is the Franklin/Navigation underpass, which is unnavigable during a severe rain storm.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. The bike connectivity improvements funded by the TIGER grant would be rerouted up Hamilton St. to Walker St. to the Columbia Tap trails.
297	Alvarado, Carol	7/17/2017	Written	Both Polk and Runnels are used for three METRO routes (routes 40, 41, and 48) to transport people between the East End and Downtown. Without those connections eastbound and westbound trips will require separate routes, causing inconvenience and confusion among passengers and probable increased cost for METRO. If there is not good connectivity at Polk St., it is essential that there be a grade separation at the rail line on Leeland to eliminate that barrier for east/west travel between the East End and Downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways.
297	Alvarado, Carol	7/17/2017	Written	There are important historic and art districts located along the route between I-10 and 610. They merit careful planning regarding lighting, landscaping, and protection from the runoff of water and garbage from the freeways. I would like to see these added in your final environmental impact statement	Many of the elements that impact on landscape and aesthetic design overlap into all parts of the final design process. Typically these areas include bridge design, lighting design, roadway design, hydraulics, and environmental mitigation. TxDOT plans to coordinate with outside groups and organizations to seek input during detailed design. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures would be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. TxDOT will comply with its statewide permit for discharges of stormwater, which was issued by TCEQ in November 2016. These commitments are included in the Final EIS.
297	Alvarado, Carol	7/17/2017	Written	I urge TxDOT to comply with the Complete Street policy adopted by Houston to assure that streets are built to benefit all users. Bicycles are used extensively in the East End and the Heights, both for recreation and as a means of transportation. Bike lanes should be six feet wide, protected or set behind the curb and well-marked with green paint and signage. Bridges and feeder streets need to include unimpeded sidewalks for pedestrians. Special attention needs to be given at intersections to clarify safe routes for all participants	TxDOT coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. TxDOT notes that the policy states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts.
297	Alvarado, Carol	7/17/2017	Written	This project will directly affect the prosperity and quality of life of Houstonians--particularly those living near it—for decades.	TxDOT and the study team have developed alternatives in consideration of input from other agencies and the public throughout the study process. The team also analyzed and evaluated the alternatives using engineering, traffic, and environmental criteria to determine which alternative would best meet the project's need and purpose. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with local authorities, planning agencies, neighborhood associations, and stakeholders to ensure the needs and interests of the communities are addressed. TxDOT developed a comprehensive public/stakeholder outreach program and conducted/attended meetings with elected officials, neighborhood associations, management districts, and others during project development. The project design has been developed in consideration of the input received to minimize impacts within the study area. TxDOT will continue to evaluate opportunities to refine and minimize impacts during detailed design.
298	Sanchez, Victor	7/17/2017	Project Website	I'm a new owner of a home in the eastwood subdivision. Closing Polk or any other street linking downtown to the east end is not acceptable. There is already a hardship due to previous expansion of George R Brown. Feel free to contact me.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
299	Thomas, Shari	7/17/2017	Email	Regarding segment 3 of the I45 North and More project, please do not close Polk street and instead consider an alternative.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
300	Unknown	7/17/2017	Email	I am writing to complain about the waste of taxpayer money in regards to the construction of Segment 3 of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. The project continues a disturbing trend at TxDOT that gives supreme precedence to automobile traffic rather than developing other transportation solutions to address Houston's urban growth.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
301	Pevy, Lanquisha	7/18/2017	Project Website	I do not agree with this plan for many reasons. Whoever created this plan I feel are heartless. Where will the elders of these communities go? Individuals have resided in all areas for years. I am against this project for all areas especially 45n and 610. This is horrible. Freeways are built daily but they will never take away from places like River Oaks for example. Its always the inner city thats a target. I wonder why.	When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.
302	Phometsi, Mothusi	7/18/2017	Project Website	I am architect consultant representing The Universal Church Inc. for their site at 5325 North Fwy, Houston Tx 77022. This site is currently impacted by Interstate 45 project. I would like to get contacts for a counselor that I can communicate with regarding the relocation process. I was given Mrs. Wahida Walki's phone number but I have called her and have been unable to contact her. I would appreciate the contacts of someone I can speak to.	TxDOT is coordinating with the property owner regarding advance acquisition of this property, per the property owner's request.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	1. The design sequesters motorists on IH-45 for a significant distance as they travel around downtown. For example, traveling northbound on IH-45 from the Gulf Freeway, there appears to be a distance of about 3.25 miles between the St. Joseph Parkway/ Pease Street exit into downtown and the following exit, to IH-10 westbound. Has TxDOT given thought as to how to assist or re-route motorists along this stretch of IH-45 during emergencies (e.g. accidents, jackknifed trailers, etc.)? For example, can emergency access gates, like those placed along HOV lanes, be provided between the IH-45 and IH-69/US 59 mainlanes in the trench east of downtown?	TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	2. There is not a direct connector between IH-45 northbound and IH-10 eastbound; it appears that motorists making this connection are expected to first exit onto IH-69/US-59 northbound and then exit onto IH-10 eastbound (and, due to the current ramp reconfiguration project, northbound motorists will need to be aware of this back at Elgin/Lockwood). Is it physically and geometrically possible to address both this concern as well as the one raised in the first point by creating a direct connector between IH-45 northbound and IH-10 eastbound?	A comprehensive traffic analysis was conducted for the entire project, which resulted in the currently proposed design. Traffic movement from I-45 northbound to I-10 eastbound was projected to be a low volume movement, and thus did not warrant a direct connector. Since I-45 northbound is at the lowest level of the reconfigured interchange, it is not geometrically feasible to include a direct connector between I-45 northbound and I-10 eastbound.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	3. When compared to the existing configuration, the revised schematic appears to reduce some of the direct access points for motorists on IH-45 to enter downtown (e.g. the elimination of the Pierce Elevated means that northbound motorists from the Gulf Freeway will no longer be able to access the northern and western sides of downtown via the Memorial Drive exit). This places a premium on the importance of clear and definitive signage to effectively inform approaching motorists as to how and where to access downtown	Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. Signage will be determined during detailed design and will be designed to effectively inform motorists of Downtown access points.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	4. There is some general language on page 7-2 of the DEIS document regarding bicycle and pedestrian pathways, but the revised schematics do not appear to address bicycle and pedestrian connectivity in detail. As the design progresses, H-GAC strongly encourages TxDOT to continue to work with the City of Houston, management districts and other stakeholders to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian connectivity across the reconstructed freeway is preserved and even, where possible, enhanced. For example, as Holman has been identified by the City of Houston as a bike route on either side of the IH-69/US 59 trench, an elevated bicycle and pedestrian bridge to provide connectivity should be considered, if physically feasible.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. Connecting Holman St. between Holman St. and Chenevert St. is not possible due to conflicts with the proposed I-69/SH 288 interchange.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	5. As this project will have at least some effect on METRO's transit operations, H-GAC also strongly encourages TxDOT staff to work closely with METRO staff to minimize disruptions to transit operations, both during and after construction, and to collaborate on opportunities to accommodate the possibility of future high-capacity transit within the corridor, especially along Segments 1 and 2.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. METRO is a Cooperating Agency and has been engaged and collaborating with TxDOT throughout the development of the project. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible, and when a preferred alignment for future rail has been determined. TxDOT is also coordinating with the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) during the NHHIP development process.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	6. The closure of Runnels makes some of the intersection improvements and grade separations as identified in the GCRD West Belt Study and H-GAC's East End Mobility Study, especially as they relate to Navigation Boulevard, even more critical. TxDOT is encouraged to cooperate with the City of Houston, the Gulf Coast Rail District, and the Greater East End Management District to ensure that these improvements are accommodated as the new design is put in place.	Comment noted.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	7. The DEIS states on page ES-20 that "[c]hanges in freeway access on I-45, I-10 and US 59/I-69 will likely affect existing traffic patterns in neighborhoods." These effects will require further analysis, especially as they relate to areas such downtown, Midtown, Greater Third Ward, the East End and the Near Northside. H-GAC encourages TxDOT staff to continue to work with the City of Houston as well as management districts, Super Neighborhoods, and other organizations to address issues such as motorist wayfinding and traffic control on local streets surrounding and connecting to the project.	TxDOT will continue to work with the City of Houston, management districts, Super Neighborhoods, and other organizations to address issues such as motorist wayfinding and traffic control on local streets surrounding and connecting to the project.

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303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	8. H-GAC is appreciative of TxDOT's efforts to reduce the impact of the freeways on the surrounding community, reconnect neighborhoods, create opportunities for economic development and improve quality of life by creating freeway deck parks in Midtown, east downtown and north of downtown, and will support efforts in advancing these projects.	Comment noted.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	9. The DEIS indicates that this project is likely to have disproportionately high and adverse impacts on Minority and Low-Income communities and historic neighborhoods. H-GAC has expertise in addressing such environmental justice concerns, and is prepared to support TxDOT's evaluation of these potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.	TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with H-GAC to discuss potential impacts to minority and low-income communities.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	10. As a result of this project, several freeway segments which are currently at or above grade will be reconstructed below grade. This places extreme importance on the need for adequate rainwater pumping, drainage control and runoff management infrastructure and capacity to ensure that these segments do not flood during extreme weather events.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	11, As it is a dynamic activity center, downtown Houston has been and continues to be the location for significant new investment by both the public and private sector. TxDOT is encouraged to coordinate with both public and private interests to minimize and mitigate the effects of this project on other construction and development activities.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with public and private stakeholders as well as local government.
303	Houston-Galveston Area Council	7/19/2017	Email	12. The new freeway configuration will cross multiple active freight railroad lines, including those owned by Union Pacific and BNSF. H-GAC encourages TxDOT to maintain close cooperation with the freight railroads to ensure that freight operations are not adversely impacted during construction and, where possible, even improve the safety and capacity of these railroads.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.
304	McLeod, John	7/19/2017	Project Website	I oppose Segment 3 of the TxDot Downtown Loop System. TxDot needs to make the following modifications to their current design: • Keep Pierce Elevated or some form or it for easy east to west route without having to go through the downtown street lights.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times.
304	McLeod, John	7/19/2017	Project Website	• Reduce amount of lanes going through the East Side of Dowtown.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. Improvements to access to/from downtown include making Hamilton Street continuous to US 59, improving north-south connectivity. Although Polk St. would not be continuous to downtown, other benefits in the downtown area of the proposed project include: - Removing the Pierce Elevated structure, a visual barrier south of downtown - Depressing freeways to accommodate park/open greenspace east of downtown - Accommodating pedestrian access and bicycle access per the City of Houston bike plan
304	McLeod, John	7/19/2017	Project Website	o Current project would remove current businesses on Chartres St, between Polk and Commerce St. As well as take possible development land from the east end and turn it into freeway lanes. Txdot currently shows total freeway lanes going from 9 to approximately 20 lanes depending on location. These are underground lanes with the street level turning into a park, if funded by others.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I-45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.

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304	McLeod, John	7/19/2017	Project Website	• TxDot should not accommodate George R. Brown Convention Center by moving freeway further east around the GRB as this also negatively impacts East side. Also, you fail at engineering.	The freeway is not being routed to the east. Hamilton Street will be routed to the east for loading and unloading at the GRB Center.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	We again appreciate TXDoTs commitment to bridging the areas of US59 being suppressed in Museum Park. Unfortunately, experience at Dallas' Klyde Warren Park has proven that disconnected segments, as planned between Caroline and Fannin, are problematic for many reasons.	Comment noted. The structural cap limits in this area were revised after the public hearing to comply with updated federal ventilation requirements. There would also be a structural cap over the depressed lanes of US 59/I-69 between approximately Main Street and Fannin Street, and in the area of the Caroline Street/Wheeler Street intersection. The revised schematic shows the updated design.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	With the proposed reconfiguration of I69 at Wheeler Transit Station, there is an opportunity to improve multi-modal circulation, access to the transit center and plan for future capacity needs with the University Corridor and US 90A transit connections. We ask that TXDoT coordinate with City and METRO to ensure this area is designed to maximize future transit and development opportunities. The Deck Park Cap at this location provides an opportunity for public and private investment to develop a Transit Oriented Development. TxDOT should actively engage in the development and implementation of the Wheeler Area Park Cap and related street and transit connections	TxDOT has coordinated with the COH and METRO regarding a highway cap in this area.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	The NHHIP proposes to move the freeway below grade in this section, reducing noise and visual impacts along the border of Midtown and the Museum District and benefiting the prospect of development. The Museum Park Livable Center Study outlines this opportunity that can be envisioned soon since this is the first project where construction is expected to start as soon as 2020. However, details including ramps, bridges, and street connections will need to be worked out to enable the greatest potential for transit-oriented development around the station.	With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	We appreciate you meeting with the city, METRO and stakeholder to discuss options and look forward to working with you to identify the design that improves circulation and accessibility for all modes of transportation around the Wheeler Transit Center. We also request that this cap be designed to accommodate landscaping and program needs. Museum Park is committed to working with TXDoT to provide design concepts in a timely manner.	With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	To create continuity of the historic street grid as it currently exists, we request that the segment bridging Main to east of Fannin be connected to the segment bridging San Jacinto to Caroline. Having this surface area retained as it exists now is critically important in this intensely pedestrian area surrounding the METRO Transit Center.	This is not feasible. There was no way to meet tunnel safety requirements without lowering the freeway an additional 10 feet. This would severely impair local street connections.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	Please evaluate options to maintain the Blodgett connection from San Jacinto to Main St. This is a useful connection and very helpful to the bus operations at the Transit Center. With the redesign of the San Jacinto on-ramp to east side of street, this should be achievable.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	IH-69 exit to Main Street near Wheeler TC should be designed to allow improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safe crossings as identified in Houston Bike Plan/METRO Bike & Ride studies.	The Wheeler Street typical section was revised to include 4 vehicular lanes and a 15-foot wide Pedestrian Realm. With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	We ask that the bridges planned over Austin, LaBranch, and Almeda be designed to accommodate all modes of mobility including people walking and bicycle riders. We ask that these bridges be designed to accommodate green scape including trees. Museum Park is committed to providing design concepts to TXDoT in a timely manner.	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.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	The current plan calls for a left turn lane on Caroline at Wheeler, reducing the green space of our beautiful esplanades. We see no reason for this additional turn lane and ask that it be eliminated from the design, and not implemented.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	The planting of anything green softens the impact of this large infrastructure project. Please landscape the walls of the dropped roadway similar to the area on US59 between Hazard and Shepherd using fig ivy or plantings even more environmentally beneficial.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	We think it likely that noise walls will be needed adjacent to residential areas in Museum Park along 59. If necessary, this additional level will add landscape opportunities. We request that this landscaping be similar to the noise walls that are currently in place on the segment of US59 towards Dunlavy.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. A limited number of noise barriers are proposed along US 59/I-69 between Main Street and SH 288, primarily near San Jacinto Street. In the remainder of the corridor, barriers were evaluated for all impacted receivers but did not meet the feasible and/or reasonable (cost effectiveness) criterion for incorporation in the project. Note that in some locations, the predicted noise levels would decrease. The project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process.
305	Museum Park Super Neighborhood	7/19/2017	Email	As currently proposed, the primary access to and egress from the SH 288 Managed Lanes or Toll Lanes would be provided on Chenevert Street south of Elgin, adjacent to the Houston High School for International Studies and Baldwin Park. Presence of the existing freeway ramps disrupt the neighborhood fabric and introduce unsafe vehicle speeds in a residential area. Please consider other options including connecting the SH 288 Managed/Toll Lanes to the SH 288 main lanes near Alabama or connecting to Hamilton and Chartres that serve as the frontage road along this section of the freeway.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

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306	Surette, Renee	7/19/2017	Email	Our new home is at 610 N & Irvington St area. After numerous community meetings & much discussion, I'd like to emphasize how important a flyover at Fulton Street will be. It will be the access to our neighborhood. The METRO train can be dangerous & cause delays. An option while using the feeder to bypass over or turn on Fulton is necessary.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
307	Betancourt, Claudia	7/20/2017	Project Website	I an against closing the Polk Exit. Residents in the East End have historically have been taken into consideration. This nor only hinders me going to and from work but also my family business locateded in the East End.	The northbound exit to Polk St. from I-69 would be maintained in the proposed design. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
309	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/20/2017	Email	Make the following modifications to Segment 3: 1.Keep Pierce Elevated or some form of it for an easy east to west route.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
309	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/20/2017	Email	*(Make the following modifications to Segment 3:)* 2.Reduce amount of lanes, keep ROW ~212', going through the East Side of Downtown.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. Improvements to access to/from downtown include making Hamilton Street continuous to US 59, improving north-south connectivity. Although Polk St. would not be continuous to downtown, other benefits in the downtown area of the proposed project include: - Removing the Pierce Elevated structure, a visual barrier south of downtown - Depressing freeways to accommodate park/open greenspace east of downtown - Accommodating pedestrian access and bicycle access per the City of Houston bike plan

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309	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/20/2017	Email	Current project would remove businesses on Chartres St between Polk and Commerce St as well as take possible development land from the east end.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I-45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.
311	Hendershot, Deaglan	7/21/2017	Project Website	Recommending construction of six lane freeway with 2 lane one way frontage roads on both sides from I-45 to Beltway 8 along the Highway 249 corridor. This along with the north project should help relieve traffoc along Beltway 8 and eliminate the need to pay a toll to take the Beltway to I 45 or US 290. The newly expanded I-45 should be able to accommodate the traffic coming off of the new freeway. This also helps reduce congestion on 249 itself by eliminating traffic signals/at grade intersections along the corridor and relocating them to frontage roads, and will shorten freeway the link to Tomball.	Comment noted. TxDOT is exploring options on SH 249 as a separate project; however, SH 249 will not be a freeway due to capacity limits.
311	Hendershot, Deaglan	7/21/2017	Project Website	At the ends of the project, I would recommend EZ Tag only tolled connectors from Beltway 8 east to 249 south and from 249 north to Beltway 8 west, and non toll connectors from Beltway 8 west to 249 south and from 249 north to Beltway 8 east.	The area discussed in the comment is outside of the NHHIP project area. After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
311	Hendershot, Deaglan	7/21/2017	Project Website	On the south end, I would recommend ending the freeway into four connectors to I 45: 2 lane southbound 249 to southbound I 45, 2 lane northbound I 45 to northbound 249, 1 lane southbound 249 to northbound 45, and 1 lane southbound 45 to northbound 249. These direct connectors will eliminate the congestion at traffic signals and save minutes turning onto the different roads. Going southbound on I 45, the left of the 2 lanes off of 249 will merge into the right mainlane of I 45, while the right lane becomes the Shepard Dr auxillary lane, and in the opposite direftion, the ramp coming from Shepard drive will merge onto the freeway and become the auxillary lane for 249, thile the option lane of going north on I 45 or 249 will be the right mainlane. On the north side of the interchange, the ramp north will become the auxillary lane leading to the Aldine Bender Rd/Fallbrook Dr exit and the entry from that intersection will become the 249 auxillary lane.	Comment noted. TxDOT is exploring options for SH 249 as a separate project that will interface with NHHIP.
311	Hendershot, Deaglan	7/21/2017	Project Website	At Beltway 8, I recommend for HCTRA to modify the Tollway to accomodate the new ramps to southbound 249 and from northbound 249. After all, this project will reduce congestion and improve travel time to Tomball and improve safety by moving high speed traffic away from at grade intersections.	SH 249 at Beltway 8 is outside the project area and being evaluated in a separate project.
312	Houston High-Speed Rail Watch	7/21/2017	Written	HHSRW has serious concerns about this reconstruction project with regard to right-of-way availability for modes of transportation other than automobiles. For the past several years, Texas Central Partners (TCP), a private company, has been working to connect Houston to Dallas via high speed rail. TCP plans to locate its Houston end terminus for the high-speed rail project near METRO's Northwest Transit Center. HHSRW, along with several transportation agencies including METRO, are working on a strategic plan for connectivity to downtown for both high-speed rail riders and transit center riders. We propose using existing freeway corridors to avoid disrupting communities. An elevated lane for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or METRO light rail will travel the median of I-10 between TCP's end terminus and downtown using the existing HOV ramp by the old post office on Franklin. The current North Houston Highway Improvement Project plans do not consider this connectivity, and in fact, would preclude it, since the plans call for the demolition of the HOV ramp. We strongly recommend that the HOV ramp be reconstructed to support BRT and/or METRO light rail. Our intent is to maintain the Franklin connection so it will tie in with METRO's existing purple and green light rail lines. We know TxDOT's primary focus is building highways for auto drivers, but BRT, light rail, bikes and other forms of existing travel need to be considered in the North Houston Highway Improvement Project to facilitate long-term transportation goals for the City of Houston and Greater Houston area. We ask that TxDOT be open to incorporating all methods of transportation as they finalize the plans for this massive undertaking. A copy of our proposal and map for our idea is included for your review.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
313	Houston High-Speed Rail Watch	7/21/2017	Email	HHSRW has serious concerns about this reconstruction project with regard to right-of-way availability for modes of transportation other than automobiles. For the past several years, Texas Central Partners (TCP), a private company, has been working to connect Houston to Dallas via high speed rail. TCP plans to locate its Houston end terminus for the high-speed rail project near METRO's Northwest Transit Center. HHSRW, along with several transportation agencies including METRO, are working on a strategic plan for connectivity to downtown for both high-speed rail riders and transit center riders. We propose using existing freeway corridors to avoid disrupting communities. An elevated lane for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or METRO light rail will travel the median of I-10 between TCP's end terminus and downtown using the existing HOV ramp by the old post office on Franklin. The current North Houston Highway Improvement Project plans do not consider this connectivity, and in fact, would preclude it, since the plans call for the demolition of the HOV ramp. We strongly recommend that the HOV ramp be reconstructed to support BRT and/or METRO light rail. Our intent is to maintain the Franklin connection so it will tie in with METRO's existing purple and green light rail lines. We know TxDOT's primary focus is building highways for auto drivers, but BRT, light rail, bikes and other forms of existing travel need to be considered in the North Houston Highway Improvement Project to facilitate long-term transportation goals for the City of Houston and Greater Houston area. We ask that TxDOT be open to incorporating all methods of transportation as they finalize the plans for this massive undertaking. A copy of our proposal and map for our idea is included for your review.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.

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314	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/21/2017	Project Website	Please take the following comments into consideration and modify the current design of North Highway project Segment 3: • Keep Pierce Elevated or some form of it for an easy east to west route without having to go through the downtown street lights. I'm not even sure why the Pierce elevated is going to be demolished. An old txdot document of this plans mentioned this would take down the "barrier" between Midtown and Downtown. There are several direct access roads so how exactly is it isolated. Second if there is something wrong structurally, then why not rebuild it. I doubt this is the real reason as this will be the traffic route while the underground freeway in EADO is built so I suggest to keep the Pierce elevated open even after the project is complete	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
314	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/21/2017	Project Website	Reduce amount of lanes going through the East Side of Downtown to keep businesses.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. Improvements to access to/from downtown include making Hamilton Street continuous to US 59, improving north-south connectivity. Although Polk St. would not be continuous to downtown, other benefits in the downtown area of the proposed project include: - Removing the Pierce Elevated structure, a visual barrier south of downtown - Depressing freeways to accommodate park/open greenspace east of downtown - Accommodating pedestrian access and bicycle access per the City of Houston bike plan
314	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/21/2017	Project Website	The current project would remove current businesses on Chartres St, between Polk and Commerce St. As well as take possible development land from the east end and turn it into underground freeway lanes with open space above. Now these are underground lanes, but businesses would be forced to move with the current design. Txdot currently shows total freeway lanes going from 9 to approximately 20 lanes depending on location.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I-45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.

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314	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/21/2017	Project Website	Now I am glad there will be easier walking access between downtown and EADO due to the underground highway, but the amount of lanes needs to reduce to save as much of these businesses as you possibly can.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. Improvements to access to/from downtown include making Hamilton Street continuous to US 59, improving north-south connectivity. Although Polk St. would not be continuous to downtown, other benefits in the downtown area of the proposed project include: - Removing the Pierce Elevated structure, a visual barrier south of downtown - Depressing freeways to accommodate park/open greenspace east of downtown - Accommodating pedestrian access and bicycle access per the City of Houston bike plan
314	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/21/2017	Project Website	Getting a park, if funded by others, is not appealing when businesses who have worked hard to make the East End vibrant will be forced to move.	If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
314	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/21/2017	Project Website	Also need to ensure Leeland/ Bell, and Polk St remain direct access roads between downtown and East downtown. Not only are the George R. Brown and Minute Maid Park walls between Downtown and EADO, but removing a single of these access roads will further isolate EADO.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
314	Orellana, Jeanneth	7/21/2017	Project Website	This project can't simply look to improve transit for those who live in the suburbs and simply pass through the area. It needs to improve transit for the inner city folks who have tried to shape the community for the better.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.
315	F., G.	7/22/2017	Email	Please don't move either I-45 or US 59 (I-69). I don't believe that there will be a good return on investment for the problems such a move will cause in the interim.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
316	Michaelides, Evan	7/22/2017	Project Website	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity while keeping high-speed transit within the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
317	Michaelides, Evan	7/22/2017	Email	TxDOT's current plans demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for a METRORail or BRT connection between downtown and the planned high-speed rail station in the 290/610 area. I request that TxDOT preserve or reconstruct this ramp for future METRORail or BRT service while remaining in its current ROW.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The City of Houston adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2013 to ensure streets are constructed for all users of the system. The City also requires that streets should be built using a Context Sensitive Design guidelines as those recommended in the ITE - Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach and NACTO - Urban Street Design Guide and others. Since the project location is within the urban core of the City, the design on the proposed project should meet these guidelines.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. For example, in coordination with COH, TxDOT developed a plan for bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, which includes a 15-17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic. TxDOT will include this bicycle/pedestrian realm on city street crossing in other areas of the project.

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318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	This project will be transformative, for the region and City. TxDOT should closely coordinate with the City of Houston, METRO and other entities such as Management Districts, TIRZs to make the project as strong as possible. This means thinking beyond the direct right-of-way of the project to understand opportunities and impacts on street, bikeway, greenway, and transit networks. It also means working to tie communities together, not separating them further with ever wider freeways serving as barriers. Several stakeholders have submitted recommendations that have potential to significantly improve connectivity but have not been reflected in current plans. Plans say they are "subject to change". Clarify to the public the process to consider these changes.	TxDOT has coordinated extensively with local government and other local groups, including those noted in your comment. The proposed project was developed in consideration of existing and proposed future streets, bikeway, greenway, and transit networks. TxDOT also received and considered input from the public and other stakeholders during the project development process. During the planning process for a roadway project, changes in project design and ROW requirements are typically identified as roadway design concepts are refined based on information about existing conditions, potential project impacts, plans for future development, and coordination with stakeholders. Some design concepts were refined after the public hearing, and changes to the project design, including the project ROW, are documented in the Final EIS.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The existing freeway infrastructure built in the 1960's had a significant impact on the City of Houston and separated communities. Connectivity in and out of Northside neighborhoods needs to be addressed in a way that it becomes improved not worse by new design. Reducing street connectivity in areas in the urban core of Houston should be avoided or mitigated wherever possible. Connectivity should be considered not only for vehicular traffic, but for all modes of transportation; inclusive of people on foot, people on bicycles, transit users, and for freight.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. TxDOT will coordinate with METRO to ensure light rail operations continue during construction. Light rail and freight rail connections would not be impacted. The study team attempted to maintain all existing connections between neighborhoods along the freeways, and to improve connections where feasible. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT has coordinated with the COH, METRO, and surrounding neighborhoods to develop a plan that provides improved highway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian, and local street connectivity.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	A large segment of our neighborhood population walks, bikes and takes public transportation to get to work, school and connect with Houston as a whole. The proposed project creates an increased barrier between lower social-economic neighborhoods on the Northside and the Central Business District. In areas where vehicular connectivity might be removed, options should be evaluated to preserve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.	TxDOT has worked closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The proposed schematic drawing does not identify sidewalks along sections of the proposed project. In general, sidewalks should be identified along all frontage roads and public streets on the schematics in all typical sections. All bridges and underpasses should have wide sidewalks and well designed lighting for safe crossing. Ensuring access to pedestrian and ADA accessibility along all public streets is critical. Connections on Crosstimbers, Victoria/Lyerly, Tidwell Rd., Cortlandt/E Witcher, Rosamond, W Parker Road, Rittenhouse, etc need to be designed with high comfort intersections for bicyclists and pedestrians. This is a vital connection between Independence Heights, Garden Oaks, Oak Forest, Acres Homes areas and the Northline community as well as safe access to the METRO Red Line into downtown.	Sidewalks were shown on the schematics for Segments 1 and 2 and sidewalks are now shown on the updated schematics for Segment 3. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding incorporating the Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets for Segment 3. The schematic was updated to show the sidewalk network agreed upon by TxDOT and the COH. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The intersection at I-610 and Fulton is currently a traffic problem with East and West bound traffic lights on the 610 frontage road having wait times of over 10 minutes due to the METRO rail crossing. The connection of the frontage roads at the 610 & 45 interchange will only exasperate traffic issues at this intersection. Coordinate with METRO to reconcile this issue. One suggestion from a resident is a flyover lane for the frontage roads parallel to the raised freeway deck.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Northline residents are opposed to any kind of street connection of Helmers North and South of 610. Helmers is a residential street with a elementary school just North of the freeway. Connecting this street under the freeway would create unsafe traffic volumes for the neighborhood.	Helmers St. is outside the project limits and is a city street. The proposed NHHIP does not include any work at Helmers St.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The HOV ramp from Airline Drive providing access to Independence Heights and Northside Community is being removed. Provide alternative access for the communities to managed lanes.	TxDOT has coordinated extensively with METRO on the mentioned connections. The T-ramps are being eliminated because their position interferes with other freeway operations; the wishbone ramps will replace the T-ramps that must be removed.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The removal of North Street Bridge creates greater access issues between Heights and Northside, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists. Provide pedestrian and bicycle connection along I-45 and Little White Oak Bayou to mitigate the removal of the North Street bridge.	The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will provide improved pedestrian-bicycle accommodations on the North Main St. bridge.

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318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Little White Oak Bayou: This bayou section has the opportunity to become an important piece of the expanding high comfort bicycle network that provides connectivity from outside the N Loop 610, under I-45 away from traffic, and into downtown making further east and west connections through Buffalo Bayou. Coordinate with Houston Parks, City of Houston and Greater Northside Management District to develop Little White Oak Bayou as bike and pedestrian connector throughout the project.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to replace affected open space by creating new open space where possible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	COMMENT 10 Deck Park over I-45 near North Main - The original I-45 construction bisected one community into two. This has become a permanent separation resulting in different community cultures on either side of the freeway. There are constant efforts to reunite the communities but the swath of freeway that separates them remains a physical barrier. Create a deck park over the freeway near North Main. This will be a physical reattachment point, reuniting the divided communities. Address the accessibility issue to the proposed Deck Park location near Main Street with the proposed multilane frontage roads and U turn ramps.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Connection of existing bike lanes along Little White Oak Bayou between Enid and Cavalcade, on the west side of I-45, to a new park at the retention pond areas on the east side of I-45 (where Love's Truck stop is currently), and on to Moody Park/Woodland Park/White Oak Bayou trail. Mitigate for loss of green space along the bayou in this area and replace the trail with an equivalent trail.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The realigned segment of 110 and I 45 has significant impact on existing businesses and could benefit by improving the connectivity in this area, which is already hampered by freight rail lines and the Bayou. Coordinate with the City and UPRR on the potential to realign the freight main along the passenger main to remove existing street grade freight crossings through Downtown.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with HB&T, BNSF, and UPRR railroad representatives, and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. Please note the project will accomplish some nearby grade separations. After coordinating with local stakeholders, TxDOT determined to grade-separate Rothwell Street and Providence Street under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jenson Drive and Main Street will no longer cross the tracks at-grade.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Integrate connection to link area north of UPRR on the north side of the post office site to Downtown. This could potentially be incorporated into Downtown Connector, Bagby, Washington Avenue extension design.	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.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Plan for the extension of San Jacinto Street to Fulton including potential grade separation at the UP Passenger Main crossing which is hugely impactful to drivers and transit in this area.	TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Provide improved version of existing pedestrian and bicycle bridge crossings of freeway east of Elysian and link to a new north-south trail connecting to Near Northside. Also evaluate the option to clean up transition from Lyons to McKee to make smoother and more legible. McKey and Hardy streets provide pedestrian bicycle connectivity between Buffalo Bayou and the Northside neighborhood. Ensure bridges across 110 are designed to incorporate safe and high comfort bike facilities.	The existing crossing would be replaced as part of the NHHIP. TxDOT evaluated options for a new bridge, including possibly constructing it under Elysian St., as suggested by others. However, this is not possible because it would not meet vertical clearance requirements with the reconstructed Providence and Rothwell streets. The revised schematic shows the proposed location of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge just west of the BNSF rail crossing. This location will provide improved pedestrian connectivity compared to the existing conditions. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. TxDOT has agreed to follow the requirements of the COH Bike Plan. There will be a pedestrian/bicycle connection across I-10 at Hardy St. and McKee St.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Focus on well thought out design of safe intersections, sidewalks and bikeways, transit stops, frontage roads, and connections have the potential to greatly enhance mobility options. Failure to do so would be a huge detriment to the project. Elements like wide outside lanes for bicyclists, which are likely to be eliminated as guidance from the next AASHTO bikeway design guide, should not be included in this project. The design needs to be forward looking and incorporate best practices for safe multimodal streets. Transit, including how the NHHIP can be designed to support faster transit trips between major activity centers and destinations, should be much more prominently considered in the plan. This should include rail expansion opportunities as well as the potential for an optimized express bus network.	TxDOT agrees that this project represents a huge opportunity that will not come around again soon. Therefore, TxDOT took extra care to ensure all interested and potentially affected parties were engaged in this project from the early stages. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT]), and automated and connected vehicles (AV/CV). TxDOT has and will continue to work with METRO regarding accommodating light rail within the Segment 1 footprint. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads.

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318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Ensure bridge and underpass widths throughout the project include sufficient space for quality sidewalks and high comfort bikeways as called for in City of Houston standards and guidelines, and not be designed to match existing cross-section or old standards. Ensure all freeway and street crossings provide for a minimum 6' unobstructed sidewalks. Where appropriate wider sidewalks should be provided since there is limited buffer between the vehicular lanes and the pedestrian.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	All lanes on city streets and frontage roads should comply with City of Houston's 11' lane standards and encourage appropriate travel speeds and safe travel. Having different lane width for different roads create inconsistent driver experience. 12' lanes are freeway lane standards and not local streets. They encourage excessive speeds through urban area where higher speeds are out of context and unsafe. Define which intersections are proposed with traffic signals and all-way stop control. It is impossible to truly assess whether the design supports safe walkability, bikeability, and transit use without this information. Traffic control recommendations should be developed with multi-modal safety and connections in mind. Multiple streets have been shown with sweeping, large radius turns. Several of these match the existing roadway curb lines which may have been designed at a different time for different uses. This project should take the opportunity to minimize these issues, especially in areas where large numbers of people walking can be expected around Downtown, Buffalo Bayou and Northline Commons.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan. Intersection signalization will be determined during detailed design. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered. Stops (and access to stops) must be designed to ADA and METRO standards with room for shelters to support high quality transit experience.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Of the bicycle features proposed, a clear design criterion with the safety of bicyclists in mind is not apparent. The City of Houston has committed to building only high comfort bicycle lanes and facilities through the recently adopted Bike Plan. A high comfort bicycle lane minimizes people's interaction with high volume, high speed traffic, and requires more separation and protection as these traffic characteristics increase. Design standards for bicyclists and pedestrians need to be set to reflect the Houston Bike Plan's high comfort commitment. Design bikeways for people of All Ages and Abilities in line with the high-comfort bikeway guidelines set out in Houston Bike Plan.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Along frontage roads, the bikeways constructed in this project need to sustain a high level of comfort for both motorists and cyclists to create a clear and safe space for both parties to travel with no room for misinterpretation. 14' wide outside lanes designed as shared bicycle facilities are unsafe and unacceptable and should not be included in this project. It is recommended any bikeway associated with these roadways be completely separated from vehicular traffic, be positioned behind the outermost curb, be at least 6 feet wide and separated from pedestrian traffic. Intersections should be designed for safe crossing to accommodate bikeways and sidewalks. An intersection is the most likely place for a vehicle-bicycle collision. A protected intersection (or Dutch Junction) for bicyclists and pedestrians is recommended and makes travel considerably safer for all parties. This design includes small islands as buffers from right-turning motorists. Green paint is then used to direct the cyclist from one protected lane to the next in a circular fashion moving counter-clockwise. College Station, TX has already completed a similar design and the protected intersection in the Energy Corridor in Houston is planned to be implemented in the fall. Please use these as acceptable examples.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	In general, creating excess unproductive space should be avoided in street design (e.g., small triangles of isolated land) unless there is clear plan to address the use of the space (e.g. public art projects).	Many large radius turns are required for bus routes and emergency vehicles. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. Efforts are being made to eliminate/avoid pedestrian islands at intersections.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Consider all detention areas and how to make these attractive and usable green spaces.	Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The City of Houston has adopted a Complete Streets policy to ensure streets are constructed for all users of the system. The City also required the streets should be built using a Context Sensitive Design guidelines as those recommended in the ITE - Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach and NACTO - Urban Street Design Guide, and others. Since the project location is within the dense urban core of the Houston, especially Segments 1 and 2 any future engineering design should meet these guidelines.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. For example, in coordination with COH, TxDOT developed a plan for bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, which includes a 15-17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic. TxDOT will include this bicycle/pedestrian realm on city street crossing in other areas of the project.

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318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	All intersections should be designed with special care for safe, comfortable crossings for pedestrians. Most arterials crossing IH-45 are on METRO's bus network, have significant nearby boardings and will require safe crossings to serve stops for people traveling in both directions. This includes lighting and walkways through underpasses. Most intersections in Segment 1 are proposed with suburban intersection design considerations. This segment falls within an urban area and all intersections should be designed to improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. To this end, an intersection design that incorporates a free flow right turn lane with a pedestrian island creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians since many drivers do not yield to pedestrians at such intersections. Additionally, several intersections have dedicated right turn lanes. Ensure the traffic counts warrant dedicated right turns. 5-6 lane/multi-lane frontage roads are daunting for pedestrians to cross. Coordinate with City of Houston on all intersection designs.	TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with METRO to accommodate bus stops and schedules during construction. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian safety. Many intersection details (including pedestrian crossings) will be determined during detailed design and will follow AASHTO design standards. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to provide intersections that meet the City's design criteria.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	While the freeways are designed to FHWA and AASHTO design guidelines; all frontage roads, adjoining local streets and intersection should be designed consistent with the City's Context Sensitive design guidelines. Evaluate how the Airline, Victoria Drive and Northbound IH-45 Intersection would operate safely and legibly to people traveling through any mode of travel. Existing configuration is considered dangerous by our residents and should be improved to ensure safety for all users of the roadway.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Ensure adequate clearance across Halls Bayou to allow for adequate natural drainage conveyance, and a pedestrian and bicycle trail along the bayou. These recommendations are consistent with the HCFCD's Halls Bayou study.	All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. TxDOT will coordinate with COH during detailed design to accommodate an alternate route across I-45 in this area, if the proposed trail crossing proves to be not feasible.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	We greatly appreciate extension of frontage roads under IH-610 at IH-45 interchange. These roadways and intersections should be designed to also allow safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings. The large radius turn lanes are not typically supportive of safe, comfortable crossings at these locations.	Safety is TxDOT's highest priority and thus was one of the primary Purpose and Need criteria used to analyze the alternatives for NHHIP. Per the TxDOT Design Manual, TxDOT follows AASHTO criteria for bicycle facility design. However, for this project, TxDOT looked at a range of bicycle facility guidance including NACTO. 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. The Final EIS includes details on these proposed pedestrian realms. 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.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered and stops (and access to stops) would be designed to ADA and METRO standards to support high quality transit experience.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Add safe pedestrian crossings, and bike lanes, to cross, and continue east, on Crosstimbers, Cavalcade (has existing bike lanes), Patton, and Cottage St-Searle Dr. These are to have access to the red line train stops at North line, Cavalcade and Moody Park, as well as the Irvington Blvd Commercial Corridor, the MD Anderson YMCA, the new park (see below), and neighborhoods. Add shade trees along sidewalks and bike lanes.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the 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. The design of the Cottage Street crossing includes accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians and the U-Turns at Cottage Street were removed from the schematic design to promote safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings per coordination with the adjacent neighborhoods.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Reconfigure the design of the local network to the new frontage road along I 610 and I 45 on the northeast side of the interchange. Create two-way T-intersection instead of the proposed one way connection to Reid Road. Evaluate the option to extend Melbourne Street to I 45 northbound frontage road.	The I-610/I-45 interchange is designed to maintain existing access to frontage roads where possible. Two way access to Reid Rd. from the frontage road will be maintained. Melbourne St. is a city street and any extension would be the responsibility of the City of Houston.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Light new bridges along I 69 in a manner similar to those in Montrose along I 69. All underpasses in Segment 1 and 2 that are adjacent to dense urban neighborhoods such as Northline and Lindale Park should be designed with lighting similar to the bridges. Colorful lighting and other design elements will enhance safety and development in the neighborhoods. Underpasses should be given special consideration as they do more damage to neighborhoods than bridges, adding to issues such as drug dealing and prostitution. I45 and Crosstimbers is a current example of how the freeway underpass has fostered these problems in our neighborhood.	Requirements for lighting would be addressed during detailed design of the project. TxDOT’s Highway Illumination Manual specifies procedures and requirements for the design of continuous and safety lighting systems, as set forth in state regulations. TxDOT will work with communities to assess interest in lighting elements. Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting could be provided under agreements with local entities.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Include landscaping and noise mitigation along widened freeway adjacent to Northline, North Lindale and adjacent neighborhoods.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The proposed project has a significant impact on parks, open space and recreation areas in the Houston Region. The project should identify opportunities to limit this impact and mitigate any impact proposed.	The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	All detention areas should be designed as accessible green space and assets to the surrounding the neighborhoods.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Coordinate with Greater Northside Management District, City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Little White Oak Bayou between I 610 and East Parker Road and Shepherd.	A detention basin is proposed adjacent to Little White Oak Bayou between I-610 and Crosstimbers St. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. North of Crosstimbers St., Little White Oak Bayou is farther from I-45; therefore, no detention basins are proposed along the bayou in this area.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Develop the detention basin between I-610 and Crosstimbers as a wet bottom basin and publicly accessible green space tied the bikeway along the bayou. Install a trash mitigation system that will collect both heavy debris and floating debris.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. Wet bottom detention basins will be considered if a partner entity agrees to maintain them
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Coordinate with Greater Northside Management District, City of Houston, and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Halls Bayou along I 45. Little White Oak Bayou represents a prime opportunity to extend open space connectivity north from White Oak Bayou Greenway to Woodlands Park, Moody Parks and beyond up to Halls Bayou. It also connects neighborhoods like Near Northside, Independence Heights and Acres Homes. This connection between Acres Homes and downtown would benefit many of the underserved communities, including North line, directly impacted by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. Through most of Segment 2 the project follows the course of the Little White Oak Bayou. It is imperative that the project fully embrace the ecological values and open space potential offered by Little White Oak Bayou.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	The current DEIS does not adequately address mitigation of traffic noise impacts and pollution. Ensure all neighborhoods with noise impacts, irrespective of existing conditions, are mitigated appropriately with options such as noise/sound walls. The plan should designate where noise walls are proposed to mitigate neighborhood impacts.	A detailed noise analysis study was performed for the Preferred Alternative and is included in the Final EIS. Locations of proposed noise barriers are identified. The results are in the Traffic Noise Technical Report, an appendix to the Final EIS.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Current blight along the North Freeway corridor is the result of poor planning and lack of landscaping and noise barriers through neighborhoods such as Northline. This project will have a significant impact on our neighborhoods and businesses. Develop a landscape plan for the project where landscape screening will be provided along the project to help mitigate the air quality and noise impact from the freeway while improving visual aesthetics.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Coordinate with the City and stakeholders to reduce visual impacts along the corridor. This should include underpasses as well.	Aesthetic design is part of TxDOT's project development process and will be performed during detailed design, which is the final design stage of the project development process. Many of the elements that impact landscape and aesthetic design overlap into all parts of the final design process. Typically these areas include: •bridge design •lighting design •roadway design •hydraulics •environmental mitigation •landscaping TxDOT will consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site during detailed design, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. TxDOT is willing to enter into public-private partnerships for enhanced aesthetics to help the COH portray the visual elements referenced by the Coalition.

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318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Waterways affected by the project are already listed as impaired waters. TXDOT should model the runoff and stormwater discharges into Buffalo Bayou, White Oak and, Halls and Little White Oak in order to meet state requirements that prohibit the addition of any pollutant load into impaired waters and focus instead on improving those waters through the additional application of more rigorous best management practices for stormwater and runoff. Similarly, TxDOT should adopt and disclose the best management practices and plans that will be adopted, including source controls, to avoid further discharge of trash into these waterways. Little White Oak Bayou continues to be one of the top 10 polluted waterways in the greater Houston area. The bayou suffers from freeway pollution from both run-off and litter. It makes a small meander on the east side of I-45. Current TXDOT plans include detention basins on the east side of the freeway along the Little White Oak Bayou channel. Currently most of the channel is not accessible and is tremendously polluted with dissolved pollutants, heavy trash within the channel, and floating debris of cups and plastic bags, much of this coming from the freeway.	Permit compliance with the Construction General Permit requires consistency with TMDLs for impaired water bodies, and discharges of the pollutants of concern to impaired waters are not authorized by the permit unless otherwise allowable under 30 TAC Chapter 305 and applicable state law. TxDOT follows permit requirements for permit coverage under the Construction General Permit. TxDOT minimizes potential pollutants during construction through the project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT minimizes potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices.
318	Northline Neighborhood Leadership Team	7/23/2017	Written	Create detention ponds that are open and unfenced, planted with native plants which filter dissolved pollutants from freeway run-off. Install a trash mitigation system that will collect both heavy debris and floating debris. There are several locations along Little White Oak Bayou where this could be installed and maintained. Ideally it would be located upstream of both Moody Park and Woodland Park.	The project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of green space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be parks. Permit compliance with the Construction General Permit requires consistency with TMDLs for impaired water bodies, and discharges of the pollutants of concern to impaired waters are not authorized by the permit unless otherwise allowable under 30 TAC Chapter 305 and applicable state law. TxDOT follows permit requirements for permit coverage under the Construction General Permit. TxDOT minimizes potential pollutants during construction through the project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. TxDOT manages construction litter and debris through the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. TxDOT manages post construction litter and debris prevention and removal in a multitude of ways. TxDOT has developed Public education and outreach programs for litter prevention and pick-up through the Don't Mess with Texas Program, Adopt-A-Highway program, and the Texas Trash Off. Further, TxDOT performs regular roadway maintenance activities including street sweeping and litter removal. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT is required to minimize potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices.
319	Arancibia, Lester	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
320	Bettinazzi, Ivan	7/24/2017	Project Website	I don't think it is a good idea to have the exit of 288 toll lane at chenevert and Elgin, there is a park and a school there, high speed vehicles, thanks, IB.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
321	Bordovsky, Jamie	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood in East Downtown.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
322	Buhr, Brian	7/24/2017	Project Website	The neighbors including myself DO NOT want the toll way entrance & exit to come through Chenevert and Balwin park.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
323	Cole, Linda	7/24/2017	Project Website	Please do not turn the chenevert exit ramp into toll lane ramps. I live at Francis and chenevert and the rush hour traffic is bad enough without being toll road ramps. Sometimes the cars don't slow down when I'm out walking my dog. This is a residential area with a school and park that is heavily used by the residents in this area. This is a community where lots of people are out walking their dogs or walking/running for exercise. And during the school year there are lots of kids walking to the school on chenevert. Please help us keep this area residential by not addding toll road ramps.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
324	Dharani, Sumaira	7/24/2017	Project Website	This note is to display objection to the 288 Toll Lane ramps that are planned to direct onto Chenevert street in Midtown Houston. We strongly disagree with the current plans that run toll lane ramps into and out of a heavily populated (urban) residential area that has schools and parks directly touching the current entrance/exits proposed. This area is surrounded by a very actively attended, quiet, and very safe community park with amenities for adults, children and pets. It is also sandwiched between a school and high density housing. This area is not conducive to channeling the high volume downtown sourced or destined, southbound destined or sourced rush hour morning and afternoon traffic onto the high occupancy toll lanes. We have lived in this community for years and have a home directly on Chenevert street (on the intersection of Anita & Chenevert) and these plans pose significant safety concerns for the neighborhood which has many pedestrians (particularly children) due to the schools, parks, townhomes, and high density apartment lofts directly next to the proposed entry/exit points. We as Texans should be working towards safety and value of our community and not to the bottom $ that routing toll lanes into existing improper locations bring. Additionally, this plan, as designed, will destroy the multi-year work of so many taxpayers to improve the midtown community. Please listen to the community of residents and other impacted and plan a route to a non-populated & non-residential area such as the existing feeders and or vacant lots across the highway.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
325	Diaz, Christine	7/24/2017	Project Website	I live in the midtown area and I do not want the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St. This is already a very congested area during rush hour and this would make it even worse. Additionally, it would push the traffic back into the heart of midtown/montrose neighborhoods making it harder for residents to leave their respective neighborhoods.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
326	Dornier, Rob	7/24/2017	Project Website	The part of the project suggesting to combine all 3 of the major Interstate freeways (I-10/I-45/Hwy 59/I-69)into the same corridor on the north and east sides of downtown is the stupidest thing they could possibly do, obviously proposed by some traffic architects who are NOT from Houston, who do not appreciate our uniquely effective "bull's-eye" set of rings around the city which allow for MULTIPLE distributed paths around the city, rather than a SINGLE point of failure.	Comment noted.

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326	Dornier, Rob	7/24/2017	Project Website	They also talk about depressing certain areas, proving themselves ignorant of "Texas Floods" and the recent disasters of the flooded areas of the BRAND-NEW Grand Parkway/Hwy 99. This is the kind of thinking that happens in Pittsburg and Boston, and leads to disastrous projects like "The Big Dig" which end up years over schedule and billions over budget. PLEASE do NOT approve this project design which has the high likelihood of crippling the Houston area in the event of an emergency on either of these two sides of downtown, rather than allowing the current flexibility of travel ALL the way AROUND downtown in the current method.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation. Adding capacity to I 45, especially lanes that are flexible in operation, such as MaX lanes, would increase the carrying capacity of the roadway, thereby providing more efficient evacuation capabilities. Bringing I 45 up to current design standards would also improve operation and safety during normal and emergency operations. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The COH has designated the I-610 Loop as a hazardous materials route. Hazardous material vehicles transporting hazardous materials product must use the I-610 Loop route and not travel through the city.
327	Henderson, Scott	7/24/2017	Project Website	I strongly object to designing the 288 Toll Lane ramps to be directed from / into Chenevert Street in Midtown. This area is surrounded by a very actively attended, quiet, and very safe community park with amenities for adults, children and pets. It is also sandwiched between a school and high density housing. This area is not conducive to channeling the high volume downtown sourced or destined, southbound destined or sourced rush hour morning and afternoon traffic onto the high occupancy tool lanes. The current traffic that utilizes the streets is heavy and loud. Frequent trips are made my emergecy vehicles.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
328	Holloway, Michael	7/24/2017	Project Website	We have lived opposite to Baldwin Park for five years. During that time we have seen an increase in residential and commercial development. We have also seen an increase in traffic flowing down Elgin as commuters work to find easier routes into downtown. We have seen streets closed for community events and the traffic logjams that result. We have seen the Academy kids carefully cross the Chenevert pedestrian cross street toward the park that they use for outdoor and physical exercise. We have also seen infrastructure destroyed by vehicles and, more frequently taking another vehicle with them. The incidence of accidents at Elgin and Crawford, Elgin and Chenevert, Elgin and Hamilton is high. These are already major traffic arteries in a dense residential area with narrow streets and limited off-street parking. If the DOT's intent is to create more mobility problems, more vehicle accidents, more infrastructure damage, and less walkable neighborhoods, this is a great plan. It is not a good plan for getting SOV's into downtown. Park and Ride is a good plan to do that. I strongly oppose this project. Another try is warranted and wold be appreciated.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
328	Holloway, Michael	7/24/2017	Project Website	It is not a good plan for getting SOV's into downtown. Park and Ride is a good plan to do that. I strongly oppose this project. Another try is warranted and wold be appreciated.	Based on the information provided, TxDOT cannot determine whether these accidents are adjacent to the existing corridor. The streets mentioned are City streets and for streets that cross the proposed project, TxDOT is coordinating closely with COH to ensure that they are designed to appropriately handle the proposed vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic. All modes of transportation were considered in the planning for this corridor. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
329	Hysong, Sylvia	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St so that cars have to empty into midtown! We already have an exit ramp into our neighborhood and do not want the increased traffic. With the marked increase in housing in Midtown do to the new apartment complexes, there has already been a significant increase in the traffic that the streets in Midtown can handle. Adding the traffic from 288 toll lanes would put an undue stress on the capacity of the neighborhood as well as its livability. Plus, most drivers who are taking the HOV lane want to go to downtown, not Midtown, so you are actually not giving drivers the product that they need	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
330	Jarrod	7/24/2017	Project Website	This is a very short sighted proposal. This is one of the few well established neighborhoods very close to downtown. It is one of he few quiet places where people can raise their family and go to a park in peace. Most of these people are like me and pay more than $10k annually in property taxes. Please, we as a community are begging you, find a more practical place to put this ramp.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
331	Kline, David E.	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
332	McIntyre, Travis	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
333	Montero, Alberto	7/24/2017	Project Website	Having H 288 HOV directly into midtown at Elgin/Chenevert will negatively affect mid town. There's not many green spaces in midtown as it is and having so much traffice in a residential area near a park makes no sense. This will be bad for our property values. I am opposed to this proposal and think it's a terrible idea	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
334	Morales, Samuel	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

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335	Myers, Bart	7/24/2017	Project Website	Please do not consider using Chenevert as the exit ramp for the Hwy 288 HOV/toll lane. It will destroy our peaceful neighborhood and put lives in danger. This is a very "outdoorsy" area and pet friendly area. For the commuters, it makes no sense as it would require them to travel through midtown to get to downtown - the streets could not handle that capacity and traffic would be gridlocked. The exit needs to be closer to downtown and directly into downtown. This is NOT a solution and will only create additional problems. Property values will plummet.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
336	Nagle, Mary Ann	7/24/2017	Project Website	This project will decrease the value of Midtown homes, plus will create "freeway" type driving through our Midtown Community. I have lived here since June, 1999 the beginning of the Midtown Redevelopment Project. It has been close to 20 years to create Midtown into a very, very desirable living area. All residents and children will be affected with increased traffic through Midtown, not only on Chevenert but all streets through Midtown especially east of Main Street to H 288. Further, the proposed project is adjacent to a school and Balwin Park. This proposed project only has the effect of downgrading Midtown, a community that has grown leaps and bounds since 1999, only to revert to an area of land uninhabitable as it was pre 1999. Homeowner's pirchased these homes.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
337	Neal, Roger	7/24/2017	Project Website	I strongly object to designing the 288 Toll Lane ramps to be directed from / into Chenevert Street in Midtown. This area is surrounded by a very actively attended, quiet, and very safe community park with amenities for adults, children and pets. It is also sandwiched between a school and high density housing. This area is not conducive to channeling the high volume downtown sourced or destined, southbound destined or sourced rush hour morning and afternoon traffic onto the high occupancy tool lanes. I am a 17 year resident on Caroline Street, a former President of the 167 unit Baldwin Square Homeowners Association, and a 10 year former board member of the Midtown Management Association. I have worked hard with our residents to improve Midtown to be a safe and prosperous, active community. This plan, as designed, will destroy the multi-year work of so many taxpayers to improve the community.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
338	Oelke, Michael	7/24/2017	Project Website	DO NOT place the 288 HOV lane end point at Chenevert. Placing the 288 HOV lane exit at Chenevert would be a complete catastrophe. It makes no sense for the commuters - dumping them into the middle of a residential neighborhood far from their destination. This is neither close to downtown nor the medical center. If the point of the HOV is to reduce commute times, this does not achieve that purpose. There are dozens of traffic lights from the exit from the HOV to downtown. It also would dump thousands of high speed commuters every day into a residential neighborhood. This is unsafe and increases the chances of deaths for walking and cycling commuters, which are on the rise in this part of the city.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
339	Parrish, Michelle	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood! As currently proposed, the exit and entrance for 288 toll lane traffic to/from Downtown will be at Chenevert & Elgin, dumping high-speed traffic between the school and the park. Please fix the design to keep freeway traffic on feeders and thoroughfares, not neighborhood streets like Chenevert.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
340	Patel, Bhavesh	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood! This will add high-speed traffic where our children play. It is already very dangerous with the pace people drive on Elgin and Chenevert.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
341	Peavey, LaQuisha	7/24/2017	Email	"I have concerns in regards to this new project that is in the making. Im not sure if its a rail or freeway that will and could affect a ton of neighborhoods. There's been sevetal meetings but alot of people in the neighborhood were unaware of these meetings and now im finding out that this project may land somewhere in front of my home literally Location: 610 west and North loop Cross street link"	The proposed NHHIP is a highway project. TxDOT advertised public meetings and the public hearing in many ways, including mailing notices to elected officials, government agencies, local organizations, civic groups, businesses, landowners and individuals. TxDOT has held meetings with individual stakeholders, including many neighborhood associations and civic clubs in the area of the I-610 and I-45 interchange. Details about public involvement for the proposed NHHIP are included in Section 2 of the Final EIS and in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report (see Appendix A of the technical report).
342	Phan, Janice	7/24/2017	Project Website	Please start Segment 3 (sinking of 59) as soon as possible.	Comment noted.
343	Rajkotwala, Farid	7/24/2017	Project Website	This note is to display objection to the 288 Toll Lane ramps that are planned to direct onto Chenevert street in Midtown Houston. We strongly disagree with the current plans that run toll lane ramps into and out of a heavily populated (urban) residential area that has schools and parks directly touching the current entrance/exits proposed. This area is surrounded by a very actively attended, quiet, and very safe community park with amenities for adults, children and pets. It is also sandwiched between a school and high density housing. This area is not conducive to channeling the high volume downtown sourced or destined, southbound destined or sourced rush hour morning and afternoon traffic onto the high occupancy toll lanes. We have lived in this community for years and have a home directly on Chenevert street (on the intersection of Anita & Chenevert) and these plans pose significant safety concerns for the neighborhood which has many pedestrians (particularly children) due to the schools, parks, townhomes, and high density apartment lofts directly next to the proposed entry/exit points. We as Texans should be working towards safety and value of our community and not to the bottom $ that routing toll lanes into existing improper locations bring. Additionally, this plan, as designed, will destroy the multi-year work of so many taxpayers to improve the midtown community. Please listen to the community of residents and other impacted and plan a route to a non-populated & non-residential area such as the existing feeders and or vacant lots across the highway.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
344	Robinson, Mark	7/24/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
345	Suttles, Laura	7/24/2017	Project Website	It is a terrible idea to have the 288 toll entrance/exit go through the Chenevert St. and Elgin St intersection. This will bring high traffic to a residential area with a park and school (high pedestrian traffic). I used to live on Chenevert St. right near that intersection, so can personally attest to the danger.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
346	Tate, Judson	7/24/2017	Project Website	Toll lane exit onto Chenevert Street. I am very concerned that the express lanes will be deposited onto Chenevert Street. There is a school on one corner and a park on the other. I have seen even with the minimal traffic now using the ramp, several close calls with students and residents from cars exiting the freeway at a very high rate of speed, not realizing they are entering a residential area with pedestrian traffic. In addition, Chenevert Street is a very densely populated residential street that is already crumbling. It is in bad shape already and will get much worse with the additional volume of traffic that the proposed exit ramps will create. Thank you for your consideration!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

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347	Velasquez, Iris	7/24/2017	Project Website	As currently proposed, the exit and entrance for 288 toll lane traffic to/from Downtown will be at Chenevert & Elgin, dumping high-speed traffic between the school and the park. This is our one chance to fix the design to keep freeway traffic on feeders and thoroughfares, not neighborhood streets like Chenevert. I am not in favor this proposed idea. Thank you.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
348	Vo, James	7/24/2017	Project Website	I fully support Segment 3. Please start on this ASAP.	Comment noted.
349	Walwyn	7/24/2017	Project Website	I live at 3320 Chenevert right by the school and I would consider it highly irresponsible to put an EZ tag entrance/exit around an area that is known for a speed trap already! Making it a toll way entrance/exit will highly increase speeds and dangers to that already dangersous school and residential area. I walk my dog and have to gamble crossing the street. Please don't risk people's safety	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
350	Whitfield, Stephanie	7/24/2017	Project Website	Please reconsider the location of the 288 HOV on and off ramp at Chenevert. That area has become a really nice part of Midtown, especially around Baldwin Park. I think the increased traffic due to the ramp would impact the neighborhood negatively.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
351	Witcher, Bobby T.	7/24/2017	Project Website	The exit and entrance for the 288 toll lane traffic to/from Downtown will be at Chenevert & Elgin, dumping high-speed traffic between a school and Elizabeth Baldwin Park. This section of midtown is full of pedestrians, families, children and pets getting to and from the park, school and surrounding homes. It is far too busy with this type of foot traffic to have such a high traffic entrance exit ramp come in at that point. It would create an unnecessary major safety issue and moreover would disrupt the very type of walkable neighborhood the city is trying to create. That traffic would be better served to the service road on either side of 288/59	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	**1) SH 288 Managed Lane Access** As currently proposed, the primary access to and egress from the SH 288 Managed Lanes would be provided on Chenevert St. south of Elgin St., adjacent to the Houston High School for International Studies and Baldwin Park. We believe this configuration is suboptimal for everyone involved. Drivers using the Managed Lanes will more likely be destined for Downtown than Midtown, or may be trying access another freeway to continue on. Either way, ending up on Chenevert St. will introduce unnecessary delay and confusion. Neighboring residents are already displeased with the presence of the existing freeway ramps which disrupt the neighborhood fabric and introduce unsafe vehicle speeds in a residential area. The proposed design would set this problem in concrete for another 50 years. MMD's Board requests that TxDOT consider tying the Managed Lanes into the frontage roads (Hamilton St./Chartres St.) between McGowen St. and Elgin St. Doing so would make access much more intuitive, improving the chances of success for the Managed Lane project. The Managed Lanes would gain an advantage over the main lanes in terms of moving the access point closer to Downtown. It would also give drivers headed toward Downtown or other connecting freeways a more convenient route for doing so than Midtown surface streets. We understand that there are geometric challenges associated with this change. However, we feel there are feasible alternatives that would realign the ramps near Elgin St. by reconfiguring currently proposed exits to and from Chenevet St. and Hamilton St. One option to evaluate is to maintain the Tuam St. bridge as a bicycle and pedestrian connection but not traffic. This would allow the express lane ramps to pass over Tuam St. with less clearance, allowing them to tie into the frontage roads between Tuam St. and McGowen St. While Tuam St. would no longer allow passage of vehicles over the freeway, it would actually become a more comfortable bicycle and pedestrian route due to lower traffic volumes. This is consistent with the identification of Tuam St. as a shared bikeway in the Houston Bike Plan. As part of the removal of the ramps from the neighborhood, Midtown requests that the grid of local streets be reconnected including Francis St., Chenevert St., and Holman St. Re-gridding the streets would create surplus land that TxDOT could sell for redevelopment or dedicate to the development of affordable housing as part of the replacement for Clayton Homes. Connecting Holman St. through to Hamilton St. would obviate the need for the freeway-style ramps connecting to Chenevert St. south of Holman St. Removing them would be more consistent with the context of the neighborhood while improving safety, reducing right-of-way acquisition, and creating more surplus right-of-way.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

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352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	**2) Heiner St. Bayou Access** While the planned project will remove the I-45 main lanes from the west side of downtown, the planned "downtown connectors," their ramps and related surface streets will have significant impacts on Buffalo Bayou, Sam Houston Park, Fourth Ward and Midtown. The existing I 45 right-of-way along Heiner St. between the Fourth Ward and Downtown is 300 feet wide and accommodates six elevated freeway lanes, four elevated ramp lanes, and fivefrontage road lanes with associated shoulders. In the proposed configuration, the facility through this section will only have five freeway connector lanes with shoulders and six frontage road lanes. This presents the opportunity to use the leftover space to create a transformational linear park connecting Midtown to Buffalo Bayou. The greenway would connect at the northern end into the trail system of Buffalo Bayou Park and the extension of the Lamar St. separated bike lane, giving Midtown residents a high-comfort bike route to Downtown jobs and destinations. A connection under/across the downtown connector at Andrews St. would also improve Downtown access from Midtown and the Fourth Ward. At the south end, the greenway would link to the Bagby St. streetscape and the proposed Brazos St. bikeway extending through Midtown. MMD's Board requests that the proposed Downtown Connector be designed with the minimum footprint possible in order to allow as much right-of-way as possible to be reserved for a linear park connection. We also request that a bicycle and pedestrian connection across the Downtown Connector in the vicinity of Andrews St. be incorporated into the design. Given the opportunity to connect 4th Ward, Downtown and Midtown, we strongly encourage TxDOT to design the Downtown Connector appropriately for the dense, urban, mixed-use context of the area. We applaud TxDOT for reconfiguring the roadway network in this area, and encourage further evaluation if the Downtown Connector could be pushed north to end near W. Dallas St. and Allen Pkwy. This will allow for the historic street grid to be reconnected in the area south of W. Dallas St. Based on recent workshop with the Downtown District and Fourth Ward it is our understanding that such design concepts may be feasible.	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project also significantly reduces the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT will coordinate with stakeholders during detailed design to identify opportunities to enhance open spaces and amenities along the bayous. TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated.
352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	**3) Wheeler Transit Center Area** The area around METRO's Wheeler Transit Center has the potential to be a hub of activity in Midtown but thus far has been hindered by the elevated freeway and the uncertainty around future infrastructure plans like the University Line. The NHHIP proposes to move the freeway below grade in this section, reducing noise and visual impacts along the border of Midtown and the Museum District and benefiting the prospect of development. The Museum Park Livable Center Study outlines this opportunity that can be envisioned soon since this is the first project where construction is expected to start as soon as 2020. However, details including ramps, bridges, and street connections will need to be worked out to enable the greatest potential for transit-oriented development around the station. We appreciate you meeting with the city, METRO and stakeholder to discuss options and look forward to working with you to identify the design that improves circulation and accessibility for all modes of transportation around the Wheeler Transit Center.	Comment noted. Details, including ramps, bridges, and street connections, will be determined during detailed design for the project.
352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	4) Connections to Adjoining Neighborhoods Midtown is pleased that connections to our neighbors in Downtown and Museum Park stand to improve considerably in the proposed design. We wish to ensure that the project bridges the gap to the Third Ward to our west, as well. We request that the proposed bridges between Midtown and the Third Ward be designed in a way that improves multimodal connectivity. This means including space for bike lanes on Almeda St., Alabama St., McGowen St., Tuam St. (should the bridge retain a vehicular purpose), and Gray St. as specified in the Houston Bike Plan. It also means making sure sidewalks across the bridges are wide enough to provide comfortable separation from traffic. On the bridges crossing the wide 59-288 trench, including landscaping or shade structures would improve what can now be a scorching 500-foot tightrope walk along the existing bridge sidewalks. Elgin St. could be the focus of the most extensive bike/ped treatments in order to create a linkage between Baldwin and Emancipation Parks.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	4) While capping the freeway may not be realistic in this segment, an extra wide bridge with landscaping and art could create the feel of a park connection on top of the freeway, helping Midtown residents access the amazing new recreational facilities in development at Emancipation Park and Third Ward residents reach the tranquil groves in Baldwin Park.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	**5) Pierce Elevated** MMD is excited about the opportunity created by the realignment of I-45. We are exploring options with the city and adjacent neighborhoods on the best solution that would meet the goals of the city and our neighborhoods regarding the retirement of the Pierce Elevated. We look forward to working with you over the next few years to discuss options along this corridor since this is the last phase of the NHHIP Segment 3 project	Comment noted
352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	**6) Proposed bridges across I 69 and SH 288** It is not clear if TxDOT has studied the impact and needs to the local roadway network and roadway capacity to the same level of the freeway itself. The bridges across the freeway should be designed based on capacity considerations of the existing roadway and the city's roadway classification identified in the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan. A number of bridges across the freeway are oversized. For example, Caroline St. functions as a local or minor collector street with on-street parking and is designated as a neighborhood bikeway. It is shown on the schematic widened to 4 lanes plus dedicated left turn lanes at Wheeler St. Wheeler St. across I 69 needs to be designed to accommodate a future University Corridor transit line consistent with METRO's current long range plan. Roadway capacity on other bridges should be designed to the context and the classification of the street. Additionally, all bridges should have wide sidewalks instead of the minimum standards and incorporate dedicated bike facilities.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.

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352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	**7) Other considerations** The project's design should recognize that this is one of the most densely populated and historic areas of Houston. The freeway surface should be design to reduce road noise with solutions such as grooved pavement to mitigate noise impact on the adjoining neighborhoods.	TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	**7) Other considerations** Midtown's residents reflect the diversity of Houston with both baby-boomers and millennials calling Midtown home. Residents, businesses, and visitors enjoy a sustainable, walkable community with a thriving arts and entertainment scene and green oases. Since 2012, Midtown Houston has experienced 50% population growth with almost 10,000 Houstonians now calling it home. We would like to ensure that all intersections of frontage roads and city streets be designed to enhance safe accessibility of people of all ages and abilities, and all users of the roadway. We hope TxDOT will continue to coordinate with MMD through the design phase of the project and especially the construction phase given the likely impacts to our residents and businesses.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted. TxDOT will also continue to coordinate with the MMD during detailed design and construction.
352	Midtown Management District	7/25/2017	Email	**7) Other considerations** The project should improve traffic safety with reduced speed limits as freeway traffic approaches the city street network. All surface streets should be designed as complete streets, not freeway frontage roads. Roadway alignments and the project scope should allow for street trees and urban-sided sidewalks and high comfort bikeway consideration. In general, the design of all structures should be high-quality and compatible with the surrounding urban and historic fabric.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
353	Ballard, Casey	7/25/2017	Project Website	Please keep the option of repurposing the Pierce Elevated	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes** In scoping comments prior to the preparation of the DEIS, both the City of Houston's Planning Department and the Houston Parks Board commented on the dangers of "the proposed 15' shared use lane along frontage roads due to safety concerns arising from the speed differential between bicycles and other vehicles in these environments. Bicycle accommodations should be provided in the form of a 10' shared use path or protected bike lane." TxDOT ignored this comment in the DEIS; we can find no evidence to an analysis performed on this important safety issue.	TxDOT acknowledges the concern raised of bicycle safety and in response has coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. TxDOT would note, however, that both the City's executive order on Complete Streets ("Complete Streets do not mean that all streets are identical.") and Bike Plan provide a framework for improving the functioning of bicycle facilities. They do not mandate certain design standards for every street as they relate to bicycles. With respect to NHHIP, the operation of frontage roads is different from segment to segment, and so the incorporation of bicycle design standards will be different depending on location and operation of the frontage road. It should be noted however, that although the bicycle facilities may vary depending on location, TxDOT is no longer proposing an outside 15' shared use lane. Bicycle facilities will be dedicated facilities and will be detailed during design.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes** The City of Houston requested that TxDOT ensure all bridges across the freeway and street crossings under the freeway provide for a minimum 6' unobstructed sidewalk, and that NACTO criteria are incorporated in all highway/surface street intersections. There is no indication in the DEIS that such criteria will be incorporated into the project, and we can find no reference to an analysis performed on this important accessibility issue. For example, as the City of Houston noted in 2015, many intersections in Segment 1 are proposed with suburban intersection design considerations. This segment falls within an urban area and all intersections should be designed to improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. To this end, an intersection design that incorporates a free flow right turn lane with a pedestrian island creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians since many drivers do not yield to pedestrians at such intersections. There is no indication that TxDOT has incorporated ideas like this in the DEIS.	TxDOT acknowledges the concern raised of bicycle safety and in response has coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. TxDOT would note, however, that both the City's executive order on Complete Streets ("Complete Streets do not mean that all streets are identical.") and Bike Plan provide a framework for improving the functioning of bicycle facilities. They do not mandate certain design standards for every street as they relate to bicycles. With respect to NHHIP, the operation of frontage roads is different from segment to segment, and so the incorporation of bicycle design standards will be different depending on location and operation of the frontage road. It should be noted however, that although the bicycle facilities may vary depending on location, TxDOT is no longer proposing an outside 15' shared use lane. Bicycle facilities will be dedicated facilities and will be detailed during design.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes** As another example, a wider freeway through the Near North Side will create a significant community impact further dividing the Woodland Heights and Near Northside communities. Eliminating North Street removes a very practical, low volume, multi-purpose crossing of the current I-45.	To elevate I-45 above the 100-year base flood elevation in the vicinity of the Little White Oak Bayou crossing, the North Street bridge must be removed. N. Main St. will be the nearest street (to existing North St. bridge) to cross I-45 and will have pedestrian-bicycle accommodations. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. Any trail will be constructed by entities other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of a proposed trail. TxDOT will continue to evaluate the design of frontage roads, which will be further refined during detailed design.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes** A deck park may help mitigate the further divide and loss of connectivity resulting from the project but only if the deck and park are fully funded by the project, and the park is not separated from the community by the high speed access roads set forth in the DEIS.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes** As the site of many fatal accidents in Houston, access roads should be designed to be safe. Twelve foot lanes, three one-way lanes, and high design speeds, mixed with entering and exiting traffic, does not make for a safe road. The DEIS does not explain why high speed designs and high volumes are required on these roads. The Final EIS should explain why TxDOT has made these trade-offs of faster highway access at the expense of public safety.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.

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354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Deck Parks** The DEIS makes reference to potential deck parks while clearly absolving the project from any responsibility in funding and creating the parks. Many of our organizations have been involved over the years in raising private and public funds to expand parks in Houston and provide other amenities. These deck parks discussed in the DEIS can only be designed if the capping greenspace is designed to account for the weight of the parks. These designs must be created and paid for as part of the highway project, or TxDOT's suggestion of decking is meaningless.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Poorly Conceived Highway/Urban Interfaces** TxDOT does an enviable job of designing highways for efficient flow of traffic, a track record for which the Department is justifiably proud. Nevertheless, over the years TxDOT has done a very poor job of ensuring that its projects integrate with an urban context where traffic slows from 65 to 30 MPH. The cumulative result over the years has meant that in Houston freeways become barriers between neighborhoods, dump freeway traffic into residential areas with very serious impacts, eliminate pedestrian walkability, erect barriers to bicycle access, and create many unsafe conditions for motorists and non-motorists alike.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation including, but not limited to, METRO, City of Houston, and Bike Houston. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report includes more detail about coordination with stakeholders. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Poorly Conceived Highway/Urban Interfaces** [CONT] In its comments to TxDOT in May of 2015 as part of TxDOT's scoping process, the City of Houston's Planning Department pointed out that "The City of Houston has adopted a Complete Streets policy to ensure streets are constructed for all users of the system. The City also required the streets should be built using Context Sensitive Design guidelines as those recommended in the ITE - Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach and NACTO – Urban Street Design Guide, and others." Since the project location is within an urban area of the city, including Downtown, any future engineering design should meet these guidelines. Unfortunately, multiple streets have been shown with sweeping, large radius turns. Several of these match the existing roadway curb lines which may have been designed at a different time for different users. TxDOT should not ignore the opportunity to modernize its approach and correct these outdated designs as it expands I-45.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. TxDOT notes that the City's policy contemplates the inclusion of the City's own Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan. And the policy acknowledges that "Complete Streets" do not mean that all streets are identical. The scope of the City's policy (executive order on Complete Streets) describes the goal that transportation entities (such as TxDOT) will partner with the City, which TxDOT has done. The policy also states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. As described in the Final EIS, the function of the frontage roads on the project is different for different locations. In some locations there are no frontage roads. TxDOT must propose a design that is safe and efficient for the function of the roadway. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Poorly Conceived Highway/Urban Interfaces** In its comments during the 2015 scoping process, the Houston Parks Board suggested that "the termination of the proposed spur at Allen Parkway should be designed in order to accommodate safe pedestrian crossings at that intersection and in a way that drivers are reminded that they are entering a park." TxDOT has ignored this suggestion.	TxDOT evaluated this request. It should be noted that termination of the proposed spur will be at Pease and Jefferson and not at Allen Parkway. Concerning the exit and entrance to the direct connectors at Allen Parkway, TxDOT notes the access will be just before and after a traffic light and crosswalks. Additionally, traffic calming measures will be implemented, including but not to limited to signage and pavement markings to enhance pedestrian and bike safety. The intersection (like all others) will be coordinated with COH and designed to ADA standards.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Poorly Conceived Highway/Urban Interfaces** There is no indication that TxDOT intends to design the project's highway-urban interfaces taking into account Houston's Complete Streets policies. Section 7.3 of the DEIS includes no reference to these criteria or to the City's scoping comment.	TxDOT coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. TxDOT notes that the policy states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts.
354	Bennett, Donna	7/25/2017	Email	**Impact to Parks and Recreation Areas** The DEIS simply ignores or dismisses the impact of the project on parks, recreation and open space, and dramatically underestimates the impact to Houston's bayou parkland. Using TxDOT's May 2017 Schematic to estimate Bayou Greenway and parks impacts, Houston will lose approximately 27 acres of current open space. These impacts are not disclosed or contemplated in the DEIS.	The analysis in the DEIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. With respect to 4(f) resources, the Final EIS abides by relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and FHWA 4(f) guidelines.
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	In recent weeks, the I-45 Coalition has been working with a large group of organizations that are attempting to get the best project possible from TxDOT. These groups include Avenue CDC, Buffalo Bayou Partnership, Friends of Woodland Park, White Oak Bayou Association, Super Neighborhood 15 & 22, BikeHouston and many more groups. My big 'ask'/concern continues to be getting the Deck Park in Segment 2 (at N. Main) fully funded by TxDOT. By providing the decking itself during construction, TxDOT will help bring together the neighborhoods on both sides of I-45. The Deck Park estimated cost is about $100 million ..which amounts to only about a 1% increase cost to TxDOT expenses for the entire project. {Current projected construction costs ONLY are at least $7 billion without condemnation costs!)	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	I would also like TxDOT to allow the City and/or private organizations the opportunity to re-purpose the Pierce Elevated into a public space.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	know there are many concerns but please keep the following in mind: · Prevent dividing communities especially low-income neighborhoods from opportunities ·	The proposed project would not introduce new barriers between neighborhoods, and in some locations existing highways would be removed (Pierce Elevated) or depressed (US 59/I-69). The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation including, but not limited to, METRO, City of Houston, and Bike Houston. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report includes more detail about coordination with stakeholders.
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	know there are many concerns but please keep the following in mind: · All new bridges should have separated bike & pedestrian sidewalks with designs approved by community, with signature bridges for the area, compatible with the historic fabric of the neighborhood · Ensure there is bike continuity and connectivity to existing and planned bikeways. ·	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. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	know there are many concerns but please keep the following in mind: · Implementing green sound walls versus concrete walls where increased traffic noise exists ·	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping.
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	know there are many concerns but please keep the following in mind: · Provide infrastructure for future mass transit, high speed rail and other transit modes ·	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	know there are many concerns but please keep the following in mind: · Disproportionate impact to low-income communities	TxDOT evaluated potential project impacts to low-income populations. See Section 5.9 of the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report for more information, including a discussion of measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impact.
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	know there are many concerns but please keep the following in mind: · Negative impact to parks and recreational areas	The analysis in the DEIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation.
355	Brown, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	know there are many concerns but please keep the following in mind: · Negative impacts on walkability and cycling	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
356	Chu, Timothy	7/25/2017	Project Website	The proposed 288 toll exit into Elgin and Chenevert is right into a neighborhood. There are already a lot of accidents coming off of the 59 exit, and there is a lot of foot traffic in this area, as well as a park where a lot of dogs play. This is an extremely dangerous place to put a high-speed exit.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
357	Cornejo, Josh	7/25/2017	Project Website	Give Houstonians the option to vote on a park, or leaving the Pierce Elevated in place to do something similar as the HighLine in Brooklyn. This could transform the city & bring in huge tourism dollars.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
358	Craig, Carly	7/25/2017	Project Website	Please consider the Pierce Sky Park and turning the abandoned pierce elevated into a park! It would be a focal point of the city and a unique experience. It would draw tourists and locals alike.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
359	Dudzik, Matthew	7/25/2017	Project Website	I am writing to urge you to repurpose the Pierce Elevated portion of I-45 once it is decommissioned and turn it into an elevated sky park. There is real potential for a new creative use to this historic structure that would attract people to the area, stimulate economic activity, and provide a green transportation artery for residents and visitors alike. Thank you for your conciseration.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
360	Gallegos, Robert	7/25/2017	Email	I write to express my concern with the proposed realignment of Interstate 45 in downtown Houston. I represent the two communities that will be most affected- East End and downtown -by the relocation of I-45 to the east side, and it is of utmost importance to us that TxDOT develop workable solutions to preserve connectivity between these two communities.	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that TxDOT will restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
360	Gallegos, Robert	7/25/2017	Email	The current plans to close Polk Street and reroute Leeland Street will make it more difficult for my constituents to travel east-west. While I welcome the proposal to lower I-45 and I-69 below ground and eliminate that visual barrier, a physical barrier will remain if residents are unable to safely and efficiently connect from one side of the freeway to the other.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
360	Gallegos, Robert	7/25/2017	Email	Inner city communities have historically suffered as a result of poor planning by transportation agencies. Minority neighborhoods have been isolated or cut off entirely by freeway projects that, far too often, divide communities. That is why I have asked the City's Planning and Public Works departments to review all east-west connections and develop solutions to ensure east side neighborhoods are not cut off by the proposed realignment. We cannot repeat the same mistakes of the past.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.
360	Gallegos, Robert	7/25/2017	Email	As we prepare for this important project, I urge TxDOT to work with the City's Planning and Public Works departments and review all options to preserve and enhance east-west street connections.	TxDOT has coordinated with the City (including Mayor Turner, city council members, and city departments) during development of the NHHIP. The COH is an EIS Participating Agency and TxDOT held numerous meetings for participating agencies at key project milestones. In addition, TxDOT and the NHHIP Study Team have attended dozens of coordination meetings with City representatives to discuss the City's desires and concerns related to the project.
362	Griffin, Jan	7/25/2017	Project Website	My knowledge of this project is limited at best, however, my concerns regarding this project are worthy of comment. First and foremost is my concern regarding the impact of the residents of Independence Heights. This primarily low income community that is underserved will be immensely affected by this project. Loss of homes and a church is not acceptable. Will displaced families be compensated in a manner that is fair and just?	TxDOT evaluated the potential project impacts to the Independence Heights community. Through coordination with residents and community leaders, specific concerns were identified. Some adjustments to the project design were made based on community input. TxDOT has proposed mitigation measures and processes to address adverse impacts. Details are included in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS. TxDOT has met with the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council and extensively with the pastor of the Greater Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church to discuss relocation options for the church with the goal of finding a new location in the community. TxDOT has attempted to avoid the church in previous designs, but more recent communications from the pastor has indicated that relocation to a new area in the community is preferred. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses or places of worship will be provided information about adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures
362	Griffin, Jan	7/25/2017	Project Website	My next concern is that for the overall safety of all residents. This project also greatly affects the residents of Lindale Park, North Lindale Park, Brookesmith, and east Heights proper. Reduction of access (closure of on ramps and off ramps) to I-45 greatly reduces the capability of emergency vehicles to gain access to these communities in a timely manner. My suggestion would be to include an exit ramp southbound between Cavalcade and Quitman and an on ramp north bound between Quitman and Cavalcade.	With the proposed NHHIP roadway improvements, the overall operations of the highway will be improved, which will provide better access to communities by emergency vehicles. TxDOT met with emergency responders regarding the fire, life, safety requirements for the planned highway caps, but did not discuss response times. Concerning response times, there will be enhanced intelligent transportation system (ITS) camera coverage and live monitoring of the capped roadway segments from TranStar with connectivity to remotely operate messaging for emergency situations in these areas. There will be an on-site command post for emergency responders at the capped section per coordination with the City of Houston Fire Department. Additionally, with the consistent number of lanes along I-45 and US 59/I-69 as through-lanes and with the use of current design standards for full size shoulders, there will be enhanced ability to respond to on-road incidents and provide for refuge for minor accidents or breakdowns that currently block mainlanes because of reduced or substandard existing shoulders. There is a proposed southbound exit ramp and a northbound entrance ramp north of Quitman St. Additional exit and entrance ramps closer to Cavalcade St. are not possible because of roadway design standards.
362	Griffin, Jan	7/25/2017	Project Website	The proposed plan increases the traffic flow at Fulton and the 610 feeder road. If a flyover at Fulton is constructed will the homeowners on Kelly be compensated in a manner that is fair and just?	It is not geometrically feasible to construct an overpass along the I-610 eastbound frontage road at Fulton St., therefore, no property would be required from properties on Kelly St.
362	Griffin, Jan	7/25/2017	Project Website	What are the environmental impacts? Have the engineers and design team given careful consideration to the need for noise reduction and abatement if the current wall along 610 adjacent to Lindale Park is removed? A physical barrier and trees would be necessary.	The existing noise wall along I-610 between Fulton Street and Irvington Boulevard, adjacent to the Lindale Park neighborhood, would not be removed. The traffic noise analysis included this wall and indicated that it continues to shield the adjacent residences from traffic noise, except at the eastern end where one house is not behind the wall. At that location, a traffic noise impact was identified and TxDOT proposes to extend the wall approximately 77 ft. to the east. The proposed barrier extension would block an existing gate (with no legal driveway access) that faces the frontage road. West of Fulton Street, a noise barrier is proposed along the south side I-610. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. However, the project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process.
362	Griffin, Jan	7/25/2017	Project Website	Currently there is a traffic counter installed on Helmers near Cavalcade. Is this part of a traffic study to determine if Helmers should be linked to its counterpart north of 610? I hope not. The safety of the residents of Lindale Park would be greatly affected.	Helmers St. is outside the project limits and is a city street. The proposed NHHIP does not include any work at Helmers St.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
362	Griffin, Jan	7/25/2017	Project Website	It always amazes me how we tend to think of freeway expansion as a means of handling traffic instead of thinking of ways to increase commuters use of mass transit.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
363	Hackedorn, Katie	7/25/2017	Project Website	I have visited the High Line in New York many times and would LOVE to see something like that done with the Pierce Elevated in Houston. It's high time we stop tearing stuff down in Houston that doesn't have to be . . .	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
364	Hoffman, Dylan	7/25/2017	Project Website	As currently proposed, the exit and entrance for 288 toll lane traffic to/from Downtown will be at Chenevert & Elgin, dumping high-speed traffic between a school zone and Baldwin park. This is a neighborhood area with a lot of pedestrian traffic. It would not be safe to loacate a high traffic freeway entrance next to such a large pedestrian zone. Freeway traffic should be kept on feeders and thoroughfares, not neighborhood streets like Chenevert.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
365	Jasper, Pat	7/25/2017	Project Website	I wholeheartedly disagree with the plans outlined for the alteration of I45 that would involve changing access to downtown from the East End and eliminating the Pierce Elevated. The federal, state and city government over decades has colluded to wall off the East End with concrete. This was abetted by the construction of the George R. Brown Convention Center which LITERALLY turned its back on the East End. That action will be exacerbated by the eventual expansion of the GRB which will reroute traffic from the East End. These changes fly in the face of the Mayor's Complete Communities initiative and should be halted immediately.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
368	Lytle, Aaron	7/25/2017	Project Website	I would love to see a pierce elevated sky park! It would be another great destination defining Houston as a city of the future.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
368	Lytle, Aaron	7/25/2017	Project Website	I also would like to see sound barriers on I-10 before it intersects with I-45 going East. As my family traveled to St. Louis this summer we drove on a freeway with creative and beautiful sound barriers. I wondered how could a city losing population, care for its existing population so much better than our Houston freeways do.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. A noise barrier is currently proposed at one location along I-10 near I-45.
369	Mahabir, Rhonda	7/25/2017	Project Website	Please keep the option to repurpose the Pierce Elevated beyond the TxDot record of decision.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
370	Martinez, Amna	7/25/2017	Project Website	Please leave the option for the City of Houston to develop the abandon portion of Pierce Elevated into Pierce Skypark concept.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
371	Perron, Suzanne	7/25/2017	Project Website	Pierce elevated SkyPark: Please keep this open...to see the benefit all you have to do it look at NYC and Atlanta!	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
372	Phoenix, Mickey	7/25/2017	Project Website	proposed reconstruction of IH 45/IH 69/SH 288. Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	All new roadway bridges over the new freeway expansion should have separated bike and pedestrian sidewalks with pedestrian friendly lighting. Requesting that Tx Dot to work with the adjoining communities on specific bridge designs and give the cultural arts district an opportunity to consider added art installations particularly on bridges into the cultural arts district located in First Ward.	Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. Lighting design is part of the final design process. TxDOT plans to coordinate with outside groups and organizations to seek input during detailed design. Safety is always a primary concern and is considered at all stages.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• Continue to protect the President Head statues and park titled Statesmen park adjacent to the freeway in First Ward as shown on current plans.	The Recommended Alternative would not impact the American Statesmanship Park.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• Tx Dot to ensure the bike path at Spring Street in First ward remains. Current plans show lanes on grade, and engineers were unable to clarify the design intent at the meetings. We are requesting roadways remain somewhat elevated to accommodate the bike pedestrian clearances facilitating connectivity from Northside to First Ward and Heights.	The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The Spring Street portion of the Heights Hike & Bike Trail that currently goes under I-45 and I-10 to connect to the White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail will be maintained.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• The roadway at 1201 Spring Street is shown to have more right of way for the expansion. Removing vehicular access along the road is a detriment to property access and again this area needs re-evaluation to maintain both the house and the access to the driveway etc.	The project design has been revised to eliminate taking of property from this parcel. This design change is included in the revised schematic design and the Final EIS.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	Tx Dot installed temporary stick bollards on the Houston Avenue Bridge driving lane which are a safety hazard. to create a temporary bike alternative path during recent ramp construction in this area. They are an extreme safety hazard as cars are driving over them mowing those down daily. They are not sufficient interim protection for pedestrians and cyclists. We request barriers that cars can't drive over.	Houston Avenue is a City street and the COH installed the current temporary stick bollards. Houston Avenue would be reconstructed as part of the proposed project and would include a buffer space between bike/ped accommodations and the roadway. Pedestrian and bicycle safety will be addressed in the detailed design phase of the proposed project.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• Work in and near the Trigas company at the exchange of I-45 and I-10 requires a safety plan for freeway demolition and construction to mitigate any potential for a gas explosion endangering adjacent communities and motorists.	TxDOT requires the construction contractors to have all gas lines and other underground facilities located ahead of construction and will follow procedures for marking such lines clearly to avoid construction activities that may impact these lines. Gas lines in conflict with the proposed construction will be relocated or adjusted ahead of construction activities to mitigate the conflicts. TxDOT requires a health and safety plan be submitted by their construction contractors for review and approval prior to beginning construction activities. These plans will require that the Trigas company facility be addressed in the plan for any work activities in close proximity to that facility or that might present a concern. The safety plan will address identification of properties and facilities of potential concern and will be required to address the approach for appropriate construction site notifications to construction personnel and proposed field markings near sensitive facilities. The plan will also address protocols for notifications and actions to be taken should an emergency situation occur.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• First Ward is requesting bike bridges be designed below the new fly ramps leading toward downtown, to provide a connection over the roadways for cyclists and pedestrians safely separated from cars. The purpose of the bike bridges extended below the new fly ramps is to provide connectivity from the current trails at Hogg Park/ Stude Park to Buffalo Bayou Park. Alternative methods of connectivity are important for inner city communities providing alternative safe methods of transportation. Many lower income residents must rely on bikes	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• The new cap park north of I-10 and I-45 exchange has multiple feeder lanes and doesn't provide a safe way for pedestrian access from the neighborhood to the future cap park. The traffic should be slowed and signals provided that would allow pedestrians to cross safely.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• Green sound walls versus concrete walls and utilizing suggested hardscape materials which absorb water to mitigate flooding in First Ward.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. Green sound walls and hardscape materials would have negligible impact on absorption of water.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• We want to see landscape plans that are sensitive to the residential communities adjacent to the freeway. We are requesting that trees and shrubs are planted to provide sufficient buffering of both the car traffic noise and the massive concrete visual of the freeway which is not compatible with the general expectations of residential neighborhoods.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• We want Tx Dot to continue to work with Metro and accommodate revisions as needed for the new capital improvement plans they are currently launching and likely to float bonds to meet mass transit needs. Mass transit initiatives should be part of the I-45 expansion concepts and not place any added burden of right of way on communities adjacent to the freeways.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible, and when a preferred alignment for future rail has been determined. TxDOT is also coordinating with the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) during the NHHIP development process.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• We support Pierce Skypark turning Pierce Elevated into a skypark.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
373	Pierce, Tamra	7/25/2017	Project Website	• We support(either METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) from downtown to the anticipated high-speed rail station at 290/610 area. Mitigating routing through First Ward. Connector would be elevated over the main lanes of I-10 and route in the I-45 expansion corridor adjacent to First Ward. It is preferred to enter downtown at the current location of the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street which Tx Dot shows to demolition. We are requesting Tx Dot works with Metro to incorporate this plan without placing additional burden of right of way on adjacent communities. I	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
374	Proctor, Amy	7/25/2017	Project Website	Please let Houston decide on converting the Pierce elevated into a sky park. It would be a great destination for residents and tourists.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
375	Rogers, John	7/25/2017	Project Website	As a resident of the Houston Heights, I have read the review comments prepared by the I-45 Coalition, and am in full concurrence with them. We should not be improving freeways at the expense of the communities they run through. TXDOT and its consultants would do well to prioritize the needs of these communities when planning projects such as this. Please go back to the drawing board.	TxDOT and the study team have developed alternatives in consideration of input from other agencies and the public throughout the study process. The team also analyzed and evaluated the alternatives using engineering, traffic, and environmental criteria to determine which alternative would best meet the project's need and purpose. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with local authorities, planning agencies, neighborhood associations, and stakeholders to ensure the needs and interests of the communities are addressed. TxDOT developed a comprehensive public/stakeholder outreach program and conducted/attended meetings with elected officials, neighborhood associations, management districts, and others during project development. The project design has been developed in consideration of the input received to minimize impacts within the study area. TxDOT will continue to evaluate opportunities to refine and minimize impacts during detailed design.
376	Tinnel, Jason	7/25/2017	Project Website	Please make pierce elevated in Houston a skypark. This city desperately needs new outdoor focal points and it's location would be perfect.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
378	Valdez, Karen F.	7/25/2017	Project Website	I would like to urge Tx Dot to keep the option to repurpose the Pierce Elevated 'beyond the TxDot record of decision.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
379	Wayland, Andrew	7/25/2017	Project Website	This proposal is highly unacceptable as many have noted due to the park which provides recreational area for families, children and is a neighborhood attraction. In addition to the adverse impacts of property owners who have spent a great amount of time and funds for community improvements. Lastly, this would heavily increase traffic on Residential streets that already have high traffic volume and this would impact the school located in proposed area.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
380	Whitsett, Jeff	7/25/2017	Project Website	Please leave the Pierce Elevated intact as an option for an above grade park.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
380	Whitsett, Jeff	7/25/2017	Project Website	Also, please consider the opportunity to put both I45 and the access roads below grade between cavalcade and downtown that would provide an extension to Woodland Park and its trails all the way to White Oak Music Hall. This would create a huge opportunity for a bike trail extension from the Heights Bike path to WOMH which would greatly increase the number of visitors to Woodland Park. And yes, I live in the Heights, close enough to WOMH to walk there and think it's a great addition to our area. I would like to see a setup that reduces street noise and pollution going below grade with a contiguous park does wonders in that category.	Frontage roads provide access to local streets, businesses, and communities; it is not feasible to depress the frontage roads due to the vicinity of Little White Oak Bayou. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
381	Arevalo, Margarita	7/26/2017	Email	I commuted from West Houston to the Woodlands for almost three years. I know I-45 has problems with flooding on the feeder road when it rains and drivers drive too fast for the winding highway. I don't agree with more lanes. We need to maximize the rail around the city.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.
382	Bacnik, Nathan	7/26/2017	Email	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plan	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project and METRO's desire to include BRT in the I-10 corridor to connect downtown to the HSR station. As part of a separate project, TxDOT is studying incorporating transit into the I-10 corridor in between I-610 and downtown.
383	Bacnik, Nathan	7/26/2017	Project Website	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity while keeping high-speed transit within the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project and METRO's desire to include BRT in the I-10 corridor to connect downtown to the HSR station. As part of a separate project, TxDOT is studying incorporating transit into the I-10 corridor in between I-610 and downtown.
384	Black, Sherry	7/26/2017	Project Website	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity while keeping high-speed transit within the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
385	Bayou City Waterkeeper	7/26/2017	Email	I am submitting comments on behalf of Bayou City Waterkeeper (formerly Galveston Baykeeper). Bayou City Waterkeeper is a 501 (c (3) organization, whose mission is the protection of the lower Galveston Bay Watershed, including the rivers, bayous and tributaries, through advocacy and education. We are concerned that the design of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project, will prove detrimental to the water quality in the bayous we protect, and ultimately in Galveston Bay. Among the streams we specifically seek to protect are Buffalo Bayou, White Oak bayou and Little White Oak Bayou, all of which would be directly impacted by this project as proposed. We are also concerned that the project as proposed incorporates some of the specific flaws identified in the recently renewed TXDOT, MS4 permit. **Issue of Impaired Waters** While the DEIS recognizes that "potential impacts on surface water quality from the proposed project would be primarily related to storm water discharges into streams and drainage ways that traverse" the project, the DEIS analysis of water quality impacts incorrectly concludes that the fact that Buffalo Bayou White Oak Bayou, and Little White Oak Bayou are on the TCEQ § 303 (d) list of impaired waters, that this somehow means that there is a lessened obligation to protect them. Because these streams are impaired, the anti-backsliding provisions of the Clean Water Act (Clean Water Act, sections 402(o)(2) and 303 (d)(4)(B)), would convey a greater obligation on TxDOT to avoid further degradation of surface water quality. As such, the DEIS should include specifics as to how TXDOT intends to implement practices that will result in improved water quality, to help assure that these streams are removed from the impaired list and meet the standards for their designated uses, which include primary contact recreation, and exceptional aquatic life uses. It is not acceptable to merely assume that since the waters in question are already impaired, that a bit more impairment is allowable.	Permit compliance with the Construction General Permit requires consistency with TMDLs for impaired water bodies, and discharges of the pollutants of concern to impaired waters are not authorized by the permit unless otherwise allowable under 30 TAC Chapter 305 and applicable state law. TxDOT follows permit requirements for permit coverage under the Construction General Permit. TxDOT minimizes potential pollutants during construction through the project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. TxDOT manages construction litter and debris through the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. TxDOT manages post construction litter and debris prevention and removal in a multitude of ways. TxDOT has developed Public education and outreach programs for litter prevention and pick-up through the Don't Mess with Texas Program, Adopt-A-Highway program, and the Texas Trash Off. Further, TxDOT performs regular roadway maintenance activities including street sweeping and litter removal. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT is required to minimize potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices.
385	Bayou City Waterkeeper	7/26/2017	Email	**Modeling of Discharge or Adoption of Numeric Limits for Discharge to Cure Dejects in the MS4** TXDOT's MS4 does not contain numeric discharge limits for pollutants entering waters from roadways. It is however, possible to calculate discharge rates from roadways and determine their impacts on the receiving waters. TXDOT's own hydraulic design manual has computed the discharge rates for various pollutants in storm water runoff from highways. A computation based on roadway miles is possible to benchmark the amount of pollution directly flowing into Buffalo, White Oak and Little White Oak Bayous with the storm water runoff from the proposed highway improvements. This computation should be conducted in order to ascertain whether the proposed project would actually result in improvement to the water quality in the receiving waters, or additional impairment. If the proposed improvements would, based on modeling result in additional impairment, as the language in the DEIS appears to suggest, then modifications to the project and the associated drainage features must be adopted to avoid further degradation of receiving water quality. Under the current TXDOT MS4, the Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) has no numeric limits for pollutants being discharged to receiving waters. It also has no benchmarks for reduction in pollution, or description of how impaired waters would be further protected by TXDOT. It is not enough to maintain the status quo or plan to allow additional degradation. This project should demonstrate specifically the projected impacts of the improvements on receiving water quality and how its implementation will result in improvement of those degraded waters. At a minimum, TXDOT should model the runoff and storm water discharges into Buffalo, White Oak, and Little White Oak Bayou in order to meet state requirements that prohibit the addition of any pollutant load into impaired waters. TXDOT should adopt additional best management practices for stormwater and runoff, including source controls, to avoid further discharge of pollutants to the receiving waters.	Permit compliance with the Construction General Permit requires consistency with TMDLs for impaired water bodies, and discharges of the pollutants of concern to impaired waters are not authorized by the permit unless otherwise allowable under 30 TAC Chapter 305 and applicable state law. TxDOT follows permit requirements for permit coverage under the Construction General Permit. TxDOT minimizes potential pollutants during construction through the project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT minimizes potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
385	Bayou City Waterkeeper	7/26/2017	Email	**Floatables** TXDOT should adopt and implement specific measures to reduce the discharge of floatable debris from the project to Buffalo, White Oak, and Little White Oak Bayous. While the current TXDOT MS4 does not call for specific measures to reduce floatables in receiving waters, this issue is a particular problem in urban waters like those impacted by this project. Currently all of the waters in question receive heavy discharges of floatables in storm water, much of which originates on TXDOT rights-of-way and other transportation infrastructure. TXDOT has conducted litter surveys demonstrating that they are fully aware of the problem Texas has with floatables and litter from roadways. TXDOT should address this issue, for this project, through the implementation of source controls and structural controls sufficient to control floatables entering the receiving waters from the proposed roadways. This is particularly important on Little White Oak, and Buffalo Bayous which are both heavily impacted now by floatables and heavy trash originating on roadways.	TxDOT manages a floatables program as described in our MS4 Stormwater Management Program. In summary, construction litter and debris is managed through the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. TxDOT manages post construction litter and debris prevention and removal in a multitude of ways. TxDOT has developed Public education and outreach programs for litter prevention and pick-up through the Don't Mess with Texas Program, Adopt-A-Highway program, and the Texas Trash Off. Further, TxDOT performs regular roadway maintenance activities including street sweeping and litter removal. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT is required to minimize potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices.
385	Bayou City Waterkeeper	7/26/2017	Email	**Summary** It is the intention of Bayou City Waterkeeper to limit our comments specifically to issues affecting water quality in the watershed we are charged with protecting. We believe that as proposed, the North Houston Highway Improvement Project does not adequately address impacts to water quality. It is our position that under the requirements of the Clean Water Act, TXDOT has an obligation to undertake to improve the quality of impaired waters, impacted by its actions and discharged to under the TXDOT MS4 permit. This project appears to assume that, because the impacted receiving waters are already listed as impaired, that additional impairment is permissible. We request that TXDOT model the impacts from this project on the receiving waters, specifically Buffalo, White Oak, and Little White Oak Bayous, and adopt those measures necessary to protect them from further degradation. We also request that those source controls and structural controls necessary to prevent discharge of floatable and heavy debris to the bayous, from the roadways be adopted.	Permit compliance with the Construction General Permit requires consistency with TMDLs for impaired water bodies, and discharges of the pollutants of concern to impaired waters are not authorized by the permit unless otherwise allowable under 30 TAC Chapter 305 and applicable state law. TxDOT follows permit requirements for permit coverage under the Construction General Permit. TxDOT minimizes potential pollutants during construction through the project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT minimizes potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices.
386	Brents, Emily	7/26/2017	Project Website	The North Houston Highway Improvement Project's proposed closure or Polk Street would greatly and negatively impact the growing East End. People are flocking to the East End because of its historic homes, charm, and it's relative accessibility to Downtown. This closure (either Polk or Leland) is unacceptable. Please find an alternative solution.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
387	Chang, Helen	7/26/2017	Project Website	There are school and parks here and it is not wise decision to dump the highway traffic into here.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
388	Daniels, Kathy Blueford	7/26/2017	Project Website	1. Please strongly consider retaining the Pierce Elevator as an additional option to travel I-45 South. 2. Additionally, please consider installing SOUND WALLS to minimize traffic noise to residents on each side where I-45, I-59/60 and I-10 will meet parallel. 3. Ensure Retention Pond is provided East of expansion to minimize the opportunity of flooding communities East because of excessive concrete.	**1.** Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. **2.** A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. **3.** TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
388	Daniels, Kathy Blueford	7/26/2017	Project Website	2. Additionally, please consider installing SOUND WALLS to minimize traffic noise to residents on each side where I-45, I-59/60 and I-10 will meet parallel.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners.
388	Daniels, Kathy Blueford	7/26/2017	Project Website	3. Ensure Retention Pond is provided East of expansion to minimize the opportunity of flooding communities East because of excessive concrete.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
388	Daniels, Kathy Blueford	7/26/2017	Project Website	We would like to have TX Dot attend our Super Neighborhood Meeting on Wednesday, August 2 to present PowerPoint Presentation to Attendees. Meeting starts at 6:00 PM, Fifth Ward Multi Service Center, 4014 Market. TX DOT will be allowed 30 minutes to make presentation and answer questions. Please contact me at mzkat@att.net to confirm attendance. Thank you in advance. Kathy Blueford Daniels, Greater Fifth Ward SN, President.	TxDOT attended the Super Neighborhood meeting on August 2, 2017.
389	Eaker, Kathryn	7/26/2017	Project Website	DO NOT PUT 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood! We understand the proposal is to put the exit and entrance for 288 toll lane traffic to/from Downtown at Chenevert & Elgin. This means dumping high-speed traffic between the school and the park -- DANGEROUS! AMEND THIS DESIGN - keep freeway traffic on feeders and thoroughfares meant for this type of traffic. PROTECT OUR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
390	Erulkar, Eliab	7/26/2017	Project Website	Strongly opposed to Houston High Speed Rail project. Limited benefit to the public and tremendous damage to Houston neighborhoods. Sad!	TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project. If this separate project moves forward, TxDOT will accommodate its design where possible, and will coordinate with the lead agency.
391	Estis, Rufus	7/26/2017	Email	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plan	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.

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392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	A. Southeast Quadrant of Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 interchange 1. HDMD requests TxDOT construct the frontage street segment of Chartres between Elgin & Tuam Streets, as a direct access corridor to Downtown. 2. [#] HDMD requests TxDOT construct a wider bridge or small cap structure over IH-69 and SH-288 trench at south side of Pierce Street for pedestrian and bicycle facilities in order to connect a future green belt west of Hamilton Street with the triangular area between aerial ramps of IH-45 & IH-69 and extending towards Bastrop Street. 3. HDMD requests clarification of landscape and potential benefit of storm water detention in the triangular area between aerial ramps of IH-45 and IH-69, from Gray Street to Pease Street.	1. The existing connection will be maintained. 2. Comment not clear, requires clarification for response. 3. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 1. [#] HDMD requests TxDOT coordinate with City of Houston (COH) and local area agencies to signalize Leeland Street as a two-way facility from Emancipation Avenue in EaDo to LaBranch Street in Downtown. 2. HDMD supports the IH-69 northbound entry ramp from Leeland and St. Emanuel intersection, providing a new connection from central city neighborhood streets to the highway system. 3. [#] HDMD supports the re-routing of Polk Street to the Lamar Street U-turn bridge, providing the IH-69 northbound exit ramp a longer queue distance and providing a westbound connection between EaDo and Downtown. In addition to the one lane U-turn movement, HDMD requests additional street width for two-way movement on Lamar Street between the proposed southbound frontage street and the northbound St. Emanuel. a. Downtown and EaDo stakeholders intend to develop schematic concepts for review with TxDOT that will propose an aerial pedestrian / bicycle facility along the Polk Street segment vertically separated above the sloped embankment lanes of IH-45. b. HDMD requests further review and coordination between TxDOT and COH for the two way cycle track facility proposed for Polk Street between Crawford and Hutchins Streets. As previously discussed in agency meetings, the re-routing of the Polk cycle track will be required when the NHHIP is implemented. 4. [#] HDMD requests the IH-69 exit to Bell as a two lane exit since it serves as the first inbound street to Downtown. As the origin of the street, the traffic volumes are minimal. A third left hand exit lane continues southbound and merges with Hamilton Street at the Leeland intersection. 5. [#] HDMD supports the proposed southbound frontage street between Commerce & Leeland Streets, where it ties in with the existing Hamilton Street. This new arterial provides greatly improved street connectivity for Downtown, EaDo, Second Ward and the East End. a. This street's name is to be coordinated between TxDOT and COH. b. The traffic signalization and turn movements for the new southbound arterial and the northbound St. Emanuel (see Comment B.9.) are to be coordinated between TxDOT and COH. c. East of the existing Hamilton Street, HDMD requests TxDOT and COH consider 2-way traffic for the east-west streets that serve the proposed highway frontage streets. d. HDMD requests coordination between TxDOT, COH and the Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD) on its current design for the grade-separated intersection of Congress / Franklin/Navigation in proximity to St. Emanuel as a future NHHIP frontage street.	1. Comment noted 2. Comment noted 3. TxDOT is evaluating this suggestion. a. An aerial pedestrian / bicycle overpass was submitted by Downtown and EaDo for TxDOT review in 2015. It was determined this overpass would conflict with the proposed freeway and would require additional right-of-way between St. Emanuel St. and Hutchins St. to meet ADA design requirements. b. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's plans for rerouting existing and future bikeways. 4. A two lane exit from I-69 southbound to Bell St. has been incorporated into the schematic. 5. Comment noted a. City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston. b. City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston. c. City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston. d. This is accommodated in the NHHIP design. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston. St. Emanuel St. will remain a city street.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 6. Relative to existing traffic volumes on Hamilton Street, HDMD requests further review of the proposed traffic volumes exiting to the new southbound arterial from IH-69, IH-45, IH-10 and the proposed extension of the Hardy Toll Road (HTR) — a separate project by the Harris County Toll Road Authority. (See Comment B.8.)	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. The traffic volumes exiting to the new southbound arterial (Hamilton Street in the schematic) were considered in the comprehensive traffic study conducted for the project. The model includes traffic from the Hardy Toll Road extension in the future condition roadway network.

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392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 7. HDMD requests further review with TxDOT and COH for the potential conversion of southbound Hamilton Street to a two-way facility between Commerce Street and Texas Avenue, thereby providing additional connectivity and relieving congestion on the new southbound arterial and northbound St. Emanuel.	City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston. Converting southbound Hamilton St. to a two-way facility would cause intersection issues and potentially increase congestion.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 8. [#] As an existing two-way street in EaDo with relatively modest traffic volumes yet proposed as a one-way northbound arterial, HDMD requests TxDOT coordinate with COH, the East Downtown Management District and Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone No. 15 the full rebuild of the St. Emanuel streetscape — including but not limited to public utilities (storm drainage, sanitary drainage, water supply), private utilities, signalized intersections, roadway, sidewalks, landscape, and street lighting — between Gray & Jefferson, between Pease & Leeland, and between McKinney and Commerce, those street segments that are not color-coded in the DEIS project plans.	TxDOT is coordinating with the City of Houston and the East Downtown Management District for the rebuild of the St. Emanuel St. streetscape.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 9. [#] HDMD supports the concept of a cap public space over the trenched IH-45 & IH-69 between Lamar & Commerce Streets. In particular, the east-west cap streets as structurally integral bridges are a beneficial multi-modal connectivity components of the proposed DEIS project plan. a. HDMD requests further review and coordination with TxDOT and COH of one-way vs. two-way street traffic movements relative to all proposed street bridges from Lamar to Commerce Streets. b. HDMD requests clarification from TxDOT as to the opportunity for other parties to construct low-scale facilities over the cap and the timeline necessary for this development planning to proceed. This request should also be considered in terms of TxDOT's ability to negotiate relocations of displaced businesses that currently occupy private parcels between the existing Chartres and St. Emanuel corridors, in the area required for the NHHIP right-of-way acquisition. c. In order to realize the cap amenity implementation between Lamar and Commerce Streets, HDMD requests timely information and Participating Agency meetings to establish the urban design parameters to be advanced in the public space's programming, design, construction, maintenance and operations.	a. The COH is evaluating the overall local street network including possible conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets and is responsible for determining the operation (one-way or two-way) of city streets. 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. b. The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements. c. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with HDMD and other participating agencies throughout project development.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 10. Relative to the capped portion over the trenched IH-69 adjacent to the George R. Brown Convention Center (GRBCC) loading docks from Polk to Rusk Streets and in the vicinity of the GRBCC upper level loading ramp from Rusk Street to Texas Avenue, HDMD requests design and engineering review in this area be primarily coordinated with Houston First Corporation (HFC), and with HDMD as needed. a. HDMD further requests the sidewalk between the GRBCC loading dock security wall and the proposed southbound frontage street be of sufficient width for pedestrian and bicycle use and allow for street lighting and landscape amenities at back of curb. (See Comment B.3.b.) b. HDMD requests clarification as to potential development on the TxDOT right-of-way ground area between Rusk Street and Texas Avenue adjacent to the existing upper level loading ramp. As this area fronts the potential cap, these parcel's development opportunities and constraints require further definition for HFC and HDMD. c. HDMD requests TxDOT coordinate with HFC the truck access and turning movements required to access the upper level loading	10.TxDOT will continue to coordinate with HFC and HDMD on the design and engineering review. a. The design has been revised to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle use along the proposed Hamilton St. b. The existing roadway in this area will be removed. TxDOT will determine after construction whether this area is surplus right-of-way. c. Truck access will be coordinated with HFC during detailed design.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 11. HDMD requests coordination between TxDOT and METRO at Texas Avenue in order for the Green and Purple Light Rail Transit lines to remain operational throughout the highway construction.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain. TxDOT will continue to work closely with METRO regarding modifications to the Wheeler Transit Center and associated circulation revisions. TxDOT and METRO have coordinated to develop a preliminary phased construction plan to maintain LRT operations during construction. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design to finalize the plan. To maintain LRT operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at some locations, which will require short-term disruption to operations; TxDOT will coordinate in advance with METRO so that METRO can customers in advance and during the activity in accordance with its standard protocols.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 12. [#] In proximity to Minute Maid Park at the current surface lots owned by the Harris County Houston Sports Authority (HCHSA), TxDOT's right-of-way purchase for Lot B — bordered by Chartres, Texas, St. Emanuel and Preston — should be considered in tandem with the development potential of Lot C — bordered by future frontage street St. Emanuel, Texas, Bastrop and Preston. a. Conceptually, HCHSA may develop Lot C in a number of ways: as a singular 4-block site, as a dual 2-block site (oriented east-west vs. north south), or as four single-block sites. In two of these scenarios, Prairie Street from the Harrisburg underpass may be extended westward and intersect with the proposed cap and the north- and southbound frontage streets. This would provide additional connectivity between East End and Second Ward communities with Downtown, and the attendant circulation benefits during game days or special events. b. TxDOT should review this area with HCHSA, COH, HDMD, East End and EaDo leadership — including TIRZ 15, the Houston Astros and Houston Dynamo — to determine development and connectivity priorities. The successful co-development of the cap public space and the Lot C superblock are integral to one another. The option of Prairie Street as bridge on the cap should be considered by all parties.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public

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392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	B. Eastern Downtown / IH-45 & IH-69 13. [#] As an existing two-way street between northern Downtown and the Greater East End, HDMD does not support the closure of Runnels Street. HDMD requests further review of prior suggestions by HDMD and others to grade-separate Runnels below or above the existing West Belt freight rail and proposed IH-45 and IH-69 main lanes and ingress / egress ramps. NOTE: With the current reconstruction of the Elysian Viaduct providing a new at grade intersection at the McKee-to-Runnels transition, a Runnels tunnel or bridge across the highway and rail rights-of-way would maintain existing neighborhood connectivity and provide East End and Second Ward residents and businesses a direct connection with Downtown and the Elysian Viaduct, and vice versa.	GCRD has recommended a Runnels St. underpass at the rail line. Though that project is not currently funded, TxDOT will coordinate with GCRD to accommodate it.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	C. Northeast Quadrant of Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 & IH-69 1. HDMD requests TxDOT coordinate with COH the rebuild of the eastbound frontage street between Clark and Meadow Streets, serving the East End and Fifth Ward communities. 2. HDMD requests clarification as to the two-way configuration (existing) on the frontage street between Jensen Drive and Meadow Street, a critical connection serving the Fifth Ward. Street name designation and appropriate signage on this stretch would be beneficial for mapping and wayfinding. 3. [#] HDMD requests clarification of grade-separated limits for westbound frontage streets labeled East Frwy and Providence. HDMD is concerned with the interface of IH-69 connector ramp to the frontage street; if Providence is grade-separated below the UPRR rail, this results in cul-de-sacs at Maury and Semmes Streets. HDMD requests additional design review in the area surrounding St. Arnold's Brewery and Hennessey Park. 4. HDMD requests clarification of eastbound Rothwell Street. From the DEIS planning documents, it appears Rothwell is not grade-separated at the UPRR rail crossing. Further, it appears that southbound IH-45 main lanes and an exit ramp are located above Rothwell and an eastbound IH-10 ramp connecting to southbound IH-69 is below Rothwell. Please clarify that Rothwell Street is is an at-grade rail / frontage road crossing. (See Comment E.3. regarding UPRR.) 5. [#] HDMD requests TxDOT review with Harris County a property south of Nance Street in vicinity of right-of-way acquisition for the 45SB to 69SB connector ramp. A county parking facility is in planning stages at this parcel. 6. [#] HDMD requests further review and planning coordination with TxDOT and COH for the eastern end of Nance Street. The NHHIP plans indicate Nance is terminated from the current connection to Jensen Street. HDMD requests a new Nance connection be restored. While the specific street alignment through at-grade and column-supported elevated highway structures is not clearly evident to HDMD, the preferred connection is Nance Street to Clinton Drive, connecting northern Downtown with the East End. 7. North of Buffalo Bayou in two areas labeled "Potential Detention" within the IH-10 & IH-45 & IH-69 interchange, HDMD requests additional storm water analysis and detention design guidelines. The detention basin at proposed terminus of Nance is of primary concern relative to the preceding comment. 8. [#] In the areas labeled "Potential Detention" adjacent to south bank of Buffalo Bayou, HDMD requests TxDOT coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership the design, engineering, hydrology analysis, and detention system respective of the Partnership's current East Sector master planning process. 9. St. Emanuel as a reconstructed frontage street is indicated to access IH-69 northbound, IH-10 westbound and Hardy Toll Road northbound, and IH-10 eastbound. HDMD requests information as to whether TxDOT evaluated an IH-45 northbound connector ramp, as the nearest "downstream" entrance is the proposed down ramp from Leeland and St. Emanuel intersection.	1. City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston and it would be the City's decision to reconstruct these streets. 2. Two-way traffic on the city street will be maintained; it will not be a frontage road. City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston and it would be the City's responsibility to change signage or names. 3. A railroad underpasses is proposed under the UPRR Main 2 line (Passenger Main) that runs next to St. Arnold's Brewery. The design has not been completed yet, but it is likely that cul-de-sacs will be needed at Maury and Semmes. TxDOT is continuing to coordinate with UPRR and the City regarding this underpass. 4. A railroad underpass (Rothwell St. below the BNSF rail line) has been incorporated in the proposed project design (design change after the public hearing). 5. Comment noted. 6. Rothwell St. replaces Nance St. as the connection to Jensen St. Additionally, Rothwell St. will be grade separated under the BNSF rail line, so that eastbound traffic going to Jensen St. will not be delayed by an at-grade railroad crossing. Due to design criteria and safety standards, a connection from Nance St. to Clinton Dr. is not geometrically feasible. 7. The proposed storm water detention basin does not prohibit the extension of Nance St. 8. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership. 9. A northbound downtown connector was evaluated and was not geometrically feasible. Connectivity to I-45 will be provided farther north, from the I-69/I-10 connector.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	D. Northern Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 1. [#] Where the Elysian Viaduct is currently being reconstructed by TxDOT, an existing pedestrian bridge to the east of the Viaduct is to remain in place. HDMD requests TxDOT remove this structure as it is likely in conflict with the proposed IH-10 main and express lanes in the proposed vertical wall trench. Further, HDMD requests TxDOT rebuild this pedestrian/bicycle bridge as a box truss structure directly beneath the rebuilt Elysian Viaduct. The supports for an existing utility conduit also exist in this area, perhaps requiring TxDOT's relocation. 2. [#] The COH has platted a right-of-way for the extension of North San Jacinto from the current intersection at IH-10 ingress and egress frontage streets (eastbound Rothwell and westbound Providence) to Fulton Street at the Burnett Street intersection in the Greater Northside. A previous COH plan proposed an elevated grade-separated roadway, pedestrian and bicycle facilities over the UPRR. a. The current NHHIP plans do not indicate any connection between North San Jacinto and the realigned IH-10 & IH-45 corridor. HDMD requests further design review of the North San Jacinto extension between TxDOT, COH, HDMD and Greater Northside Management District (GNMD). Presently, North San Jacinto is the primary entry street from IH-10 to Downtown; this existing condition necessarily needs reconstructed as part of the NHHIP. b. HDMD requests the support columns for the elevated IH-10 main and express lanes and the elevated IH-45 main lanes be positioned to accommodate the North San Jacinto extension. c. As a component of the NHHIP, HDMD requests an at-grade southbound North San Jacinto street connection from the new frontage street of Providence through the new frontage street of Rothwell, continuing southbound. Further, HDMD requests an at-grade northbound street connection of North San Jacinto through Rothwell intersection and terminating as a westbound (left only) turn onto frontage street Providence. d. To accommodate a North San Jacinto extension further northward to Fulton Street, a grade-separated tunnel solution will likely be required. In order for this to be accomplished, the requested at-grade connections between Providence and Rothwell described in the previous Comment will need to be horizontally separated to allow a North San Jacinto tunnel trench beneath the highway and rail rights-of-way. Sufficient width in the tunnel should be accounted for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between the Greater Northside and Downtown. e. Respective of the preceding priority comments (D. 2 / a.-d.), see the attached "North San Jacinto Extension" diagram for clarification.	1. The existing pedestrian bridge to the east of the Elysian Viaduct will be replaced with a pedestrian bridge on the east side of the UPRR Main 2 (Passenger Main) line that runs next to St. Arnold's Brewery. This relocation was required to accommodate the proposed freeway reconstruction and also allows for pedestrians and bicycles to connect directly to Hennessey Park. HDMD can coordinate with TxDOT and/or TxDOT's design-build contractor during detailed design. Utility engineering will be performed during detailed design. **2.** TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. **a.** TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. b. Columns will accommodate the San Jacinto St. northern extension. c. & d. See response above to item 2.

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392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	D. Northern Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 3. [#] HDMD requests COH and TxDOT determine with HDMD the future street configurations in the area of "Surplus ROW" of the existing IH-10 alignment. The establishment of new public right-of-way necessarily precedes the disposition of the TxDOT surplus parcels and their potential combination with existing parcel ownerships. 4. HDMD requests clarification as to acceptable land usage under the elevated portions of IH-10 and IH-45 lanes between North San Jacinto extension and Main Street, accessed from either the Providence or Rothwell frontage streets. HDMD also requests similar clarification as to land usage under the elevated highways in areas west of Main Street, particularly with respect to the recreational and parking needs of UH-Downtown and with respect to White Oak Bayou.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	D. Northern Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 5. HDMD requests the reconstruction of the McKee and Hardy Street bridges over IH-10 to be of sufficient width to include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and either stop all directions or signalized intersections with Providence and Rothwell frontage streets.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects. TxDOT has agreed to follow the requirements of the COH Bike Plan. There will be a pedestrian/bicycle connection across I-10 at Hardy St. and McKee St.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	D. Northern Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 6. [#] HDMD requests clarification as to whether the western end of Providence frontage street can be a signalized T-intersection at Main Street, providing critical connection to Downtown and the Greater Northside. DEIS plans appear to indicate only a U-turn at the METRO Red Line. HDMD requests an intersection, and if possible, a westward extension to serve the UHDowntown campus to the west of Main Street	Providence St. and Main St. are city streets and signalization or intersection modifications are the responsibility of the City of Houston.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	E. Northwest Quadrant of Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 and Downtown Connector 1. [#] Regarding the eastbound IH-10 exit to the Downtown Connector (DC): HDMD requests TxDOT re-evaluate this ramp as an independent structure that extends from west of Main Street to south of the proposed McKinney & Allen Parkway DC exits. The exit should allow for IH-10 exiting traffic to access McKinney and Allen Parkway rather than solely the southern terminus of the DC. An earlier merge of the IH-10 ramp would also reduce at-grade column supports between the north and southbound DC structures. 2. As previously discussed between HDMD and TxDOT, the possibility of extending Dart Street from First Ward eastward to the future frontage of Rothwell Street is a project requiring further planning and engineering coordination between HDMD, COH and TxDOT. The placement of columns supporting the elevated highways and ramps should accommodate the option to extend Dart Street.	E.1. This was evaluated and is not geometrically feasible. E.2. TxDOT will coordinate with the City of Houston and HDMD during detailed design, to accommodate the City's future plans.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	E. Northwest Quadrant of Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 and Downtown Connector 3. [#] As recently discussed between HDMD and TxDOT, HDMD requests that consideration of a realignment of the Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) current facilities be evaluated. This rail realignment would have numerous connectivity, safety, and noise-reduction benefits for central city neighborhoods plus improved economic development potential. a. The concept proposes double-tracking freight and passenger rail lines between Houston Avenue and Main Street. This consolidated freight rail infrastructure would allow for the removal of the westbound rail along the Winter Street corridor in First Ward and the eastbound rail across northern Downtown from the City's Houston Fire Department (HFD) facilities on Dart Street to the track merger near Opelousas and Semmes Streets in the GNMD. b. This realignment would remove four current at-grade rail crossings between Winter & Summer Streets in the First Ward, including these north-south streets: Oliver, Sawyer, Henderson and Silver. c. This realignment would allow for seven current dead end streets between Winter & Summer Streets to be reconnected north-to-south in the First Ward, including these streets: White, Sabine, Colorado, Johnson, Hickory, Goliad, and Holly, and perhaps an eighth reconnection of Beachton Street between Crockett and Bingham. d. Winter Street should be extended eastward to Holly or perhaps Beachton Street. e. A rails-to-trails project should be implemented with this realignment such that First Ward has direct connection to White Oak Bayou Greenway Trails. f. This realignment would likely require the rebuilding of the Houston Avenue gradeseparated crossing at the UPRR line, which reinforces Comment F.1. below.	E.3. TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.

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392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	E. Northwest Quadrant of Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 and Downtown Connector 3. [CONT] g. Considering the potential rail realignment, one new at-grade crossing at Dart Street would be required east of Beachton Street. Furthermore, critical access to Elder Street Artist Lofts and Ecclesia Church would need to be maintained, perhaps with a street extension from Washington Avenue near the City's Permit Center and current Amtrak Station. h. This realignment would remove four current at-grade rail crossings in Downtown, including these streets: North San Jacinto, McKee, Nance and Rothwell. i. This realignment would allow for the extension of Bagby Street northward to the proposed Dart Street extension. j. This realignment would remove three current at-grade rail crossings in GNMD, including these streets: Providence, Lyons Avenue, and Opelousas. k. Respective of the NHHIP, this rail realignment would eliminate one UPRR bridge over the IH-10 main and express lanes, and greatly simplify at-grade access of Rothwell and Providence frontage streets and their associated local streets. (See items C.2. and C.3.) l. Respective of the NHHP, this rail realignment would require a revision to the grade separated highway connections from IH-10 and IH-45, specifically the respective connections to Smith, Louisiana, Milam and Travis Streets. m. The interface between the UPRR proposed alignment and the NHHIP will require significant planning and design modifications for the IH-10 main and express lanes, the IH-45 main and MaX lanes, the respective ingress / egress connector ramps, and perhaps the bridging structure of Hogan Street. However, the UPRR proposed alignment would likely entail economic and constructability benefits as two temporary shoo-fly bypass rail bridges would not be required, a permanent rail bridge is eliminated over IH-10, and a majority of the new rail alignment could be constructed offline in tandem with highway improvements. n. The opportunity for a new Amtrak Station has been considered by HDMD and is proposed in proximity to the Burnett Station on Main Street, north of the proposed freight and passenger rail alignment. o. A significant component of the proposed rail alignment is coordination with the land area required for the dual track turns in the area of the City's HFD facilities at Dart Street.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	E. Northwest Quadrant of Downtown / IH-10 & IH-45 and Downtown Connector 4. With the proposed removal of the existing IH-10 HOV ramp structure and the IH-10 westbound ramp connecting to IH-45 southbound, HDMD requests TxDOT consider this area as surplus right-of-way. 5. [#] With the proposed realignment of IH-10 and the associated connectors to Smith and Louisiana streets and respective of Comment E.3. above, HDMD requests TxDOT consider the area north of the former Post Office site and UPRR as surplus right-of-way for new development adjacent to the proposed Dart Street extension.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	F. Western Downtown / Downtown Connector (DC) 1. [#] South of Memorial Drive and the associated Capitol / Rusk frontage streets, HDMD has previously reviewed with TxDOT and COH a proposed alignment of Houston Avenue connecting with McKinney and Walker Streets, via an at-grade T-intersection with a new frontage street couplet that connects southward to the Allen Parkway intersection. HDMD believes this proposed street system enhances connectivity between Downtown and the Washington Avenue corridor, Sixth Ward, First Ward and the Heights neighborhoods. Further evaluation of this proposal is warranted, with due respect given to the McKinney and Walker street bridges crossing over Buffalo Bayou. 2. [#] The NHHIP DEIS plans indicate a one-lane road from Walker Street (west side of the City Hall Annex parking garage) intersecting with Allen Parkway westbound. This connection is not required with the inclusion of the previous comment. With the removal of this street segment, Sam Houston Park will establish direct connection with and access to Buffalo Bayou Park. 3. [#] HDMD requests TxDOT evaluate the ramp length of the Allen Parkway exit from the southbound DC. HDMD requests the ramp come to grade on the north side of Buffalo Bayou and limit the amount of column supports within the bayou floodway. 4. [#] HDMD requests TxDOT modify the curvature of the Allen Parkway eastbound connector ramp to the northbound DC. The ultimate goal is to shift the merge lane further south and modify the ramp's geometry in order to reduce the number of support columns or ramp embankments that interface with Allen Parkway and Buffalo Bayou. 5. HDMD requests confirmation of the lane counts for the DC frontage streets, in particular the intersection and signalization controls at Allen Parkway. With the current pedestrian and bicycle use in Buffalo Bayou Park, this new highway-to-street access point will likely have higher traffic counts in the future. An appropriate interface to allow safe crossings in all directions for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles is of paramount importance to HDMD and the broad array of community interests (see Comment G.1. / a.-d.).	F.1. TxDOT will provide a stub-out to accommodate future City of Houston projects for the mentioned connections. All streets mentioned in this comment are city streets and any projects will be the responsibility of the City of Houston. TxDOT has discussed this at meetings with the City of Houston. F.2. TxDOT met with the City of Houston and maintaining a Walker St. connection to Allen Parkway was requested. At this time, no change to the project design is proposed. F.3. TxDOT cannot accommodate the requested ramp revision and the stub-out in the current design because it would conflict with design standards. If the City of Houston provides a revised local street connection, this idea could be considered. If it is a design change after the Final EIS, an EIS re-evaluation would be required. F.4. The design of the eastbound connector ramp to the northbound DC was modified to reduce the number of columns in the Allen Parkway/Buffalo Bayou; this design change is included in the revised schematic design and the Final EIS. F.5. Signalization at intersections will be determined during detailed design.

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392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	G. Southwest Quadrant of Downtown / Downtown Connector (DC) 1. [#] Between June 26 - July 19, 2017, HDMD hosted a series community meetings and planning workshops with Buffalo Bayou Partnership, Sam Houston Park, Brookfield (Allen Center property owner), Fourth Ward TIRZ 4, Freedman's Town Preservation Committee, Midtown Management District (MMD), Pierce Skypark advocates, and HDMD consultants for the NHHIP and Plan Downtown. These meetings have addressed the DC and proposed frontage streets south of the Capitol / Rusk light rail facilities. The community has requested HDMD advance internally and with TxDOT alternatives for restored neighborhood connectivity between Downtown and the Fourth Ward plus improved connections between Midtown and Buffalo Bayou Park. HDMD has previewed these alternatives with TxDOT personnel and the NHHIP consultants. Herein, HDMD offers additional DEIS commentary for the project's record. a. General modification for DC alignment: within the indicated TxDOT right-of-way, adjust eastward the curvature of the DC and northbound / southbound frontage streets, in order to maximize the space on western side of DC for north-to-south pedestrian, bicycle, and landscape amenities adjacent to Fourth Ward. This DC shift eastward may involve reconsideration of the DC exit to Bagby Street. b. Alternative 1 ("surgical tweak"): shift southward the embankments at southern end of DC such that an east-west pedestrian / bicycle connection along Andrews Street can be established. Due to the historic condition of Andrews Street in Fourth Ward, the objective is not to increase vehicular traffic on this narrow, brick-lined street, but rather to allow for pedestrian and bicycle access across (under) the DC. The proposed "swing lanes" of the northbound frontage street between Dallas and Allen Parkway are unaffected. c. Alternative 2 ("the big ask"): grade separate the DC below Dallas and Andrews Streets. Further, shift the "swing lanes" of the northbound frontage street to between Dallas and Andrews Streets; this results in an eccentric bridging structure for the "swing lanes" which has been discussed within the community meetings as a potential cap benefitting both Fourth Ward and Allen Center. TxDOT has indicated to HDMD who acknowledges there is insufficient length for a below grade-separated DC facility to rise in the available distance for connections with Pease and Jefferson Streets. d. The community's consensus preference is Alternative 2, for which HDMD has informed all parties this may require a re-evaluation process of the FEIS, or perhaps a Supplemental Hearing to the DEIS. HDMD requests TxDOT incorporate Alternative 1 in the FEIS and ROD, and advise HDMD as to further community and COH engagement to consider Alternative 2 or variants thereof.	G.1.a. This was previously considered during preliminary design and the proposed design was developed in coordination with the City of Houston and HDMD. G.1.b. An east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along existing Andrews St. route was added to the schematics. G.1.c. The "big ask" is not feasible because of the proximity to Buffalo Bayou and the vertical clearance needed over the bayou. G.1.d. Alternative 1 is incorporated in the project design: allowing for east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along the existing Andrews St. route under the proposed I-45 connectors. Alternative 2 (the "big ask") is not feasible due to design criteria for vertical clearance over Buffalo Bayou.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	H. Southern Downtown 1. HDMD supports the removal of the existing IH-45 Pierce Elevated across southern and western Downtown. Removing the existing columns that impact the Buffalo Bayou floodway will enhance hydrological performance during flooding events. Removing the existing columns and highway deck will result in broader capacity for economic redevelopment of this physical and social barrier area between Downtown and Midtown. The opportunity for an at-grade linear park is currently under conceptual design by HDMD consultants for the NHHIP and Plan Downtown. 2. Respective of the previous Comment, HDMD is also receptive to the conceptual plans advanced by Page for the Pierce Skypark. As preserved infrastructure with the possibility for aerial grade-separated connections from Third Ward, EaDo, Downtown and Midtown, back and forth to the west side connective green belt described in Comment G.1., HDMD sees the potential. 3. HDMD is currently in an early stage of evaluating the economic impacts associated with the Pierce Elevated "Surplus ROW." At least 3 options are under evaluation by HDMD's planning and economic consultants: a. At-grade linear park (see Comment H.1.), likely requiring significant financial, urban space development and operational commitments from HDMD or MMD. b. Elevated Pierce Skypark (see Comment H.2.), perhaps requiring a third party development and management organization or an HDMD / MMD sub-agency structure and the associated obligations. c. Half block sites subject to free market development forces.	1. Comment noted 2. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated. 3. At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: a. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority b. Adjacent property owners c. General public
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 1. For the extents of elevated IH-45 (north and southeast of Downtown), IH-69 lanes (northeast Downtown) IH-10 express and main lanes (north Downtown) and the Downtown Connector (west Downtown), HDMD requests TxDOT design and construct highway structures with minimal ground level impacts. The use of segmented highway bridging and mono-point single columns — or better — is expressly requested throughout the limits of Segment 3.	Comment noted
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 2. [#] All "Surplus ROW" currently indicated in the NHHIP DEIS plans that currently shares COH facilities should automatically revert to COH right-of-way. For example, Pierce Street within the designated Pierce Elevated "Surplus ROW" reverts to COH right-of-way, as do all crossing streets from Chenevert to Bagby. How this impacts an elevated park should be fully evaluated by COH, HDMD and MMD. 3. [#] Similar to the previous Comment, all "Surplus ROW" that was historically COH right-ofway should automatically revert to COH. For example, the IH-10 eastbound exit ramp that connects to Nance at McKee Street should be TxDOT surplus that reverts to COH. HDMD will collaborate with COH to identify the original Downtown street grid that was subject to and assumed by the current TxDOT right-of-way in order to clarify the reversion rights.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public

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392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 4. [#] While separate projects by other agencies, TxDOT should fully collaborate with GCRD and HCTRA as the respective rail and toll road projects are inter-related with the NHHIP. In particular, HDMD was recently made aware of the proposed detention requirements and proposed locations for both the grade-separated Lyons Avenue at the West Belt BNSF line and the extension of the Hardy Toll Road. These detention areas in addition to the NHHIP's "Potential Detention Areas" require further inter-agency coordination to ameliorate the land extents required. Further, the urban and landscape design of these detention areas should be raised to the highest level as central city amenities — as well-natured, wet-bottom facilities that can be utilized by the residents and businesses impacted by the respective rail, toll road, or highway infrastructure projects. Further, these detention sites should be understood by TxDOT, HCTRA, GCFRD, COH, and related local area agencies in terms of their maintenance and operations, including the beneficial connections to the Bayou Greenway trails and proximal pedestrian / bicycle facilities.	TxDOT has coordinated with GCRD, City of Houston, HCTRA, and HDMD during preliminary engineering for the NHHIP, and will continue to coordinate with them during detailed design and construction. TxDOT is coordinating with GCRD and City of Houston regarding storm water detention needs for the Commerce St./Navigation St. underpass project, and will accommodate that project's detention requirements in the NHHIP project, if needed. The detention areas for the Lyons Ave. underpass and the Hardy Toll Road extension will be addressed by project sponsors (City of Houston, GCRD, and HCTRA). TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 5. As Segment 3 of the NHHIP is implemented between +/- 2020 and 2030, HDMD requests continued collaboration to appropriately message the temporary traffic control plans such that the Downtown workforce, residents and visitors are kept apprised of the project's construction status through the HDMD weekly "Street Closure" email communication.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and other stakeholders during detailed design and construction.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 6. As HDMD is responsible for Downtown's vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding systems, the timely updates to those message panels and the associated maps will be the administered throughout future Service and Improvement Plans and Assessment Plans of the HDMD. 7. [#] Respective of the previous Comment, HDMD requests TxDOT continue to honor the long-standing agreement to minimize highway located signage to "Downtown Destinations" and specific street exits, so as to moderate the number of signage requests from multiple Downtown stakeholders seeking "highway markers."	6. Comment noted 7. Comment noted
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 8. [#] Respective of existing highway columns and ramp embankments within the Buffalo and White Oak Bayou floodways, HDMD requests hydrological analysis and confirmation with the Harris County Flood Control District to validate whether TxDOT abandoned columns and ramp embankments may be preserved or repurposed in situ as infrastructural artifacts, as has been proposed by multiple parties, or whether significant floodway conveyance and capacity is enhanced by the removal of unnecessary highway columns and embankments. If the latter, HDMD requests that all water-surrounded and bayou-adjacent highway columns and embankments be removed with the highest standard of care to avoid damages to this natural resource area. If the former, HDMD requests advisement from TxDOT as to the appropriate use of abandoned columns and embankments, whether by HDMD or other parties.	The preliminary conveyance analysis for Buffalo and White Oak Bayou assumed the removal of existing highway structures in the floodway that would be removed during construction of the proposed project. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by HCFCD to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. The design-build contractor for Segment 3 will include specifications for demolition activities to minimize impacts to the bayous and bayou features in those areas. TxDOT will review the specifications and inspect the area during construction to confirm that appropriate measures are utilized.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 9. HDMD requests TxDOT incorporate 100% recycling protocol as a baseline construction specification for all concrete and steel materials demolished in association with the NHHIP. 10. [#] HDMD requests TxDOT coordinate with COH on the standard lane width and required lane counts for all highway to surface street connections. Wherever possible, HDMD errs on the side of narrower lane widths and fewer lane counts in an effort to moderate vehicular speeds and promote safe conditions for all modes and all users.	9. Comment noted 10. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston during detailed design and construction. Frontage roads will be designed as frontage roads. City streets requiring reconstruction or connections due to the NHHIP will be designed per City of Houston design criteria.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 11. Respective to noise abatement strategies and the stated possibility of sound wall installation adjacent to the NHHIP right-of-way, HDMD requests detailed review during the design and engineering process to engage with TxDOT and affected stakeholders requesting the installation of sound walls within the Downtown limits of Segment 3.	TxDOT has a standard process to evaluate noise impacts and propose noise abatement measures, and to coordinate with affected stakeholders requesting the installation of noise barriers. TxDOT is willing to discuss proposed noise barriers in the Downtown area with HDMD; however, the final decision to build each proposed barrier is based on a majority vote from the benefited property owners and residents, since they would experience traffic noise impacts due to the proposed project.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 12. As feasible during the preparation of FEIS planning documents, HDMD requests a Participating Agency session with TxDOT and COH to review all signalized traffic intersections in proximity to the NHHIP limits.	Signalization at intersections within the project area will be determined during detailed design in coordination with the COH.
392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 13. [#] During the preparation of the FEIS planning documents and / or at the appropriate design and engineering phase following the ROD, HDMD requests information as to required land size, general locations, required access and general equipment specifications for storm water pump stations and mechanical exhaust systems associated with the Downtown /EaDo cap area. As well, similar information is requested for storm water pump stations that serve any trenched portion in Segment 3. 14. [#] Based on July 14, 2017 meeting held between HDMD and CenterPoint Energy, TxDOT should fully coordinate the relocations and adjustments required for electrical and gas facilities for the entirety of NHHIP. Likewise, other private utility relocates and COH or Harris County public utility relocates are to be coordinated by TxDOT.	13. These details will be determined during detailed design. TxDOT will coordinate with City of Houston, HDMD, and other local agencies during design. 14. Comment noted

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392	Houston Downtown Management District	7/26/2017	Email	GENERAL COMMENTS 15. [#] During the preparation of the FEIS and based upon the ROD, HDMD requests TxDOT participate in METRO's Regional Transit Plan (RTP), with the planning process and community engagement currently in progress. Upon completion of the METRO RTP, HDMD requests the DEIS or FEIS be amended to incorporate METRO's plan and need for future transit improvements. a. Current METRO bus routes 40, 41 and 48 are affected by the NHHIP, due to the rerouting of Polk Street and the disconnection of Runnels Street. The short- or long-term rerouting of these transit services should be well-understood and coordinated as part of the FEIS process and the NHHIP's final conceptual plans. 16. In the capacity as a Participating Agency with TxDOT for the NHHIP, continued coordination is warranted to ensure the above Comments, related issues, and new issues yet to be revealed are jointly addressed throughout the various Segment 3 phases of design and engineering, and further throughout the anticipated and actual letting schedule for bidding and construction,	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO regarding potential impacts to bus routes, bus stops, and LRT. a. TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. b. TxDOT welcomes Participating Agencies for the EIS process to continue to provide feedback and input during detailed design of the NHHIP.
393	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	I am a resident of First Ward and the immediate past president of the First Ward Civic Council. I have attended and commented at most of the TxDOT public meetings as well as two of the Texas High-Speed Rail meetings, and I want to further clarify my support for Houston High-Speed Rail Watch which has developed a proposal to enhance transit in Houston while helping to ensure that the high-speed rail line never comes downtown (i.e., through our neighborhoods).	Comment noted. TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project. If this separate project moves forward, TxDOT will accommodate its design where possible, and will coordinate with the lead agency.
393	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	As I understand it, TxDOT is moving forward with its North Houston Highway Improvement Project, which involves re-routing I-45 to follow I-10 and I-59 around downtown. The TxDOT project does not take into account the connectivity we hope to see between the high-speed rail station and downtown; in fact, it would make this connectivity impossible to achieve, as TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office), our plan's access route to downtown. I support the retention of the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street, so it can be used for future connectivity with the HSR station at the Northwest Transit Center, thus connecting it with Downtown via an already existing route.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	All new roadway bridges over the new freeway expansion should have separated bike and pedestrian sidewalks with pedestrian friendly lighting. Requesting that Tx Dot to work with the adjoining communities on specific bridge designs and give the cultural arts district an opportunity to consider added art installations particularly on bridges into the cultural arts district located in First Ward.	Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. Lighting design is part of the final design process. TxDOT plans to coordinate with outside groups and organizations to seek input during detailed design. Safety is always a primary concern and is considered at all stages.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	Continue to protect the President Head statues and park titled Statesmen park adjacent to the freeway in First Ward as shown on current plans.	The Recommended Alternative would not impact the American Statesmanship Park.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	Tx Dot to ensure the bike path at Spring Street in First ward remains. Current plans show lanes on grade, and engineers were unable to clarify the design intent at the meetings. We are requesting roadways remain somewhat elevated to accommodate the bike pedestrian clearances facilitating connectivity from Northside to First Ward and Heights.	The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The Spring Street portion of the Heights Hike & Bike Trail that currently goes under I-45 and I-10 to connect to the White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail will be maintained.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	The roadway at 1201 Spring Street is shown to have more right of way for the expansion. Removing vehicular access along the road is a detriment to property access and again this area needs re-evaluation to maintain both the house and the access to the driveway etc.	The roadway design was revised to avoid this property.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	Tx Dot installed temporary stick bollards on the Houston Avenue Bridge driving lane which are a safety hazard. to create a temporary bike alternative path during recent ramp construction in this area. They are an extreme safety hazard as cars are driving over them mowing those down daily. They are not sufficient interim protection for pedestrians and cyclists. We request barriers that cars can't drive over.	Houston Avenue is a City street and the COH installed the current temporary stick bollards. Houston Avenue would be reconstructed as part of the proposed project and would include a buffer space between bike/ped accommodations and the roadway. Pedestrian and bicycle safety will be addressed in the detailed design phase of the proposed project.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	Work in and near the Trigas company at the exchange of I-45 and I-10 requires a safety plan for freeway demolition and construction to mitigate any potential for a gas explosion endangering adjacent communities and motorists.	TxDOT requires the construction contractors to have all gas lines and other underground facilities located ahead of construction and will follow procedures for marking such lines clearly to avoid construction activities that may impact these lines. Gas lines in conflict with the proposed construction will be relocated or adjusted ahead of construction activities to mitigate the conflicts. TxDOT requires a health and safety plan be submitted by their construction contractors for review and approval prior to beginning construction activities. These plans will require that the Trigas company facility be addressed in the plan for any work activities in close proximity to that facility or that might present a concern. The safety plan will address identification of properties and facilities of potential concern and will be required to address the approach for appropriate construction site notifications to construction personnel and proposed field markings near sensitive facilities. The plan will also address protocols for notifications and actions to be taken should an emergency situation occur.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	First Ward is requesting bike bridges be designed below the new fly ramps leading toward downtown, to provide a connection over the roadways for cyclists and pedestrians safely separated from cars. The purpose of the bike bridges extended below the new fly ramps is to provide connectivity from the current trails at Hogg Park/ Stude Park to Buffalo Bayou Park. Alternative methods of connectivity are important for inner city communities providing alternative safe methods of transportation. Many lower income residents must rely on bikes.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	The new cap park north of I-10 and I-45 exchange has multiple feeder lanes and doesn't provide a safe way for pedestrian access from the neighborhood to the future cap park. The traffic should be slowed and signals provided that would allow pedestrians to cross safely.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	Green sound walls versus concrete walls and utilizing suggested hardscape materials which absorb water to mitigate flooding in First Ward.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. Green sound walls and hardscape materials would have negligible impact on absorption of water.

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394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	We want to see landscape plans that are sensitive to the residential communities adjacent to the freeway. We are requesting that trees and shrubs are planted to provide sufficient buffering of both the car traffic noise and the massive concrete visual of the freeway which is not compatible with the general expectations of residential neighborhoods.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	We want Tx Dot to continue to work with Metro and accommodate revisions as needed for the new capital improvement plans they are currently launching and likely to float bonds to meet mass transit needs. Mass transit initiatives should be part of the I-45 expansion concepts and not place any added burden of right of way on communities adjacent to the freeways.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible, and when a preferred alignment for future rail has been determined. TxDOT is also coordinating with the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) during the NHHIP development process.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	We support Pierce Skypark turning Pierce Elevated into a skypark.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
394	Griffith, Rob	7/26/2017	Project Website	We support(either METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) from downtown to the anticipated high-speed rail station at 290/610 area. Mitigating routing through First Ward. Connector would be elevated over the main lanes of I-10 and route in the I-45 expansion corridor adjacent to First Ward. It is preferred to enter downtown at the current location of the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street which Tx Dot shows to demolition. We are requesting Tx Dot works with Metro to incorporate this plan without placing additional burden of right of way on adjacent communities. !	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	**UPRR Owns and Operates Critical Rail Lines within the Proposed NHHIP Area** UPRR owns and operates a common carrier railroad network in the western half of the United States, including the State of Texas. Specifically, UPRR owns and operates rail main lines in Houston and throughout the State. UPRR is the largest rail carrier in Texas in terms of both mileage and train operations. UPRR's rail network is vital to the economic health of Texas and to the nation as a whole, and its rail service to customers in the Houston Area is crucial to the future success and growth of those customers.	Comment noted.
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	**UPRR Owns and Operates Critical Rail Lines within the Proposed NHHIP Area** As currently proposed, the NHHIP would add four express lanes and involve reconstruction of mainlanes and frontage roads, rerouting of I-45 in the Downtown area, removal of existing elevated lanes, construction of new connector accessways, and realignment of major interstates. All three freight rail lines and associated rail infrastructure are located within the proposed project area are owned and/or operated by UPRR (see Draft EIS, p. 3-36): • The Union Pacific Railroad parallels the Hardy Toll Road from north of Beltway 8 to I-610, then parallels the Elysian Viaduct and continues to I-10 and US 59/I-69. The rail line passes under I-10 and US 59/I-69 then veers to the east near Franklin Street. • The Southern Pacific Railroad has two rail lines in the general vicinity of the proposed project area. One rail line runs north-south between I-610 and I-10 on the west side of US 59/I-69 and parallels the UPRR tracks. The rail line has an underpass at I-10 then veers west, paralleling Washington A venue beyond the study area. Another Southern Pacific rail line enters the proposed project area approximately one-half mile north of the I-10/US 59 interchange and continues westward on the north side of I-10. • The Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad is an east-west rail line paralleling the north side of I 610. These freight rail lines include elements either comprising the right-of-way (i.e., ballast, ties, track, bridges, etc.) or located adjacent to it (i.e., signs, mileposts, switches, etc.). UPRR uses all of these tracks extensively. For instance, in the proposed Recommended Alternative's Segment 3 (Downtown Loop System) area alone, the rail lines handle more than twenty trains per day. The area is a main artery for the east/west route for trains. There is also an Amtrak route utilizing these same rail lines.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations.
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	**Preemption: Railroad Operations are Under the Exclusive Jurisdiction of the Federal Surface Transportation Board** Only the Federal Surface Transportation Board ("STB") has authority to regulate the use of railroad property. As set forth in the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act ("ICCT A"), the STB has exclusive and preemptive jurisdiction over: 1) transportation by rail carriers, and the remedies provided in this part with respect to rates, classifications, rules (including car service, interchange, and other operating rules), practices, routes, services, and facilities of such carriers; and 2) the construction, acquisition, operation, abandonment, or discontinuance of spur, industrial, team, switching, or side tracks, or facilities, even if the tracks are located, or intended to be located, entirely in one State, is exclusive. Except as otherwise provided in this part, the remedies provided under this part with respect to regulation of rail transportation are exclusive and preempt the remedies provided under Federal or State law. 49 U.S.C. § 10501(b) (emphasis added). Thus, UPRR's continued operation of its rail lines cannot be disturbed except as directed by the STB. Accordingly, the Draft EIS should not assume that any (even potentially temporary) encroachment of railroad right-of-way and/or relocation or acquisition of UPRR's rail lines as a result of the NHHIP is feasible.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations.

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395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	**The Draft EIS Does Not Analyze Potential Impacts to Rail Infrastructure and/or Operations Even Though the Project as Currently Proposed Will: (1) Likely Require Relocation and/or Redirection of UPRR's Property, (2) May Result in Significant Adverse Impacts, and (3) May Obstruct UPRR's Ongoing and Future Operations in the Region.** Even Though the Project as Currently Proposed Will: (1) Likely Require Relocation and/or Redirection of UPRR's Property, (2) May Result in Significant Adverse Impacts, and (3) May Obstruct UPRR's Ongoing and Future Operations in the Region.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	**The Draft EIS Does Not Analyze Potential Impacts to Rail Infrastructure and/or Operations** The Draft EIS acknowledges that the NHHIP would necessitate the taking of new right-of-way (for instance, the NHHIP will require acquisition of 160 acres of right-of-way in Segment 3 alone); however, the Draft EIS does not discuss or analyze any railroad right-of-way acquisition required for implementation of the proposed project. The Draft EIS also does not address any potential impacts to rail infrastructure and rail operations during project construction and/or implementation. As an example, Section 3.1 discusses existing conditions and direct impacts to land use ("All land uses that would be directly impacted by the NHHIP would be permanently converted to transportation use" (p. 3-3)) but it fails to mention potential project impacts to existing (and substantial) rail infrastructure and/or operations. In addition, the Draft EIS includes Tables ES-I through ES-3 (pp. ES-14 through ES-23) summarizing impacts for each project Segment, but neglects to specify any impacts to rail lines or railroad companies, including impacts to land use, displacements, encroachments, transportation facilities, and the like. Notably, the analysis of the No Build Alternative seems to confirm that impacts would occur as part of NHHIP when the EIS highlights the lack of impacts to railroads as a benefit of the No Build Alternative. The Draft EIS states "[t]he No Build Alternative would not require the acquisition of new right-of-way, and therefore would not result in direct impacts to transit centers, Park & Ride facilities, railroads, LRT, or bus routes" (p. 3-38).	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations.
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	**The Draft EIS Does Not Analyze Potential Impacts to Rail Infrastructure and/or Operations** [CONT] Available project details and conceptual roadway layouts suggest that construction and implementation of the proposed project will require (at least during the construction stage) relocation and/or redirection of some UPRR rail lines and infrastructure. If so, these actions may result in adverse impacts to air quality, land use, and traffic and circulation (particularly to adjacent roadways), and interfere with UPRR's ongoing and future operations on those lines. Additionally, potential closure, relocation and rerouting of existing rail lines will likely result in delays for both rerouted rail traffic and for rail traffic on the lines to which traffic is rerouted. The Draft EIS does not address these potential impacts, nor does it examine whether there is sufficient capacity on other lines to handle this rerouting, particularly if construction is required. UPRR therefore requests that TxDOT recognize and coordinate with UPRR to make sufficient accommodations for the proposed project's likely impacts to rail infrastructure and operations as a result of construction activities and/or project implementation.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations.
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	**The Draft EIS Does Not Provide the Necessary Information Needed for Informed Decision-Making under NEPA** The Draft EIS does not contain sufficient detail to allow UPRR to understand the relevant environmental consequences of the proposed project as related to rail infrastructure and operations. Instead, it includes what appears to be conclusory assumptions about potential railroad right-of-way encroachment, relocation and/or redirection of existing UPRR rail lines and infrastructure. Thus, the Draft EIS does not adequately consider UPRR's rail lines in the region and their role in the national transportation infrastructure. For these reasons, the required analysis of the project is insufficient under NEPA. See Robertson v. Methow Valley Citizens Council, 490 U.S. 332, 349 (1989) (noting NEPA's purposes are to ensure the agency will have detailed information on significant environmental impacts when it makes its decisions and to guarantee that this information will be available to a larger audience); 40 C.F.R. §§ 1502.1, 1502.14.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	A. The Draft EIS does not contain sufficient detail about potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. NEPA requires agencies to take a good faith "hard look" at the potential consequences of a project, analyze its potential impact on the environment and identify unavoidable adverse consequences of the proposed action and of alternative actions. See 42 U.S.C. § 4332(C). In addition NEPA requires agencies to consider all substantial evidence when analyzing significant impacts and consider impacts within the setting in which they occur. See 40 CFR § 1508.27(a)). Here, the Draft EIS is insufficient because the analysis of the proposed project and Recommended Alternative neglects to address these NEPA requirements by not having any analysis of existing rail lines and operations and the proposed project's potential impacts thereon.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations

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395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	B. The Draft EIS's Recommended Alternative appears to include conclusory assumptions about the feasibility of relocating or redirecting existing rail lines and infrastructure. The purpose of the alternatives discussion in an EIS is to identify ways to reduce or avoid significant environmental effects. For this reason, an environmental document must focus on alternatives that avoid or substantially lessen a project's significant environmental effects and the alternatives discussed should be ones that offer substantial environmental advantages over the proposed project. See 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14(a) (NEPA requires the lead agency to "[r]igorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives, and for alternatives which were eliminated from detailed study, briefly discuss the reasons for their having been eliminated."); 42 U .S.C. § 4332(C)(iii). In addition, the selection of sufficient alternatives should rely on "some notion of feasibility." (See Citizens Against Burlington, Inc., v. Busey, 938 F.2d 190 (D.C. Cir.), cert. denied, 502 U.S. 994 (1991)). Likewise, reasonable alternatives should be both feasible and non-speculative. (See Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc., 435 U.S. 519, 551 (1978)). Because the Draft EIS does not analyze project implications to existing rail lines or operations, it is unclear without additional information and environmental analysis whether the proposed project alternatives are feasible and non-speculative, and therefore sufficient under the basic tenents of NEPA.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations.
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	C. The Draft EIS does not consider the importance of UPRR's rail network's role in regional and national transportation infrastructure. NEPA requires a "full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts" as part of an EIS. 40 C.F.R. § 1502.l; see also 42 U.S.C. § 4332 (C); 40 C.F.R. §, 1508.7. This includes analysis of both direct and indirect environmental impacts of the proposed action. 40 C.F.R. § 1508.8. Direct effects are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place. 40 C.F.R. § 1508.8(a). Indirect effects are those caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. See 40 C.F .R § l 508.8(b). Both include "effects on natural resources and on the components, structures, and functioning of affected ecosystems," as well as "aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health [effects]." Id. (emphasis added). NEPA requires that federal agencies explain and evaluate economic effects to the extent they are interrelated to the natural or physical environment (id at § 1508.14). Here, however, the Draft EIS does not adequately discuss the effects of the project on UPRR rail lines and operations. For instance, ifrail lines and infrastructure is converted, relocated or redirected, the Draft EIS contains no analysis of potential adverse impacts from these actions. Any potential relocation of UPRR rail lines and infrastructure in the region will likely have effects on the larger regional and national rail network and UPRR' s goods movement activities. Even temporary disruption could have far-reaching economic consequences and TxDOT must minimize those consequences in its construction and engineering planning.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations.
395	Union Pacific Railroad Company	7/26/2017	Email	**C. The Draft EIS does not consider the importance of UPRR's rail network's role in regional and national transportation infrastructure.** The Draft EIS confirms that "selection of the final preferred Build Alternative will not be made until after the public comment period is completed, comments on the Draft EIS are received and considered, agency coordination is completed, the individual Section 4(f) evaluation is completed, and the environmental impacts are fully evaluated." The Draft EIS should be supplemented to consider the environmental impacts of the proposed project on rail infrastructure and operations and to set forth sufficient detail to enable third parties to fully understand the potential relevant environmental consequences of the NHHIP. As a major stakeholder in this process, UPRR requests that TxDOT coordinate with UPRR on the next steps of the proposed project's environmental review process to the fullest extent possible in order to ensure that all relevant rail impacts are addressed and, if needed, mitigated accordingly.	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. Accordingly, TxDOT is not required to prepare a supplemental Draft EIS. TxDOT is mindful that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, updated/revised technical reports were posted on the project website and were available at the TxDOT Houston District office. TxDOT has previously coordinated with HB&T, BNSF, and UPRR railroad representatives, and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. TxDOT will continue to engage agencies, entities, and organizations during detailed design and construction
397	Hoffman, Kevin	7/26/2017	Project Website	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
398	Henderson, Elspeth	7/26/2017	Project Website	Please do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and and Elgin...this would be incredibly dangerous to our neighborhood. These are neighborhood streets, next to a school, and very close to houses. It is a neighborhood where younger people and families walk and bicycle. Having high speed traffic in this area would be life-threatening and cause huge disruptions to our quiet area. It would place us at risk for traffic related incidents just by leaving our driveways. It would endanger children and the residents in the neighborhood. It is NOT an ideal place for this type of road. Please reconsider, and if you have not actually seen the proposed site other than on a map, please come assess the street for yourself. Please find some other place to put the toll lane ramps.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
399	Hogans, Marvin	7/26/2017	Project Website	Repurpose the Pierce Elevated and make Pierce Skypark a reality! Been living Downtown Houston for over (15)-years. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE...	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
400	Jackson, Cindy	7/26/2017	Project Website	Please rethink the idea of using Chenevert as an off and on ramp for 288. The infrastructure cannot handle all those vehicles every day!!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
401	James, Carla	7/26/2017	Project Website	I am concerned that the current proposed exit and entrance for 288 toll lane traffic to/from Downtown will be at Chenevert & Elgin, dumping high-speed traffic between a school and park. I would like to see a design that keeps freeway traffic on feeders and thoroughfares, not neighborhood streets like Chenevert.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
402	Koehl, Robert	7/26/2017	Project Website	1. I believe the plan will cause greatly increased traffic on the North/South roads near the Greater Height, such as North Main, Houston Avenue, Taylor/Watson, & Studemont during rush hour, as those working in downtown & The Medical Center search for alternate paths to and from work. I would like to see more entrances remain open between I10 & 610 or other methods discussed to mitigate this concern.	The traffic volumes exiting were considered in the comprehensive traffic study conducted for the project. Managing travel pattern shifts during construction of the NHHIP will be closely monitored and detours to other state system roadways to avoid the construction work zones will be clearly announced and maintained.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
402	Koehl, Robert	7/26/2017	Project Website	2. I believe the closed exits & entrances on I45 will cause increased North/South cut-though traffic through our Brooke Smith neighborhood, as more drivers will be tempted to drive all the way through our neighborhood from North Main to Cavalcade and vice versa. I would like to see more entrances remain open between I10 & 610 or other methods discussed to mitigate this concern.	The traffic volumes were considered in the comprehensive traffic study conducted for the project. Additional ramps could not be included in the design due to the need to meet roadway design standards.
402	Koehl, Robert	7/26/2017	Project Website	3.1 have concerns that those of us living close in to the city are being sacrificed for the benefit of those living outside the city & commuting in (The Woodlands, Spring, Etc.)	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.
402	Koehl, Robert	7/26/2017	Project Website	4. I would like to see more discussion about how the green spaces on the freeway caps and elsewhere will be funded. I have concerns that funds may not be allocated for these green spaces & the result would be an ugly utilitarian space.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
402	Koehl, Robert	7/26/2017	Project Website	5. I support adding bicycle lanes wherever possible in the plan.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
402	Koehl, Robert	7/26/2017	Project Website	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
403	Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Co.	7/26/2017	Written	HBT understands TxDOT' s goal of improving roadways in this project, but HBT objects to the failure of the Draft EIS to consider environmental impacts of the proposed project on rail infrastructure and operation. This omission prevents third parties from reviewing NHHIP's potential relevant environmental consequences.	The Final EIS has a more detailed discussion of potential temporary impacts to freight rail operations.
403	Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Co.	7/26/2017	Written	HBT has a specific interest in the proposed project since construction and implementation of the NHHIP will likely impact HBT's rail facility and operations by its tenant railroads over its facilities. Such impacts may include encroachments upon HBT's right-of-way, re-routing or redirecting of existing rail lines and infrastructure, and disruptions to rail operations.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. TxDOT does not anticipate acquiring any railroad ROW and efforts will be made to avoid impacts to rail ROW.
403	Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Co.	7/26/2017	Written	For reasons discussed more fully below, while HBT is supportive of the proposed project as a whole, it opposes the Recommended Alternative identified in the Draft EIS to the extent that it impacts or potentially impacts HBT rail infrastructure and operations without any environmental analysis or feasible mitigations. Daily train operations are conducted over HBT's tracks by Union Pacific Railroad ("UP") and BNSF Railway ("BNSF"). HBT's West Belt line, although not clearly or correctly described in the Draft EIS, crosses I-10 and US-59 at the center of the downtown portion of the project. Although no details have been provided by TxDOT, it has generally told HBT that it will be impacted significantly and that, at a minimum, train operations will be ceased or delayed during some of the construction activity.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. TxDOT has worked to minimize impacts during design and efforts will be made to minimize impacts during construction.
403	Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Co.	7/26/2017	Written	HBT objects to the current status of the project and insists that the process mandated by NEP A requires much more detail than TxDOT has provided to HBT to date. The specific rail operations by BNSF and UP over HBT's affected tracks must be evaluated and a mitigation plan must be set forth by TxDOT after review and consultation with the affected railroads, BNSF, UP and HBT.	Comment noted.
403	Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Co.	7/26/2017	Written	HBT hereby incorporates by reference and adopts as its own the detailed written comments submitted to TxDOT this week on this project by Union Pacific Railroad, including the legal authorities discussed therein. HBT has always had a good working relationship with TxDOT's Houston District. We trust that will not change, as it is HBT's intent only to preserve its rights under NEPA by filing these comments. HBT supports the goal of the project and it looks forward to cooperation with TxDOT generally on the project, in proper and full compliance with NEPA.	The Final EIS has a more detailed discussion of potential temporary impacts to freight rail operations. I-45 currently bridges over the HB&T railroad tracks on the north side of I-610. No new ROW would be required from the railroad. Construction would not impede railroad operations. As with UPRR, TxDOT will continue to coordinate with HBT during the detailed design and construction.
404	Miller, Leticia	7/26/2017	Email	I request TxDOT modify its plans to permit connection to the I-45 expansion corridor. TxDOT must preserve or rebuild the existing Franklin St ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while staying within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connection keeping HST in the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
405	Miller, Nathanael	7/26/2017	Email	I request TxDOT modify its plans to permit connection to the I-45 expansion corridor. TxDOT must preserve or rebuild the existing Franklin St ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while staying within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connection keeping HST in the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
406	Navarro, Ken	7/26/2017	Project Website	I would like too see the current path of I-45 retained around the west side of downtown.	Alternatives with other configurations, including widening the existing I-45 around Downtown, were considered and were determined to be not feasible based on the traffic modelling results.
406	Navarro, Ken	7/26/2017	Project Website	I would also like to see the high speed rail link to dallas connect directly to downtown.	TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project. If this separate project moves forward, TxDOT will accommodate its design where possible, and will coordinate with the lead agency.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
407	Nickerson, Rev. Jerome C.	7/26/2017	Project Website	I am writing with concerns about the planned expansion of I-45 and its impact on the Independence Heights Community and surrounding areas. After receiving a letter from Ms. Tonya Debose and reading information on your website it appears that there has been ross negligence on your part to sufficiently address the potential impact that this project will have on them. History bears record that financially the government seldom provides adequate funding when property is taken by public domain. The community is made up of people and not just land and houses. You are not just uprooting houses at what you define as fair market value, but inclusive of that you are destroying history and peoples lives both young and old. At a time when we are undergoing revitalization of the community to keep current residents and attract new residents. I implore you to do the right thing and not the most expedient financial thing and meet with us and talk with us hear us out and work with us that we might work with you. As a former resident of the Independence Heights community I am a product and productive citizen born out of that community. I served my country in the Armed Forces, the Army, served in Viet Nam and returned to my community that I call home. I pastored in the community for 28 years not too far from where the project will take place. My grandfather, the late Rev. George Henry Nickerson, Sr., organized the Bella Vista Missionary Baptist Church on Airline Drive in an abandoned "beer joint" where lives were lost through violence and assaults often. He later relocated the church on 803 East 35th and it remains to date. This community has held the church in high esteem. Mount Olive Missionary has a 130+ history and was recently rebuilt from the ground up. The pastor and members were responsible for that bold move. Why? because lie anyone else they are proud of their history. When disaster strikes that community turns to the neighborhood churches for comfort, assistance and help. We are there to provide all three. It may not mean much to you and the Texas government but this community is like the San Jacinto monument which buttresses the skyline as a symbol to the struggle of our state. Our community was in fact a city unto itself, with mayors, city council members, commissioners, jail, and other amenities at that particular time. I recognize that progress is as much a part of life as life itself. But if the Alamo can stand as a symbol of our independence, then the African American communities must remain as symbols of progress for this state and other states. These communities have demonstrated over the years a strong will to survive despite very little help from governmental agencies. Pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and other currency raised this community from the pits of ambiguity to the stage of notoriety. Just minutes from downtown Houston no other community in Houston possesses that distinction. We ask that your would reopen the door for conversation in order that a meeting of the minds may take place and better understandings can be gained for both sides and not just a mandate.	TxDOT has met several times with Tanya Debose, Independence Heights Redevelopment Council, to discuss the community's concerns and interests, and has considered input received. TxDOT recognizes that the Greater Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church is associated with the history of the community and is a center for cultural and social activities, and that relocation of the church would be a disruption to the church congregation and affect access to the social activities it provides. TxDOT has met with the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council and extensively with the pastor of the Greater Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church to discuss relocation options for the church with the goal of finding a new location in the community. TxDOT has attempted to avoid the church in previous designs, but more recent communications from the pastor has indicated that relocation to a new area in the community is preferred. TxDOT is proceeding with advance acquisition of this property; advance acquisition would provide additional time for renovation or relocation of the place of worship. TxDOT will assign a relocation assistance counselor who will provide current listings of other available properties (if requested). At the request of the place of worship, a memorial plaque will be placed at its current location. TxDOT will coordinate with Greater Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church to create a community gathering spot on excess right-of-way at the former location of the church. The community gathering spot may include such things as a marker, mural, or landscaping. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
408	Petrini, Michael	7/26/2017	Project Website	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity while keeping high-speed transit within the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
409	Pohl, Robert	7/26/2017	Email	I request TxDOT modify its plans to permit connection to the I-45 expansion corridor. TxDOT must preserve or rebuild the existing Franklin St ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while staying within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connection keeping HST in the existing TxDOT right of way.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
410	Price, Stan	7/26/2017	Email	PLEASE Ensure any reconstruct to the I69/288/I45 interchange improves US59/I69 North and Southbound bottlenecks on SW side of downtown @ spur 527. Provide through interstate traffic lanes for vehicles traveling through downtown(not using 610 loop or beltways).	The proposed NHHIP would improved traffic flow at Spur 527 and highway mobility in the Downtown area.
411	Reynolds-Hausman, Tiko	7/26/2017	Project Website	The need for a public-transit (METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) connection between downtown and the 290/610 area will be even greater once the high-speed rail station is operational. TxDOT's current plans would demolish the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street (next to the old Post Office) needed for this connection. We request that TxDOT modify its plans to permit such a connection through the I-45 expansion corridor. Specifically, TxDOT must preserve or reconstruct the existing Franklin Street ramp for future METRORail and/or BRT service while remaining within TXDOT's existing right of way. This would support the goal of allowing for needed connectivity while keeping high-speed transit within the existing	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
412	Russo, Monica	7/26/2017	Project Website	Regarding the north Houston highway improvement project, please ensure there is an opportunity for high-capacity transit - a mode of transportation that will become increasingly more important as the population grows.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
413	Slavik, Alina	7/26/2017	Project Website	Please do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St. I live on the block of Tuam between Chenevert and 288. This is a great neighborhood that allows walkable and bikeable access to parks, restaurants, other local businesses, Downtown/Museum District/Montrose and beyond. It would have a negative impact on my neighbors and me to dump high-speed traffic between my block and the remainder of the area.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
414	Smith, Mindy	7/26/2017	Project Website	Please do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St in my neighborhood (Midtown). This will be a nightmare for homeowners & commuters in the area!	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
415	Trejo, Ma Perla Montero	7/26/2017	Project Website	I strongly object to designing the 288 Toll Lane ramps to be directed from / into Chenevert Street in Midtown. This area is surrounded by a very actively attended, quiet, and very safe community park with amenities for adults, children and pets. It is also sandwiched between a school and high density housing. Our kids walk to and from the Baldwin park. This is our residential neighborhood.This area is not conducive to channeling the high volume downtown sourced or destined, southbound destined or sourced rush hour morning and afternoon traffic onto the high occupancy tool lanes.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	All new roadway bridges over the new freeway expansion should have separated bike and pedestrian sidewalks with pedestrian friendly lighting. Requesting that Tx Dot to work with the adjoining communities on specific bridge designs and give the cultural arts district an opportunity to consider added art installations particularly on bridges into the cultural arts district located in First Ward.	Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. Lighting design is part of the final design process. TxDOT plans to coordinate with outside groups and organizations to seek input during detailed design. Safety is always a primary concern and is considered at all stages.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• Continue to protect the President Head statues and park titled Statesmen park adjacent to the freeway in First Ward as shown on current plans.	The Recommended Alternative would not impact the American Statesmanship Park.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• Tx Dot to ensure the bike path at Spring Street in First ward remains. Current plans show lanes on grade, and engineers were unable to clarify the design intent at the meetings. We are requesting roadways remain somewhat elevated to accommodate the bike pedestrian clearances facilitating connectivity from Northside to First Ward and Heights.	The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The Spring Street portion of the Heights Hike & Bike Trail that currently goes under I-45 and I-10 to connect to the White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail will be maintained.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• The roadway at 1201 Spring Street is shown to have more right of way for the expansion. Removing vehicular access along the road is a detriment to property access and again this area needs re-evaluation to maintain both the house and the access to the driveway etc.	The project design has been revised to eliminate taking of property from this parcel. This design change is included in the revised schematic design and the Final EIS.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• Work in and near the Trigas company at the exchange of I-45 and I-10 requires a safety plan for freeway demolition and construction to mitigate any potential for a gas explosion endangering adjacent communities and motorists.	TxDOT requires the construction contractors to have all gas lines and other underground facilities located ahead of construction and will follow procedures for marking such lines clearly to avoid construction activities that may impact these lines. Gas lines in conflict with the proposed construction will be relocated or adjusted ahead of construction activities to mitigate the conflicts. TxDOT requires a health and safety plan be submitted by their construction contractors for review and approval prior to beginning construction activities. These plans will require that the Trigas company facility be addressed in the plan for any work activities in close proximity to that facility or that might present a concern. The safety plan will address identification of properties and facilities of potential concern and will be required to address the approach for appropriate construction site notifications to construction personnel and proposed field markings near sensitive facilities. The plan will also address protocols for notifications and actions to be taken should an emergency situation occur.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• Tx Dot installed temporary stick bollards on the Houston Avenue Bridge driving lane which are a safety hazard. to create a temporary bike alternative path during recent ramp construction in this area. They are an extreme safety hazard as cars are driving over them mowing those down daily. They are not sufficient interim protection for pedestrians and cyclists. We request barriers that cars can't drive over.	Houston Avenue is a City street and the COH installed the current temporary stick bollards. Houston Avenue would be reconstructed as part of the proposed project and would include a buffer space between bike/ped accommodations and the roadway. Pedestrian and bicycle safety will be addressed in the detailed design phase of the proposed project.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• The new cap park north of I-10 and I-45 exchange has multiple feeder lanes and doesn't provide a safe way for pedestrian access from the neighborhood to the future cap park. The traffic should be slowed and signals provided that would allow pedestrians to cross safely.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• First Ward is requesting bike bridges be designed below the new fly ramps leading toward downtown, to provide a connection over the roadways for cyclists and pedestrians safely separated from cars. The purpose of the bike bridges extended below the new fly ramps is to provide connectivity from the current trails at Hogg Park/ Stude Park to Buffalo Bayou Park. Alternative methods of connectivity are important for inner city communities providing alternative safe methods of transportation. Many lower income residents must rely on bikes.	The existing Heights Bike Trail and White Oak Bayou Greenway trail will remain in place.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• Green sound walls versus concrete walls and utilizing suggested hardscape materials which absorb water to mitigate flooding in First Ward.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. Green sound walls and hardscape materials would have negligible impact on absorption of water.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• We want to see landscape plans that are sensitive to the residential communities adjacent to the freeway. We are requesting that trees and shrubs are planted to provide sufficient buffering of both the car traffic noise and the massive concrete visual of the freeway which is not compatible with the general expectations of residential neighborhoods.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• We want Tx Dot to continue to work with Metro and accommodate revisions as needed for the new capital improvement plans they are currently launching and likely to float bonds to meet mass transit needs. Mass transit initiatives should be part of the I-45 expansion concepts and not place any added burden of right of way on communities adjacent to the freeways.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible, and when a preferred alignment for future rail has been determined. TxDOT is also coordinating with the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) during the NHHIP development process.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• We support Pierce Skypark turning Pierce Elevated into a skypark.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
416	Villaescusa, Julie	7/26/2017	Project Website	• We support(either METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) from downtown to the anticipated high-speed rail station at 290/610 area. Mitigating routing through First Ward. Connector would be elevated over the main lanes of I-10 and route in the I-45 expansion corridor adjacent to First Ward. It is preferred to enter downtown at the current location of the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street which Tx Dot shows to demolition. We are requesting Tx Dot works with Metro to incorporate this plan without placing additional burden of right of way on adjacent communities. !	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
417	Stollmack, Hanna R.	7/26/2017	Project Website	I think we should focus on ensuring we can add public transportation in the future if not now! Having rails in the city will make it feel more like the big city that it is, decrease traffic, and ease the flow on the congested roads.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.
418	Wakefield, Raphael	7/26/2017	Project Website	As a resident of Houston and a former I-45 commuter from Galveston, I oppose unequivocally any effort to increase traffic lanes or otherwise expand capacity on I-45 or any in-the-loop highways. This is a self-perpetuating disaster that will only lead to more traffic, more air and noise pollution, more suburban sprawl, and an even more hazardous and inhumane pedestrian environment.	Comment noted.
418	Wakefield, Raphael	7/26/2017	Project Website	I do not see why I should subsidize the extraordinarily wasteful lifestyles of suburban commuters at a time when Houston is making steps towards becoming a walkable and bikeable city. The exurban growth this project promotes will result indirectly in the destruction of natural environments that can never be replaced, and put the entire state on the hook to maintain a roadway that will not pay for itself and indeed will represent a gigantic financial liability indefinitely into the future. The past investments made in roadways, water pipes, sewer, transit and electrical lines will be wasted, as more money is spent on supporting sprawl. Houston neither needs nor should it welcome this future.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	1. The NHHIP should provide and/ or reinforce connections between neighborhoods previously separated by the freeways and mitigate adverse impacts related to noise, air quality, storm water runoff, and historical, environmental, recreational or natural sites.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation including, but not limited to, METRO, City of Houston, and Bike Houston. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report includes more detail about coordination with stakeholders.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	2. The NHHIP should maximize multi-modal transportation and people and freight movement options by incorporating the highest safety and aesthetic standards possible for pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular interface within an urban context.	TxDOT is working with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. Safety will be a primary consideration. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. The proposed project does not include new at-grade railroad crossings, and it eliminates four existing at-grade crossings. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during design and construction to minimize impacts to existing transit operations.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	3. The NHHIP should maximize neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment opportunities in order to enhance the quality of life for all Houstonians and strengthen the city's tax base. This includes the disposition of TxDOT's surplus rights-of-way in order to prompt the appropriate, site specific development projects that access new conditions on all edges of downtown and throughout the NHHIP project limits.	TxDOT does not have authority to place such conditions on future use of surplus TxDOT right-of-way. TxDOT surplus property is advertised and sold directly to eligible Texas entities (other Texas state agencies, political subdivisions, and approved non-profit assistance organizations) or is auctioned online to the general public if eligible entities do not request it during the advertisement period. The Texas Facilities Commission, by state statute, administers the state surplus property program.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	4.TxDOT should provide appropriate mitigation and fair remuneration for displaced residents and businesses, especially those directly impacted by right-of-way acquisitions to the east and north of Downtown, and further northward in Segments 1 and 2 of the NHHIP.	If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process. When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion. Additionally, enhanced counseling and assistance for displaced residents will be available to facilitate the planning and transition associated with the relocation process. This program is outlined in Section 5.1.2.2 Residential Relocation Assistance discussion in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.

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419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	5. SH 288 managed lanes are proposed to enter surface streets in Midtown at Chenevert & Stuart Streets, with vehicles traveling through a relatively dense residential neighborhood. SH 288 is a growing commute corridor that needs more direct Downtown ingress/egress for daily and event traffic volumes. CHI requests TxDOT design and implement an alternative where SH 288 managed lanes directly utilize Chartres & Hamilton Streets, adjacent to the vertical-wall trenched portion of the future IH-69 and SH-288	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	6. Similar to the MaX lanes as proposed for IH-45 from Downtown's Milam & Travis Streets to Beltway 8, CHI requests TxDOT design the NHHIP with consideration for future Max lanes on IH-10 and IH-69 (including Spur 527 with direct service to Midtown and Downtown), such that high occupancy and transit vehicles have both Downtown direct connections and highway-to-highway interconnections, thereby serving multiple activity centers.	Extending Spur 527 through Midtown is being studied under a separate TxDOT study (Planning and Environmental Linkage Study: I-69 from Spur 527 to Beltway (BW) 8) (https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/houston/houston-pel-i-69.html). The results of this study will be integrated into NHHIP as appropriate. MaX lanes along I-10 is not feasible due to restrictions in ROW and ability to connect the MaX lanes to the I-45 MaX lanes.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	7. TxDOT, METRO and other governmental agencies should evaluate whether the existing IH-10 HOV connector should be repurposed as a direct connection between Downtown and the Northwest Transit Center potentially linking by transit the proposed High-Speed Rail terminal with the major activity centers of Downtown and Uptown.	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with Gulf Coast Rail District and/or Texas Central Railway if there is a proposal to bring rail along I-10 to the downtown area.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	8.Specific to the elevated portions of Segment 3 highways surrounding Downtown at the southeast I H-45 & 69 interchange, at the northeast I H-10 & 45 & 69 interchange, at the northern IH-10 & 45 realignment, and at the western reconstruction of the Downtown Connector, CHI requests TxDOT construct highway structures with minimal ground-level impact. CHI requests the implementation of segmented bridges and mono-point columns at the elevated highway and ramp areas. Particularly along the northern and western edges of Downtown where existing and future highway infrastructure crosses Buffalo and White Oak Bayous, the highest design and engineering should be utilized to result in the most visually attractive and aesthetically enhanced environment including as location appropriate signature bridge structures.	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project also significantly reduces the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT will coordinate with stakeholders during detailed design to identify opportunities to enhance open spaces and amenities along the bayous.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	9. TxDOT should collaborate across agencies and with the Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rail Road companies in the possible realignment or grade-separation of facilities within, adjacent to and in proximity to the NHHIP limits.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.
419	Taylor, Anne	7/26/2017	Email	10. As an alternative to use of sound walls as a noise abatement strategy, CHI requests that TxDOT incorporate grooved pavement and 2151-century next-generation concrete surfaces.	Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels. This pavement treatment will be placed on all non-elevated structures. Structures such as overpasses and elevated connectors will not have the longitudinal-tined pavement.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.1 -All existing sound barrier walls must be replaced. Past agreements to install sound barrier walls, must be installed as part of this project. 0.2- Sound Mitigation -There must be noise barrier walls for residential neighborhoods that are adjacent to the freeway, with landscape/beautification included. Consider a design that is appropriate for some of the oldest districts of Houston. Consider both vertical and horizontal caps and a slight inward angle towards the freeway instead of vertical walls to further remove sound from entering neighborhoods. 0.3- Utilize 'quiet pavement' techniques and materials to lower the sound decibel levels generated from the roadways.	0.1 Unless an existing noise barrier would be removed as part of the proposed improvements, TxDOT follows a standard FHWA-recommended process to evaluate the effectiveness of existing noise barriers. If an existing barrier is still providing reasonable and feasible abatement, then it typically will not be modified or replaced. For example, the analysis of the existing TxDOT noise barrier along I-610 between Fulton Street and Irvington Boulevard confirmed that this barrier continues to shield adjacent residences from traffic noise impacts, except in one area, where an extension to the existing wall is proposed. 0.2 A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. 0.3 Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.4- Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design to curb or prevent potential loitering and undesired spaces underneath highway bridges by allowing for appropriate lighting at night.	Requirements for lighting would be addressed during detailed design of the project. TxDOT's Highway Illumination Manual specifies procedures and requirements for the design of continuous and safety lighting systems, as set forth in state regulations.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.5 -It is vital to the economic stability and vitality of Houstonians that any and all proposed construction of this proposed infrastructure utilize the talents and skill of working men and women of our city. All contractors and subcontractors should be local, as well as, hire locally to stimulate our local economy and sustainability. Texas Department of Transportation should also invest in skill trainings at local community colleges and area high school to recruit talent from the neighborhoods where these projects are proposed	TxDOT will facilitate opportunities such as job fairs to promote hiring individuals from the local communities, for general employment and for project construction, such as job fairs. TxDOT will conduct at least two job fairs in each segment during the construction phase and will research opportunities to invest funds in a local workforce development program aimed at job readiness training prior to construction.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.6- Bridges, roads design, public art should be a reflection of the character of the communities the project is located in. These artists and their project proposals should be elected by the impacted communities.	Comment noted.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.7- Environmental groups like Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services should be consulted throughout the planning, construction, completion, and evaluation of these projects. It is important that these projects do not carry an added environmental burden to low-income communities.	TxDOT would consider input from Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services. TxDOT has evaluated potential project impacts to low-income and minority populations, and has designed the proposed project to avoid, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts as much as possible. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report documents the evaluation of impacts to low-income persons and communities, and others. As documented in that report, TxDOT commits to mitigation measures and other actions to reduce adverse impacts to low-income communities.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.8- TXDot, and the City of Houston must create Oversight Committees for each segment of the project. Members of the oversight committee should be made up of community residents, labor union representatives, environmental representatives, homeless advocates, business representatives, and local elected officials for the impacted communities.	There is currently no plan for oversight committees for NHHIP. TxDOT has offered and will continue to offer opportunities for public involvement and stakeholder input and will continue to coordinate with Cooperating and Participating Agencies and other interested parties.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.9- All bridges, roads, and infrastructure must be able to handle an increase in truck weight increase of 100,000 lbs since the 85th legislature has approved this measure. In addition, roadways must be able to handle a surge in the truck, freight industry by 2020, as demand and usage at the Port of Houston will impact truck increase.	Comment noted
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.10- Transparency is vital and important for every step of this project. I expect updates at City Hall and for our civic associations on projects, and delays. I also expect a repository for record keeping of this project at Houston Public Library for all segments of this project, and the creation of a department to handle complaints of labor abuse, resident concerns, accidents, and incidents in and around the areas of construction	Records for this project are maintained by TxDOT and will be available during construction. TxDOT will also have a public outreach program during construction to update communities on the project.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.11- Historical Site: Alacran Park at 512 McKee St Houston 77002 must be preserved. No exception. This site cannot be torn down or relocated.	The proposed project would not impact this park/site.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.12- Clayton Homes Residents must be consulted with in person. Clayton Homes Residents should be given every opportunity to remain at their current residence. They must be given the opportunity for housing equal or more affordable than their current residence, at a safe and secure location before asked to vacate their properties. They must have elected representation for the decisions to relocate throughout the relocation process. I expect TXDOT to work with City of Houston, and The Houston Housing Authority to ensure that the rights of residents at Clayton Homes are not violated.	TxDOT has been coordinating with Houston Housing Authority regarding potential impacts to Clayton Homes and Kelly Village. In May 2017, the Houston Housing Authority held meetings with residents to discuss the proposed project and the relocation process. Throughout 2019, TxDOT representatives met with Houston Housing Authority representatives to discuss advance acquisition of property and develop an agreement regarding replacement housing. Actions taken to mitigate impacts to Clayton Homes and Kelly Village are focused on ensuring that displaced residents of both communities are provided with multiple relocation options resulting in minimal disruptions to their lives. This includes eliminating the need to move multiple times, minimizing interruption to current employment and allowing children to remain in the same school district. Additional information is in Section 5.1.2.5 of the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.13- Dust particle mitigation process for all ongoing construction for this project. This can be water spraying during construction to reduce or eliminated dust particulate matter for impacted communities.	TxDOT will require the construction contractor to follow industry standards and utilize Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce dust particle mitigation during construction. Measures to control fugitive dust would be incorporated into the final design and construction specifications. To mitigate for potential short-term construction dust and/or noise impacts, TxDOT is developing a program to provide weatherization and energy efficiency for qualifying low-income single-family residences.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Throughout all Segments** 0.14 -Constant Air Monitoring for impacted communities due to increase of C02 due to lane expansions. Communities near current roadway infrastructure like I-45, I-10, 59 or 69, and 610 already face increased levels of C02, by expanding lanes this will increase C02 along with a surge in the trucking industry. Air monitoring is essential to ensure the quality of life for our residents, access to this data must be available to area residents online and by way of a public repository for such data. Please consult Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services.	Because carbon dioxide (CO2) is considered to be a global pollutant concern and not a localized pollutant concern, it is not clear whether the commenter meant to reference carbon monoxide (CO) instead. CO2 potential effects would be in how it contributes to global CO2 emissions and how those ultimately impact climate change. Localized monitoring of CO2 would not seem to provide any benefit to the public with regards to localized health-based awareness. CO, on the other hand, does have the potential to produce localized concentrations of concern but not in the case of this project and not to transportation projects in Houston for recent decades. CO is one of the bigger success stories of the Clean Air Act (CAA). EPA monitoring data (https://www.epa.gov/air-trends/carbon-monoxide-trends) indicate that from 1980-2017, CO has decreased by 84% nationally and 72% regionally from 2000-2017. In appendix D of the CO TAQA Technical Report, there is also a discussion of an existing near-road monitoring network which identifies that CO concentrations are much lower than applicable health-based standards throughout the country. The CO TAQA technical report demonstrates that a CO impact is not expected even assuming worst-case meteorology and receptors located on the right-of-way line. Also, in appendix D of that same technical report, there is a near-road monitor in Houston demonstrating CO levels far below the applicable health-based standards, and a discussion of the TCEQ Trends Report which models a continuing reduction in overall CO emissions into the future. TxDOT freeways and other facilities are designed to accommodate the projected traffic growth that is provided by the metropolitan planning organization (Houston-Galveston Area Council)(H-GAC). While there is the possibility of additional demand from the trucking industry related to improving area freeways, there is no direct correlation between new freeways or freeway expansions and a surge in truck traffic growth. The truck growth used in the NHHIP traffic models is consistent with the overall projected traffic growth, which ranges from 0.5-2.0%. The future daily truck percentages are consistent between No-Build (not building the NHHIP) and Build (building the NHHIP) and ranges between 3% and 11% depending on the corridor and location in the project area. This is consistent with the 10% historical truck traffic percentage of the overall traffic on a facility. For a minimum period of five years during construction, TxDOT will fund ambient air monitoring near the right-of-way at one location in Segment 2 and one location in Segment 3.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1 (610 to Beltway 8)** 1.1- Proposed plan has additional R.O.W. taken from the east side of I-45 south ofCrosstimbers. This eastside is populated by well-developed and thriving businesses, while the west side has many vacant or closed businesses. It is more desirable to utilize the additional R.O.W. from the WEST side in this section, instead of the east. Conflicts with floodway can be mitigated by retention I detention basins channel adjustments and by building above grade	It is not geometrically feasible to take additional ROW on the west of I-45 between Crosstimbers St. and I-610; this would make it impossible to create a safe interchange with I-610. Additionally, taking ROW from the west side of I-45 would cause significant residential displacements.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1 (610 to Beltway 8)** 1.2-There needs to be curb cut entrances from frontage roads so customers can gain access to businesses.	Existing driveways will be accommodated.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.1- All bridges removed and rebuilt (Cottage St., N.Main, North St.) should be rebuilt as architectural-styled bridges that have physically (concrete barrier, for example) separated, wide pathways for pedestrians and cyclists. They should have pedestrian friendly lighting. This section of I-45 passes through some of the oldest districts of Houston and the bridges should reflect that character. They should give our neighborhood a visual identity (similar in concept to the "red-ball" bridges over US-59 at Mandell, Dunlavy, Woodhead, Hazard). Perhaps a local Houston artist design submission that impacted communities can vote for?	The overpasses in NHHIP will have aesthetic treatments and all will include a wider pedestrian realm on both sides to safely separate pedestrian and bike traffic from vehicular traffic. Requirements for lighting would be addressed during detailed design of the project. TxDOT's Highway Illumination Manual specifies procedures and requirements for the design of continuous and safety lighting systems, as set forth in state regulations. TxDOT will work with communities to assess interest in lighting elements. Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting could be provided under agreements with local entities.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.2- Houston Ave. must continue to be a two-way street. Otherwise, it will force additional traffic onto neighborhood streets. Keep Houston Ave two lanes southbound, two lanes northbound and then a designated barrier-separated entrance ramp (at grade level) to I-45 south. This separated entrance ramp can be merged with additional vehicles from Houston Ave north bound (similar to current). This layout completely eliminates the dangerous cross-traffic intersection that is currently in place. By eliminating a two-way street you limit the neighborhoods access to emergency assistance vehicles necessary to the safety and health of the community	Houston Ave. will continue to be a two-way street with two lanes each direction, as it is today. Several options were explored to improve the interface between Houston Ave. and the existing ramp to I-45 south. A roundabout was found to be the most effective and safest solution.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.3 -When the N.Main Bridge is rebuilt, please design it to accommodate the increased traffic that will be directed there. Currently, eastbound traffic on N. Main waiting on the left rum light to go north, backs up into southbound feeder traffic. When engineering this bridge, consider a double tum lane left with better timed lighting. Increasing the width of this bridge may help and is possible since all main I-45 traffic lanes are depressed at this location	The overall operations of the N. Main St./Houston Ave. intersection will be improved with the proposed project. TxDOT will work with the COH during the design phase to optimize the Main St./Houston Ave. signal timings and operations.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.4- The proposed connector/service road from the 180 degree curve that connects from Houston Ave northbound to North St MUST be eliminated. This design will force passing traffic into residential neighborhoods, will destroy acres of green space/natural noise barriers and creates dangerous traffic patterns. By implementing 2.2 above, there is no purpose or need for this connector road. The construction of this road will also negatively impact school buses, METRO and create a traffic signal burden for the residents of this community to wait for the City of Houston to implement appropriate traffic controls to address incoming traffic. This connector/service road will also introduce high speed traffic in a neighborhood not use to elevated speeds in a residential community, creating the potential for a higher number of pedestrian casualties and automobile accidents.	Numerous ramping and access configurations for this area were studied. Eliminating this connector/service road will introduce additional traffic demand on Taylor St., Quitman St., and Houston Ave. The ramp will transition to a frontage road south of N. Main St. with appropriate warning signs and traffic controls implemented to warn drivers that they are approaching a signalized intersection.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.5- Retain the existing R.O.W. by adjusting the radius of the connector ramp that goes from I-45 northbound to 610 Eastbound, in the southeast quad rant of the 61 0 exchange. Proposed plans eliminate many recently constructed Avenue CDC affordable homes. Consider a double lane width, banking the roadway and lower ramp speeds by 3- 5 MPH.	To minimize ROW impacts, this connector ramp from I-45 northbound to I-610 eastbound was set at the minimum radius allowable and cannot be reduced any further.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.6- From south of Patton (approximately Melwood St.) to south of North St., I-45 will be depressed below grade level. TxDOT has agreed to construct a structure that will support eventual capping of these sections. I request that TxDOT puts the cap in place at the time of construction of this project. Costs for the project will be significantly less if it is done concurrent with the road project. Traffic and congestion will not be increased significantly as compared to doing it at a later date. Also any life safety, lighting or other issues can be engineered and implemented at a much lower cost if done simultaneously rather than at a future date.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.7 -I ask that TxDOT plant a large number of trees along the southbound feeder of I-45 along the eastern edge of Woodland Park for sound and visual insulation. TXDOT should consult with Arbor Tree Foundations for best possible outcome.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. The Draft EIS included a preliminary evaluation of noise and visual impacts. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. An addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report was prepared. Both documents are included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents anticipated noise impacts to Woodland Park as a result of the project. A noise barrier is proposed at Woodland Park.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.8- On I-45 northbound from I-10, the proposed plan shows only ONE (1) exit at N. Main/Houston Ave. Both #50A Patton and #50B Cavalcade/Link are being eliminated. We must have an exit near Cavalcade. Perhaps providing a "fly-over" exit ramp above the proposed entry ramp to northbound I-45, taking advantage of the elevation of the Patton overpass. Considering the flooding event on I-45 on May 25,2015 our neighborhoods cannot afford to eliminate exit ramps that serve as an escape route for cars stranded in highway flooding at I-45 and N. Main. Additionally, these exits are essential to the neighborhoods they feed into. By eliminating these exits we are faced with congested merging lanes at I-45 and N. Main causing a back traffic effect at peak drive [illegible]	The southbound North Main exit is being moved to avoid ROW displacements to the surrounding area while also meeting design criteria.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.9- On I-45 southbound from 610, the proposed plan has only ONE (1) exit at Quitman. We need another exit somewhere near Cavalcade. The current plan will greatly increase traffic though neighborhoods by anyone whose destination is in the northern section of Segment 2. A possible location would be an exit immediately north of Cavalcade. lfthis is not feasible, place a "ffy-over" exit to Patton Street above the proposed entry ramp from Cavalcade to southbound I-45.	The southbound North Main exit is being moved to avoid ROW displacements to the surrounding area while also meeting design criteria.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.10- On I-45 southbound, there is an exit for Link Road. Link Road is a 2 lane neighborhood street with only a stop sign. It is a local street not an arterial or collector street. This exit should not be at Link, it should be located closer to Cavalcade which IS designed as a major thoroughfare street.	The southbound exit ramp from I-45 to Calvalcade/N. Main passes over Link Rd and thus wiil not force exiting traffic through the Link Rd/I-45 southbound frontage road intersection.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.11 -The current plan shows the elimination of the Quitman entrance ramp going North on I-45. Current plans also show an increased usage of Quitman as an Exit from I-45 southbound. Most drivers wi ll expect an entrance Northbound close to an exit south bound. The only other entrance northbound is between Patton and Cavalcade. We would like the Quitman entrance northbound to remain, BUT the acceleration lane and lane merging onto I-45 N must be improved. In addition, the intersection at Quitman must be improved to accommodate the increased traffic that will be created and the additional connection to South St. maintained	This comment does not reflect the most recent set of design plans.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.12- There is a Hike and Bike Trail on little White Oak Bayou near Quitman- any changes to this area must not negatively affect the trail.	The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail along White Oak Bayou, south of Quitman St., will be maintained.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2 (I-10 to 610)** 2.13- On 610 heading west, the proposed exit is at Fulton. Keep the Fulton exit. Consult with area residents throughout the construction for this part of the project Lindale, and Greater Northside Management, Go Neighborhoods Near Northside.	This comment does not reflect the most recent set of design plans.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 West (Downtown)** 3.1 – I strongly support the Pierce SkyPark concept and request that TxDOT incorporate this concept at the Pierce Elevated. In particular, I would like to be able to use existing portions of the Pierce Elevated infrastructure for a hike-and-bike connectors, green spaces and parks. This will also provide a reduction in demolition costs to the project for TxDOT.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 West (Downtown)** 3.2 -I want connectivity from I-45 to and from Memorial Drive. Memorial Drive is an important East-West connector and needs to have connectivity with I-45. Without Memorial connectors, west side inner-loop residents will be adding to congestion on I-10, 610 and or US-59 while accessing I-45 North or South.	Like the current configuration of Memorial Dr., no direct access will be provided to or from the Downtown Connector. This will allow Memorial Dr. to retain its City of Houston designated functionality of moving high traffic volumes into and out of the downtown area.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 West (Downtown)** 3.3- There are numerous hike-and-bike trails in this area near the bayou. It is essential that TxDOT co-ordinates with the Houston Parks Board and the Buffalo Bayou Partnership to ensure enhancement and coordination of the all trails and pathways and to ensure replacement in kind of any damages to hike/bike trails/bridges and specialized landscaping. TxDOT should have a working session to integrate future bike planning and enhancement to coordinate efforts and minimize added cost to bike plans.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the Houston Parks Board and the Buffalo Bayou Partnership.

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422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 West (Downtown)** 3.4- Proposed plans show US-59 and I-45 will be depressed behind the George R. Brown Convention Center (at Lamar, McKinney, Walker, Rusk, Capital, Texas, Preston, Congress, Franklin, Commerce Streets). TxDOT has agreed to construct a structure that will support eventual capping of these sections. I request that TxDOT puts the cap in place at the time of this project Costs for the project will be significantly less if it is done concurrent with the road project Traffic and congestion will not be increased significantly as compared to doing it later. Also any life safety, lighting or other issues can be engineered and implemented at a much lower cost at the time of the road project as opposed to doing it later. TxDOT needs to work with city entities on public private partnerships to achieve this	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 West (Downtown)** 3.5- Revise plans to avoid added ROW at two areas in First Ward at Spring Street & Holly Street and Statesmen Park located at Edwards and Bingham. There is existing ROW on the east to avoid this issue.	The project design was revised to avoid the need for new ROW at the two locations noted.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 West (Downtown)** 3.6- TxDOT should be meeting and incorporating the possibility of both High Speed Rail (Texas Central Railway) and Commuter Rail (Gulf Coast Rail District) into downtown from the I-10 west corridor. Although the projects may not be timed with TX Dot construction, residents want all entities working together on transportation to keep high speed transportation in one corridor and not routed through residential neighborhoods. Particularly the I-10-45 interchange and south bound corridor into downtown part of this plan. It is impossible to continually widen freeway lanes and, at some point, commuter rail will be needed.	TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project and METRO's desire to include BRT in the I-10 corridor to connect downtown to the HSR station. As part of a separate project, TxDOT is studying incorporating transit into the I-10 corridor in between I-610 and downtown.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 West (Downtown)** 3.7- Maintain current speed limits on Houston Avenue in residential areas. Consider coordination of green esplanades to maintain traffic control of speeds in residential area of First Ward.	The City of Houston determines speed limits on city streets.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 West (Downtown)** 3.8 - Drainage and flooding - TxDOT should be meeting with Harris County Flood Control to understand the anticipated future issues with flooding given the growth rate on the westside of the expansion. Detention requirements should be based on projections of the actual project life span and not the time that the project is being designed.	HCFCD is a participating agency for this project and will also review the NHHIP design plans to confirm compliance with HCFCD's criteria and policies. TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. The proposed project will include necessary stormwater detention, per design criteria in effect at the time of the project design; the project lifespan is not applicable to detention requirements.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.9- Provide sufficient ingress and egress for high volumes of traffic entering public facilities including the GRB, Minute Maid Park, Discovery Green Park and adjacent courts area. Proposed plans do not appear to be adequate for the number of large trucks or thousand's in attendance. Proposed plans do not reflect the increase in truck weight limits to 100,000 lbs. Ensure that any new construction to roadways, bridges, on and off ramps are equipped to handle the increase in truck weight over for short, and long periods oftime due to traffic, congestion, and an increase in rail to road commerce by 2020.	Comment noted. Access to the George R. Brown and other venues will improve with continuous Hamilton St.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.10 – TxDOT should coordinate with a Downtown oversight committee made up of community residents, business representatives, homeless advocates, affordable housing representatives, and environmental groups to determine which streets and feeds from the freeway work in this area. This committee should be consulted with to address issues on both sides of the expansion near the GRB. The members of this committee must be made public, and should be accessible for community at large.	There is currently no plan for oversight committees for NHHIP. TxDOT has offered and will continue to offer opportunities for public involvement and stakeholder input and will continue to coordinate with Cooperating and Participating Agencies and other interested parties.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.11 -Work with Greater North Side oversight committee made up of community residents, university representatives, business representatives, homeless advocates, affordable housing representatives, and environmental groups and leaders from that area to review the connectivity and freeway access on the segment near the University of Houston at the alignment with I-10. Consider equitable land trading where University of Houston is losing large areas of future growth. Tx DOT is abandoning adjacent areas that could be future growth for U of H. The members of this committee must be made public, and should be accessible for community at large	There is currently no plan for oversight committees for NHHIP. TxDOT has offered and will continue to offer opportunities for public involvement and stakeholder input and will continue to coordinate with Cooperating and Participating Agencies and other interested parties.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.12 –I suggested to extend the freeway depression further to Holman Street and entertain cap park connection where U of H and Texas South em connect into midtown. These areas are campus areas and being able to move people over the freeway via bike and pedestrian is important.	The proposed cap behind the GRB cannot extend further south from Lamar St. due to conflicts with the relocated I-45 reconnecting to I-45 Gulf Freeway. The area south of Pierce Elevated will be reconstructed with aesthetic bridges replacing the existing McGowen, Tuam and Elgin bridges. These bridges will have bike/pedestrian accommodations.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.13 - TxDOT needs to coordinate with City of Houston Planning Department to provide easy access to all freeway expansion projects. Citizens should have easy access to projected freeway expansion plans that are easily understood. Plans should also be made available in Spanish. 20% of our public is Spanish Speaking in Harris County.	TxDOT provides language translation assistance. Although the schematic design exhibits are not produced in Spanish, Spanish translators were available to answer questions at all public meetings (held from 2011-2015) and the public hearings held in May 2017. Spanish-speaking TxDOT staff have been and are available to discuss the project with all interested persons. You and others can contact the TxDOT Public Information Office at (713) 802-5076 or at HOU-piowebmail@txdot.gov for assistance.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.14- Review and coordinate with the Hardy Toll Road extension to provide access into downtown. It is detrimental that any future construction with Hardy Toll Road extension also incorporate input from North and South Cavalcade Superfund site leadership in conjunction with EPA, TCEQ and Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services to review and evaluate construction around and near hazardous zones. Contact and involvement with N. and S. Cavalcade Superfund leadership has not been done with residents in the area. Any and all minutes from meetings should be made available for the leadership ASAP. Contact www.Tejasbarrios.org to speak to a representative in that area.	TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with HCTRA. The proposed NHHIP accommodates the future extension of Hardy Toll Road to Downtown. The Hardy Toll Road is the responsibility of HCTRA.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.15- There needs to be access lanes to the freeway where Scott Street has been removed.	This is not in the project area.

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422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.16- Review the convention center cap park to cap during construction similar to comments made in segment 2. I request that TxDOT puts the cap in place from Lamar St. to Commerce, as shown on proposed plans, at the time of construction of this project. Costs for the project will be significantly less if it is done concurrent with the road project. Traffic and congestion will not be increased significantly as compared to doing it later. Also any life safety, lighting or other issues can be engineered and implemented at a much lower cost at the time of the road project as opposed to doing it later. TxDOT needs to work with city entities on public private partnerships to achieve this.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
422	Arellano, Deyadira	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 (East)** 3.17- Coordinate with Metro Light Rail and allow connectivity over bridges that are being planned in the future. Special planning is required in the vicinity of the convention center rail line and the Burnett station.	TxDOT has coordinated extensively with METRO and will continue to do so during detailed design and construction.
423	Houston Parks Board	7/26/2017	Written	**White Oak Bayou Greenway** The White Oak Bayou Greenway is part of Bayou Greenways 2020, a $220 million public/private investment by the City of Houston to provide continuous linear parks, with hike/bike trails, along 150 miles of Houston's major waterways. The White Oak Bayou Greenway extends over 15 miles from the city limits to UH Downtown where a federally funded TIGER project, currently under construction, is connecting White Oak Bayou Greenway to Buffalo Bayou Park. That TIGER project also includes neighborhood connections to Main Street and Leonel Castillo Community Center at Hogg Park, plus bike wayfinding to the transit centers on Fulton. It represents the kind of complete community effort that Houston is working toward and federal funding champions. The 1,100 feet of White Oak Bayou Greenway from the current I-45 overpass at UH-Downtown west to Hogg Park is completely open to the sky and the bayou except for small under-crossings at the rail bridge and Hogan Street. The linear park features wildflowers and a hike-and-bike trail maintained by HPB. It offers amazing views of downtown. We are very concerned that the sense of open space will be negatively impacted by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. The project will extend seven new highway overpasses over the greenway's widest stretch. Currently, only the existing I-45 overpass impacts the greenway, and because it sits right against the massive UH-Downtown building, it is more part of the urban infrastructure. The new overpasses will create an intrusion into the landscape. Moreover, additional lanes parallel to the bayou encroach further into the south side of the greenway to the point where they impose on the bayou itself. The DEIS appears to suggest that if the project maintains just the hike-and-bike trail, no impact results. That ignores the impact to the greenway and open space itself of which the hike-and-bike trail is just a component. The project eliminates that open space. While the project will remove some freeway, HPB estimates a net increase of 18 acres of open space effectively covered by the project in just the stretch between UH Downtown and Hogg Park. The DEIS does not identify this as an impact, but it certainly is one, and the DEIS should offer alternatives or mitigation to minimize that impact.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to maintain existing open space and replace affected open space by creating new open space where feasible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. Impacts to parks, open spaces along the bayous, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some resources are likely unavoidable. The proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou and the existing hike/bike trail would remain. The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The impact would be primarily aerial (bridges over the open space), with some columns to support the bridges. The function of the White Oak Bayou greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the greenway area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the White Oak Bayou greenway in the area of the NHHIP is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH. Aesthetic improvements along Heights Bike Trail between Taylor Street and Main Street will be provided (coordinated by TxDOT with Houston Parks Board and other entities). Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping. Visual impacts were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on the viewscape in some areas are likely unavoidable. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the during detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design, where feasible.
423	Houston Parks Board	7/26/2017	Written	**Freed, Woodland, and Other Parks** The DEIS identifies less than one acre of impact to City of Houston Parks. It dismisses that impact as related to marginal greenspace rather than the "use of facilities." HPB calculates the total loss of open space in City parks at 3.27 acres (table attached). Thus, as it does with the greenways, the DE IS dismisses the impact to green space and open space as non-existent if the project does not impact active features of the park. The greenspace impacted is the park and therefore should be recognized as such regarding mitigation.	The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions. The project complies with the relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation.
423	Houston Parks Board	7/26/2017	Written	**Little White Oak Bayou Greenway** Through a study called Beyond the Bayous funded by the Houston Endowment, HPB has been actively identifying opportunities for expanded open space and hike-and-bike connectivity. In a sense, Beyond the Bayous is even more difficult than Bayou Greenways in that it seeks to retrofit the city around the existing connectivity barriers created by freeways, major arterials and railroads. Little White Oak Bayou represents a prime opportunity to extend open space connectivity north from White Oak Bayou Greenway to Woodland and Moody Parks and beyond up to Halls Bayou. The 20 lanes at I-45 will eliminate 10 acres of open space along Little White Oak Bayou. We are currently in the process of expanding the Bayou Greenways network to include Little White Oak Bayou from I-10 to at least Crosstimbers with an extension to Acres Homes, an area of the city not currently served by trails. This connection would benefit many of the underserved communities directly impacted by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. Through most of Segment 2, the project follows the course of the Little White Oak Bayou. An old TxDOT trail runs north from Moody Park along the bayou.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to replace affected open space by creating new open space where possible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
423	Houston Parks Board	7/26/2017	Written	**Little White Oak Bayou Greenway** [CONT] We recommend the DEIS be supplemented with specific design features to preserve the ecological values and open space potential of Little White Oak Bayou including: a. Providing bridge spans and trail underpasses where I-45 crosses Little White Oak Bayou; b. Building a continuous shared-use trail from Woodland Park to Crosstimbers; c. Designing detention basins to be fully-functioning recreational green spaces along the greenway; d. Providing for a safe trail corridor through the I-610 interchange; e. Coordinating land acquisition to maximize green space, especially north of I-610; f. Spanning Halls Bayou to preserve the opportunity for extending the Halls Bayou Greenway; g. Provide meaningful connections to dedicated, on-street bike connections feeding into the Little White Bayou as identified in the Houston Bike Plan; and h. Maximizing public access and park opportunities for any highway decking through the Woodland Heights neighborhood. Many of these comments were included in previous letters we sent to you on December 3, 2013 and May 29, 2015, during the scoping process (enclosed). We have also enclosed a few diagrams to demonstrate our above points.	a. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. b. TxDOT will accommodate space for a trail that may be developed by others as a separate project. c. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. d. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. e. TxDOT can only purchase ROW for transportation purposes, not for open space. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. TxDOT is proposing a large detention basin north of I-610 adjacent to the bayou. f. TxDOT will coordinate with COH during detailed design to accommodate an alternate route across I-45 in this area, if the proposed trail crossing proves to be not feasible. g. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. TxDOT is working 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. h. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing the park concepts for each of the deck areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
424	Bayer, Katrina	7/27/2017	Email	I am a homeowner in the Fourth Ward; I typically walk or take transit to my job (located in Downtown). Considering the expense and unsightly nature of noise barriers (aka noise walls), the Fourth Ward and surrounding neighborhoods respectfully request that TxDOT evaluate the feasibility of incorporating sound attenuating devices into the roadway, as noise abatement measures, particularly for the Downtown Connector. Such devices might include using longitudinal cuts in the pavement and/or other next-generation roadway surfaces.	Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels. This pavement treatment will be placed on all non-elevated structures. Structures such as overpasses and elevated connectors will not have the longitudinal-tined pavement.
424	Bayer, Katrina	7/27/2017	Email	Can the Direct Connector on the west side of Segment 3 be envisioned to incorporate the following? • A bike/pedestrian connection to the Fourth Ward along Andrews street • A bike/pedestrian connection between Midtown and the bayou along the Heiner St. The residents of Fourth Ward urge TxDOT to provide strong bike/pedestrian connections between Fourth Ward, Downtown, Midtown, and the bayous.	1. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated. 2. In response to requests from stakeholders, TxDOT revised the design to provide additional space for a shared-use path along Heiner Street between Bagby and Dallas Street. The path itself will be constructed on this additional space by organizations other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of this path. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
424	Bayer, Katrina	7/27/2017	Email	As presently configured, the West Dallas Bridge over IH-45 is one of the most pleasant highway pedestrian interfaces in the entire city, serving as a critical connection between the Fourth Ward and Downtown. Unless great care is taken in the design of the proposed West Dallas connection under the Downtown Connector, the Fourth Ward may lose pedestrian access to Downtown. Please explore opportunities to make the newly at grade W. Dallas connection feel comfortable, safe, and inviting, where it travels under the Downtown Connector. Can TxDOT explore opportunities to make the newly at grade W. Dallas connection feel comfortable, safe, and inviting, where it travels under the Downtown Connector?	TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
426	Betty	7/27/2017	Project Website	Please maintain the exit off of I-10 east at Jensen drive. We cannot afford to leave that access to 5th ward area as we have lost enough commercial businesses due to freeway construction. Moreover, we are generally NOT PLEASED that TXdot is contemplating lowering bridges in this area. I live at Hirsch and Kelly St. The bridge near Kelly and Hardy is a primary indication of what we should expect with lowered bridges. During even the smallest volume of rain, that bridges is blocked for access.	Proposed access improvements include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. TxDOT is not lowering bridges in this area.
427	BikeHouston	7/27/2017	Email	Design standards for bicyclists and pedestrians need to be set to reflect the Houston Bike Plan's high comfort commitment.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.

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427	BikeHouston	7/27/2017	Email	At the proposed box/beam structure behind the GRB, connectivity is diminished between downtown and southeast Houston on Rusk, Capital, Leeland, Commerce Street, and Polk Street is entirely removed. **Southeast Houston is a historically under resourced area, and an area that relies on their bikes to safely travel throughout the city.** Crossings at these points need to be designed delicately to a high comfort level complete with physical barriers, pavement markings, signage, and a continuation of the Bike Plan's programmed projects to build these streets out as dedicated on-street bicycle lanes. Please consider sustaining these important connections, especially the Polk Street connection, as it connects to the Harrisburg and Columbia Tap trails. • The Box/Beam Cap: The purpose of the Box/Beam Cap's throughout the project is unclear. If indeed the purpose is to mitigate the loss of usable green space, the segments of streets that are united by caps need to be continuous. Specifically, the caps from Main Street to San Jacinto should be united.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. Box/Beam Cap: The structural cap limits in this area were revised after the public hearing based on the results of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 502 Design Standards) study. The maximum allowable cap limits are 410'. This allows for caps between Main Street and Fannin Street and in the area of the Caroline Street/Wheeler Street intersection. The revised schematic shows the updated design.
427	BikeHouston	7/27/2017	Email	This bayou section is an important piece of the expanding high comfort bicycle network that provides connectivity from outside the N Loop 610, under I-45 away from traffic, and into downtown making further east and west connections through Buffalo Bayou. Acknowledgement of this bayou as a pleasing and necessary connector for bicyclists, pedestrians, and naturalists is unaddressed in this design. **Full access to Little White Oak Bayou needs to be maintained and carefully designed with high comfort bicycle and pedestrian crossings.** Similar to the Eastward plans, surrounding neighborhoods are historically under-served and connections via bicycle and on foot are measurably significant.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to maintain existing open space and replace affected open space by creating new open space where feasible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. Impacts to parks, open spaces along the bayous, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some resources are likely unavoidable. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design
427	BikeHouston	7/27/2017	Email	**Connections on Crosstimbers, Victoria/Lyerly, Tidwell Rd., Cortlandt/E Witcher, Rosamond, W Parker Road, Rittenhouse, and others need to be designed with high comfort intersection design for bicyclists and pedestrians.** This is a vital connection for the Independence Heights, Garden Oaks, Oak Forest and Acres Homes areas to safely reach both Little White Oak Bayou and the Red Line into downtown.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
428	Blake, Frank	7/27/2017	Project Website	I support a "no action" alternative. I find the proposed impacts to downtown Houston horrific. I am dismayed that so many billions of dollars will be spent on mega-freeway road infrastructure in an age of climate change, when other cities around the world are adopting transportation projects focusing on public transit that aim to reduce carbon emissions.	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high-capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
428	Blake, Frank	7/27/2017	Project Website	I would much rather see these dollars spent on transit development in the Houston region. It is past time for a city the size of Houston to invest in real transit options, not just bigger freeways. And I detest driving on MEGA-freeways. They are ugly, bad for the environment, bad for neighborhoods, and inherently inefficient for moving people around in an urban environment.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

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428	Blake, Frank	7/27/2017	Project Website	Any benefit that is achieved by eliminating the Pierce Elevated is outweighed ten times over by the huge chasm that will be created that will separate downtown from the east end.	Connectivity between the east side of Downtown and central Downtown is currently limited due to the George R. Brown Convention Center, where several east-west streets do not extend from the east side of US 59/I-69 into Downtown. The proposed project would reconstruct Hamilton Street to be a continuous southbound street adjacent to US 59/I 69 between Commerce Street and Leeland Street, which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker streets) that were previously cut off when the George R. Brown Convention Center was constructed. This would improve access between Downtown and neighborhoods to the east.
428	Blake, Frank	7/27/2017	Project Website	This concentration of roadways will impact the immediate neighborhoods with auto pollution and particulate matter pollution.	Any increased air pollutant or MSAT emissions resulting from increased capacity, accessibility and development are projected to be more than offset by emissions reductions from EPA's fuel and vehicle standards or addressed by EPA's and TCEQ's regulatory emissions limits programs. The project is included in the regional conformity determination for the area. Transportation conformity is a State Implementation Plan (SIP) requirement. The SIP contains measures for attaining the NAAQS. The project-level carbon monoxide traffic air quality analysis (CO TAQA) demonstrates that the project will not exceed the applicable health-based CO standards. The mobile source air toxics (MSAT) analysis indicates a downward trend in emissions over time. TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix D of the CO TAQA and Appendix C of the MSAT Technical Reports (in the Final EIS), regarding: 1) overall status of air quality in the greater Houston area, 2) mobile source air emission projections for Harris County, 3) ambient air monitoring for NAAQS and air toxics for the greater Houston area, 4) TCEQ toxicology assessment and Trends Report for the greater Houston area, 5) an EPA Study Assessing Outdoor Air Near Schools, and 6) national near-road monitoring data. The Final EIS, CO TAQA and MSAT Technical Reports and associated supplemental information do not identify adverse impacts associated with air quality. Considering the success of the SIP, conformity, and other regulatory controls in reducing historical monitored criteria pollutant (including PM) and MSAT (including diesel PM) concentrations, future modeling projecting continued criteria pollutant and MSAT reductions, and the project analyses not demonstrating any air quality impact; the quality of life with regards to air quality is not expected to worsen.
428	Blake, Frank	7/27/2017	Project Website	And I wonder about the wisdom of having a junction where all three major freeways, I-10, I-45, and I-69 come together at the same point. This could make all three roadways vulnerable to a major accident, severe weather event, act of terrorism, etc. Let's NOT do this!	Although the freeways run parallel to each other for certain segments, they do not overlap, but are rather connected through ramps between the freeways. The current configuration was the most effective alternative at eliminating sections where drivers would need to weave into and out of lanes to get where they need to go. Analysis of this configuration shows a crash reduction by at least 30%.
429	Burkhardt, J.	7/27/2017	Written	1. Keep Blodgett open two- way. Need more local route options, not fewer 2. Take frontage to Wheeler to get traffic to Fannin/San Jac couplet (?) 3. new southbound ramp to relieve back at Richmond/Spur	1. TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain. 2. Extending the southbound frontage road to Wheeler was explored, but would create a mid-block intersection, with two intersections close to each other, not meeting design criteria and increasing congestion. 3. This was evaluated but is not feasible due to geometric design criteria; cannot connect to Fannin St. or San Jacinto St. because the depressed section constrains connectability. To accommodate southbound US 59 (I-69) as described would cause severe displacement impacts.
430	Burkhardt, Jerry	7/27/2017	Project Website	Comments regarding project east of Spur 527, Segment 3 1. Keep Blodgett St. open, two-way (with turn lanes), between Main and San Jacinto St. Align north bound 59 exit at Main with Blodgett. Need more local route options, not fewer, because of delays with Metrorail. 2. Take North frontage road of 59 continuous to Wheeler St.(Instead of dead-ending at Caroline) Make traffic easier to get to Fannin/San Jacinto Couplet for access to Med Center/Downtown. 3. Would be helpful for new South bound 59 access at San Jacinto (or Fannin) to relieve backup at South bound Spur 59 access from Richmond. Could be done in block south of Wheeler, between Fannin and San Jacinto or, just west of Fannin, next to Metro Bus Transit Center. Merge on 59 South could get a borrowed lane by reducing North bound by one lane (to be picked up after San Jacinto entrance ramp 59 North bound.	1. TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain. 2. Extending the southbound frontage road to Wheeler was explored, but would create a complex mid-block intersection with Caroline and was dropped from further consideration. 3. A ramp similar to what you show was considered, but will not meet required design/safety criteria due to adjacent constraints.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	Segment 1 ● Consider the effects of induced demand from a wider freeway. The experience with the I-10 widening shows that congestion is not mitigated and travel times are not reduced. Please consider redesigning this segment to stay within the existing Right of Way.	Alternatives analysis studied multiple solutions for Segment 1, including trying to stay within existing right-of-way. This was determined to not be feasible, due to the need to accommodate the four MaX Lanes that were added to address the purpose and need for the project.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 2 • The proposed redesign impacts Little White Oak Bayou extensively. Please Include bike trails along the bayou north of Quitman St. and from Cottage St. to Crosstimbers St. Coordinate with The City of Houston and the Houston Parks Board for a complete trail. Reference the City of Houston Bike Plan.	The analysis in the DEIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 2 • Please consider keeping the North Street crossing. The proposed northbound braided ramp could be moved south to resolve the conflict.	To elevate I-45 above the 100-year base flood elevation in the vicinity of the Little White Oak Bayou crossing, the North Street bridge must be removed. N. Main St. will be the nearest street (to existing North St. bridge) to cross I-45 and will have pedestrian-bicycle accommodations. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. Any trail will be constructed by entities other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of a proposed trail. TxDOT will continue to evaluate the design of frontage roads, which will be further refined during detailed design. The bridge cannot be moved south in this area.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 2 • Consider removing U-turns at Cottage Street and Main Street and extend the park area. The feeder road should be one or two lanes at most in each direction and there should be slow design speeds and HAWK beacons for ease of access to the park.	The design of the Cottage St. crossing includes accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians and the U-turns at Cottage St. were removed from the schematic design to promote safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings per coordination with the adjacent neighborhoods. HAWK beacons will be considered during detailed design.

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431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 2 • Consider moving the Cavalcade northbound off-ramp south to allow for vehicles turning right to merging easier. • Consider adding northbound on-ramps to I-610 North of Cavalcade. • Consider keeping the both the on-ramp and off-ramp west of Irvington Blvd. They could be redesigned as overpasses to feed directly into I-610 without interfering with vehicles turning to I-45	1. There is not enough space and the current ramp location meets design criteria. 2. There is not enough space in this area to accommodate a northbound on-ramp. 3. The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 3 • There is a glaring lack of connectivity from downtown to the Near Northside. Access to downtown via all other directions is improved, except to the North. The Near Northside is a mostly low income and minority neighborhood and continuing the isolation from jobs and city resources exacerbates environmental injustice.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design will minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto St. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	• To address this consider extending the depressed section of I-10 and I-45 west to Main Street. Along with a depressed UPRR it would allow for at-grade street crossings of at least San Jacinto/Fulton and possibly Main Street. A park area cap could be designed as well.	Segments 2 and 3 operate as one giant interchange and interchanging 3 interstates with the planned Hardy Toll Road extension requires the freeways to be at different levels to meet required geometric and safety criteria. Therefore, we could not make the entire section depressed, but we were able to keep the existing depressed section.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 3 • Alternatively design for a San Jacinto/Fulton bike trail at-grade crossing. While vehicle at-grade crossings are not prefered by the Gulf Coast Rail District, the bike crossing at Sherman St. has been successful. This connection is outlined in the City of Houston Bike Plan.	City streets are the responsibility of the City of Houston.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 3 • Coordinate with Metro to allow for pedestrian connectivity from UHD to the Burnett Transit Center.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 3 • Coordinate with the City of Houston to restore the original street grid in warehouse district. (See attached exhibit)	TxDOT is aware that COH is evaluating reworking or converting the street network and TxDOT will accommodate the COH's plans where possible.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 3 OTHER • Realign ROW at the intersection of chevernet and Francis St. Remove the cut-through section to make the block whole. • Consider removing Spur 529 and restitching the grid. The on-ramp would start at Blodgett St. and the off ramp at Main St. The HOV on-ramp would start at Fannin St. and HOV off-ramp at San Jacinto.	1. Francis St. is a city street and the responsibility of the City of Houston. 2. HOV ramps could not accommodate the needed traffic capacity that Spur 529 currently handles.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	SEGMENT 3 OTHER • For the East End Depressed Section. Consider depressing the roadway farther south, removing the Leeland St. crossing, but allowing Polk St. crossing to remain. The cap would at Polk and end in Commerce St. Every cross street should be for ped/bike only. (similar to Harwood St. in Klyde Warren park). The only exceptions being Texas and Franklin since they provide connectivity to Harrisburg and Navigation. The feeder road should be one or two lanes at most in each direction and there should be slow design speeds and HAWK beacons for ease of access to the park.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	OTHER GENERAL • For all feeder/frontage roads in urban areas: o The design philosophy should focus on all road users with slow car speeds. o Use NACTO's Urban Street Design Guide as a reference. o The design should conform to the City of Houston's Infrastructure Design Manual and match the existing layout on both ends. (ie. 11 ft lanes, no right turn slip lanes, small curb radii, and protected bike lanes as called on COH bike plan)	1. Comment noted 2. TxDOT uses AASHTO standards for frontage roads. City streets requiring reconstruction will be designed per City of Houston design standards. 3. City streets requiring reconstruction will be designed per City of Houston design standards. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	OTHER GENERAL • If appropriate, allow detention areas to also serve as park facilities.	Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
431	Bustamante, Jorge	7/27/2017	Email	OTHER GENERAL • Transportation-as-a-Service Autonomous Vehicles will become a reality in the near future. Consider flexible design elements wherever possible to accommodate for them.	The proposed NHHIP includes managed lanes on I-45 that will be for use by high-occupancy vehicles such as buses and other vehicles with more than one passenger. These lanes can be used in the future by autonomous vehicles.
433	Calhoun, Jessica	7/27/2017	Project Website	Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood! This would be a drastic increase in traffic in a residential and school neighborhood. The existing traffic flow onto. Chenevert from 288 is already heavy during rush hour and presents its on set of risks for home owners and students.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
434	Campa de Hoyos, Dora	7/27/2017	Email	Interstate 45 already serves as an obstruction and obstacle to many in our community. It is both a visual and physical barrier. It is an unfortunate truth that highway projects of this scale often harm the communities they pass through, especially low income neighborhoods such as ours. We the Melrose Civic Club support Northline Leadership Team.	The proposed project would not create a new barrier between neighborhoods. The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. In Segment 2, the highway cap over the proposed depressed lanes of I-45 would create the opportunity for improved connectivity in the area of the depressed section of the freeway between the Near Northside and the Greater Heights neighborhoods. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements. There are multiple examples where the proposed project will remove physical barriers and add new connections to improve connectivity (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) between minority and/or low-income communities. Additional information is included in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the during detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. Additionally, there are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping.
435	Campa de Hoyos, Dora	7/27/2017	Email	The intersection at I-610 and Fulton is currently a traffic problem with East and West bound traffic lights on the 610 frontage road having wait times of over 10 minutes due to the METRO rail crossing. The connection of the frontage roads at the 610 & 45 interchange will only exasperate traffic issues at this intersection.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
436	Campa de Hoyos, Dora	7/27/2017	Email	Norhtline residents are opposed to any kind of street connection of Helmers North and South of 610. Helmers is a residential street with a elementary school just North of the freeway. Connecting this street under the freeway would create unsafe traffic volumes for the neighborhood.	Helmers St. is outside the project limits and is a city street. The proposed NHHIP does not include any work at Helmers St.
437	Campa de Hoyos, Dora	7/27/2017	Email	Connections on Crosstimbers, Victoria/Lyerly, Tidwell Rd., Cortlandt/E Witcher, Rosamond, W Parker Road, Rittenhouse, etc need to be designed with high comfort intersections for bicyclists and pedestrians.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
438	Carleton, Geoff	7/27/2017	Project Website	I write this note as a supplement to the comments I previously submitted to TxDOT. The main comment I want to make is that I hope that TxDOT takes the same level of care in finding creative solutions to minimize impacts of segments 1 & 2 as they have in engaging stakeholders in Segment 3. The impact on single family housing in a neighborhood like Independence Heights, which stands to loose over 100 homes, could be devastating to their revitalization effort.	Since publication of the Draft EIS, TxDOT has conducted additional meetings with stakeholders in all areas of the project, including Segments 1 and 2. TxDOT met with the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council, elected officials, residents, and others to discuss the community's concerns and suggestions, and has considered input received. TxDOT understands that some homes in Independence Heights are identified in a floodplain buyout program. The proposed NHHIP would displace and relocate 27 single-family residences and 138 multi-family residential units. TxDOT's relocation assistance program for the NHHIP will provide the opportunity for residents who would be displaced by the proposed project to relocate within the community if they so choose. Additionally, enhanced counseling and assistance for displaced residents will be available to facilitate the planning and transition associated with the relocation process. This program is outlined in Section 5.1.2.2 Residential Relocation Assistance discussion in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. The Final EIS includes an updated community impacts assessment with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination, and proposed design changes based on community and agency input. Proposed mitigation measures and other commitments are documented, including some that were proposed by stakeholders.

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440	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	7/27/2017	Email	According to the DEIS analysis of the proposed highway project preferred alternatives' impact on "public housing and other EJ community facilities," impacts would include the following: • A possible increase in traffic noise, air emissions, and construction related impacts at Pecan Grove Manor, a lowincome senior housing development at 611 E Rogers St. • A possible increase in traffic noise, air emissions, and construction related impacts at Woodland Christian Towers, a senior housing facility located at 600 E Tidwell Road. • Displacement of 72 units at Kelly Village, a 333 unit public housing development built in 1939 and modernized in 2005, located at 3118 Green. • Displacement of all units, totaling 296, at Clayton Homes, a public housing development that was completely renovated with federal assistance in 2007, and is located at 1919 Runnels. • Displacement of 60 supportive/transitional housing units for homeless veterans located at the Midtown Terrace Suites, located	The 2017 Draft Community Impact Assessment Technical Report and Section 3.2 of the Draft EIS included an analysis of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to environmental justice populations. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report was updated to include input from outreach efforts to EJ communities, organizations, and businesses. The updated analysis is included in the Final EIS.
440	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	7/27/2017	Email	On p. 3-21 to 3-22, the DEIS indicates that TXDOT is in communication with the Houston Housing Authority and these discussions are informing the choice of alternatives and mitigation measures in the final EIS. We appreciate TXDOT's outreach to the housing authority. We also note that for purposes of compliance with NEPA and related laws and authorities for many HUD-assisted activities, including public housing, the City of Houston serves as Responsible Entity under 24 CFR Part 58, assuming HUD's NEPA decisionmaking responsibility. Under this Congressionally authorized framework, the Certifying Officer (see 24 CFR 58.13) of the City of Houston should also be consulted for matters involving environmental impacts to HUD-assisted properties. The Certifying Officer of Houston is by default the Mayor or City Manager, and by delegation the Director of the Houston Department of Housing and Community Development.	TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the COH and its Department of Housing and Community Development.
440	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	7/27/2017	Email	HUD's noise standards may be found in 24 CFR Part 51, Subpart B. For proposed new construction in high noise areas, the project must incorporate noise mitigation features. Consideration of noise applies to the acquisition of undeveloped land and existing development as well. To the extent that the proposed highway activity would increase ambient noise and indoor noise levels above thresholds of acceptability, for HUD-assisted units that are not being displaced, HUD considers this to be an adverse impact of the proposed activity and strongly encourages TXDOT and the Federal Highway Administration to provide appropriate mitigation measures. HUD's noise standard was implemented through agency rulemaking and in furtherance of the Quiet Communities Act of 1978, and is the federal standard for analysis of noise impacts to HUD-assisted properties. We encourage TXDOT to pursue project alternatives and mitigation measures that will enhance, rather than worsen, the noise environment at locations of much-needed affordable housing. We stand ready to assist EIS preparers with questions on HUD's noise standard.	The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and TxDOT agree that highway noise can have adverse impacts on nearby residential properties and that both agencies desire to reduce the adverse impacts as much as can be done following relevant law and policy. Among federal agencies, FHWA uses methodologies to assess the potential adverse effects of noise that are different than the methodologies used by other agencies within the U.S. Department of Transportation. The FHWA's methodologies are also different than the methodologies used by HUD. FHWA is the federal lead agency concerning the preparation of the environmental review document. FHWA and TxDOT followed the procedures for noise abatement in FHWA's rules (23 C.F.R. part 772) and the FHWA and TxDOT approved noise guidelines. FHWA and TxDOT concur that the FHWA equivalent sound level (Leq) differs from noise metrics currently in use by other federal agencies. But there are no irreconcilable differences between the noise requirements established by FHWA and those established by HUD as they apply to the project. The FHWA noise analysis is based on peak hourly travel volumes with results shown on an hourly equivalent noise basis (Leq); HUD noise standards are based on a 24-hour Day-Night noise level (DNL). Notably, per HUD noise guidance (24 C.F.R. section 51.106(a)(2)), "Leq and DNL noise levels may be assumed to be equivalent as long as heavy truck traffic does not exceed 10 percent of the total traffic flow in vehicles per 24 hours and the traffic flow between 10 pm and 7 am does not exceed 15 percent of the average daily traffic flow in vehicles per 24 hours." The NHHIP heavy truck volumes and overnight traffic flow will not exceed these levels, according to predictive traffic modeling conducted for the project. While the FHWA policies are different, there are similarities. When the analysis (using FHWA policies stated above) shows that the exterior noise levels would be below 65 dbA (equivalent to the HUD DNL standard), the noise environment inside a building is acceptable under HUD's own rules because the noise environment outside is less than 65 dbA. See 24 C.F.R. § 51.103(c)(2). Also, the Final EIS noise analysis includes a discussion of interior noise levels as appropriate. When appropriate, interior noise levels were calculated assuming a 20 dBA noise reduction factor based on typical public housing construction standards. For Category D land uses (auditoriums, hospitals, etc.), primary consideration is given to exterior areas where frequent human activity occurs, but interior noise levels are considered if there is little or no human activity in exterior areas adjacent to the roadway. That calculation is consistent with both FHWA and HUD noise policy.
440	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	7/27/2017	Email	Section 4.1.5 of the DEIS states that the analysis of the project's air toxics impacts from mobile sources will be conducted during development of the FEIS, and is not currently available. When this analysis is performed, we strongly encourage TXDOT to consider project alternatives that can avoid an increase in air toxics impacts to HUD-assisted developments. As noted in the DEIS, Executive Order 12989, Environmental Justice, requires that NEPA analyses consider the degree to which federally-assisted activities disproportionately and adversely impact minority and low-income communities, and that agencies involve residents in the NEPA decision-making process	A quantitative analysis of project-specific mobile source air toxics (MSAT) emissions was performed for the Final EIS and is included in a technical report. The Draft MSAT Quantitative Technical Report was released on June 20, 2018. The analysis indicates that a decrease in MSAT emissions can be expected for both the Build and No Build Alternatives in 2040, compared to the existing year of 2018. Under the Build Alternative, emissions of total MSAT are predicted to decrease by 72 percent from 2018 to 2040, even though vehicle miles travelled (VMT) is expected to rise by 58 percent. In future years, a large reduction in diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions is predicted, with a calculated 80 to 81 percent decrease from 2018 to 2040 in both scenarios. Considering the reduction of MSAT projected for the future in both the national and project specific MSAT analyses, the quality of life with regards to air toxics is not expected to worsen.
440	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	7/27/2017	Email	As noted above, the DEIS identifies displacement of a combined 428 public housing and transitional or supportive housing units. This will occur in an environment in which the supply of housing units is already significantly constrained. According to the City of Houston's Consolidated Plan for 2015-2019, the City's assessment of affordable housing and community development needs and market conditions, "The available housing units do not currently meet the needs of low-income Houstonians. The City consistently sees high rates of severe cost burden, meaning households are paying more than 50% of their monthly income for housing costs. Overcrowding is also a problem. The persistence of both of these housing problems indicates that the available housing stock is not meeting the needs of the residents. In addition, the interest in the HHA [Houston Housing Authority] waitlist also illustrates that there is not enough affordable housing." (p. 54 of the Consolidated Plan, available at http://houstontx.gov/housing/2015-2019%20Consolidated%20Plan%20and%202015%20Annual%20Action%20Plan%20Submitted%20to%20HUD%205.12.2015.pdf). HHA administers approximately 18,500 housing choice vouchers total, yet receives approximately 85,000 applications for voucher assistance each year. The DEIS should consider and mitigate the proposed highway project's full displacement impact, including the challenges residents face in locating a quality affordable housing unit that will accept a Section 8 voucher. When HUD must approve demolition and disposition of public housing under Section 18 of the Housing Act of 1937, as amended, the relocation requirements of 24 CFR 970.21 may apply (HHA and HUD have staff who can help determine the specific requirements that apply). But beyond these minimum requirements, NEPA and EO 12898 call for a transparent and accurate analysis of the true impact of displacement on residents, given the existing conditions and trends in the Houston housing market. We request that TXDOT continue to undertake the credible analysis of this impact and determine appropriate mitigation in conversation with the Houston Housing Authority as well as the operators of supportive and transitional housing facilities, and most importantly, in communication with the residents who live and work in the properties that will be affected by the project. I would also appreciate being added to your distribution list for future notices and the FEIS.	The Final EIS and the associated Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report include an updated evaluation of community impacts, including to public housing and other affordable housing. TxDOT coordinated with the City of Houston (COH) (Mayor Turner, city council members, and many city departments including the Housing and Community Development Department) during development of the NHHIP. In addition, the COH is an EIS Participating Agency and COH representatives attended five group meetings for the participating agencies at key project milestones. TxDOT has coordinated with HHA regarding potential project impacts to Clayton Homes and Kelly Village, and mitigation for adverse impacts. TxDOT is coordinating with the HHA for advance acquisition of the Clayton Homes property and a portion of Kelly Village property. Actions taken to mitigate impacts to Clayton Homes and Kelly Village are focused on ensuring that displaced residents of both communities are provided with multiple relocation options resulting in minimal disruptions to their lives. This includes eliminating the need to move multiple times, minimizing interruption to current employment and allowing children to remain in the same school district. TxDOT also coordinated with the owners of Midtown Terrace Suites and Temenos Place II and is coordinating advance acquisition of their properties so that replacement housing is available prior to the need to relocate residents. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with HHA, Mayor Turner, and the COH Housing and Community Development Department to identify affordable housing for other displaced residents. TxDOT will comply with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Act); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures regarding compensation and relocation assistance. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with providers of public housing and transitional or supportive housing units, and services for homeless persons, as well as other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by EJ populations, LEP persons, and other sensitive populations. TxDOT contacted community facility representatives in the project area, including facilities that serve EJ populations, to ensure awareness of the proposed project and potential impacts and to seek additional input on the communities they serve. Input received has helped to formalize mitigation and other commitments for the project. We have added you to the project mailing list and Final EIS distribution list.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	(I) Harris County Toll Road Authority is currently planning the Hardy Downtown Connector, a project which offers many opportunities for increased mobility options other than just increased lanes. The various detention areas integrated in the design of the project represent an opportunity to create a high comfort off-road hike & bike trail connecting the northern areas of the city to downtown. This proposed trail must cross under the combined I-10/I-45 section at Elysian Street, and so we ask that TxDOT work with HCTRA to leave space for a high comfort, off-road hike & bike trail under the combined highways. This opportunity was identified after the approval of the Houston Bike Plan and so is not represented there. We ask that TxDOT honor any changes or alterations to the Houston Bike Plan submitted by the City's Planning Department.	The existing crossing would be replaced as part of the NHHIP. TxDOT evaluated options for a new bridge, including possibly constructing it under Elysian St., as suggested by others. However, this is not possible because it would not meet vertical clearance requirements with the reconstructed Providence and Rothwell streets. The revised schematic shows the proposed location of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge just west of the BNSF rail crossing. This location will provide improved pedestrian connectivity compared to the existing conditions. TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets.
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	(II) The many detention ponds included in this plan should be designed as park areas or maintained green space in collaboration with the City Parks and Recreation Department. Poorly maintained green space is a significant issue in Houston due to the rapid growth of plant material, and District H already has many areas along the freeways and bayous that remain overgrown for a large part of the year. Maintained green space also serves as an opportunity to further one of Houston's most ambitious goals to create linear, connected parks and trails.	Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible.
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	(III) The design of any bridge crossing over I-45 should be designed in similar fashion to existing bridges over I-69 in artistic quality. The adjacent neighborhoods and Houston Arts Alliance should be consulted and have input in the design of these structures to best reflect the character of the area.	A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	(IV) The draft seems to indicate that the existing bike trail connection between White Oak Bayou and Spring Street will be demolished when I-45 is brought to ground level. The connector is the only currently existing bike connection over the White Oak Bayou other than the crossing at the other end of the Spring Street trail. Without this connector, the Spring Street path would dead-end as there are no nearby bike paths, trail or otherwise. We ask that TxDOT consider leaving space for the connector to remain or make another connector to keep access	The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The Spring Street trail (Heights Hike and Bike Trail) and the White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail along White Oak Bayou will be maintained.
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	(V) The proposal to include a shared use lane along the frontage roads is highly inadvisable. Mixing 40+ MPH speeds with bike traffic is a recipe for disaster unless TxDOT makes more changes to the design of the frontage roads. While bike and pedestrian paths are certainly welcome and encouraged, shared use lanes in this environment are dangerous and not supported unless further design elements are implemented to slow speeds.	TxDOT acknowledges the concern raised of bicycle safety and in response has coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. TxDOT would note, however, that both the City's executive order on Complete Streets ("Complete Streets do not mean that all streets are identical.") and Bike Plan provide a framework for improving the functioning of bicycle facilities. They do not mandate certain design standards for every street as they relate to bicycles. With respect to NHHIP, the operation of frontage roads is different from segment to segment, and so the incorporation of bicycle design standards will be different depending on location and operation of the frontage road. It should be noted however, that although the bicycle facilities may vary depending on location, TxDOT is no longer proposing an outside 15' shared use lane. Bicycle facilities will be dedicated facilities and will be detailed during design. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible.
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	Near Northside LACK OF ACCESS/ISOLATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD: The removal of the North Main exit along I-45 South severely restricts access to the Near Northside when traveling South. With Cavalcade and Quitman remaining as the only other exits it will be difficult to enter and leave the neighborhood if you miss the Cavalcade exit. This is compounded by the lack of a bridge at North Street, making access across I-45 even more difficult. We ask that TxDOT consider reinstating the North Street Bridge so traffic across I-45 is not bottlenecked at N. Main and Quitman.	A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	Near Northside LACK OF ACCESS/ISOLATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD: The most devastating effect of the NHHIP on the Near Northside, however, is the wall of pavement that will be created by the diversion of I-45 around the east side of downtown. This barrier will exist physically and psychologically, further isolating the neighborhood from the rest of the city. A large portion of the community already uses biking and walking as primary modes of transportation. We recommend bridging the environmental gap created by the I-10/I-45 wall with a hike and bike trail to connect the neighborhood with downtown, such as the San Jacinto Street trail proposed on the Houston Bike Plan. Similarly, shifting I-10 and I-45 to the north will create a barrier between University of Houston – Downtown and its closest neighborhood. Every effort must be made to overcome this further distancing of one of the most accessible institutions of higher education in Houston from one of the city's most underserved areas. TxDOT must ensure the campus remains accessible to the Near Northside population, potentially through the construction of a trail or path to increase access from north to south.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The realigned I-10 and I-45 roadways would be closer to the southern portion of the Northside, and still south of the existing railroad. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	Independence Heights FLOODING/DRAINAGE: Independence Heights suffers from frequent floods due to the expansive floodway of the Little White Oak Bayou, an issue that is being addressed by both the Harris County Flood Control District and the City of Houston. We ask that TxDOT coordinate their flood mitigation efforts with those of the Harris County Flood Control District so that the effects of the increased impervious surface area from I-45's expansion may be properly addressed and not contribute to this already serious issue.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. TxDOT is coordinating with Harris County Flood Control District and the COH regarding regional drainage and flooding issues.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	Independence Heights NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING: TxDOT is buying out about 40 homes in Independence Heights for I-45's Right of Way, a significant number because Harris County Flood Control is also buying out 163 homes in the Glenburnie neighborhood of Independence Heights. Many of the homes in this neighborhood are subject to deferred maintenance and so we ask that TxDOT take careful consideration in the case of displaced homeowners in this area. Per TxDOT standards the homes the displaced homeowners relocate to must be decent, safe, and sanitary, and we ask TxDOT to ensure these homeowners are relocated into quality houses.	TxDOT's relocation assistance program for the NHHIP will provide the opportunity for residents who would be displaced by the proposed project to relocate within the community if they so choose. Additionally, enhanced counseling and assistance for displaced residents will be available to facilitate the planning and transition associated with the relocation process. This program is outlined in Section 5.1.2.2 Residential Relocation Assistance discussion in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. As noted in that discussion, in addition to fair market value for the property, qualifying owners will receive a purchase supplemental as well as assistance with incidental costs necessary to purchase a comparable decent, safe, and sanitary replacement dwelling. The purchase supplemental includes the amount that a comparable replacement dwelling exceeds the acquisition cost of the displacement dwelling and certain loan-related fees and costs. Supplemental assistance provides the opportunity for displaced residents to relocate to a comparable residence in the same neighborhood even though the cost of the replacement home might be more than the acquisition cost of the displacement dwelling. Supplements will also be available to tenants. TxDOT will provide individual advisory services and group/program informational workshops to assist property owners and tenants.
441	Cisneros, Karla	7/27/2017	Email	Independence Heights BAYOU TRAIL DEVELOPMENT: Harris County has identified a severely flood-prone area along Little White Oak Bayou in Glenburnie where they are buying out homeowners mentioned above. The COH Bike Masterplan also identifies a bike trail to be located along the bayou in this location. We ask that TxDOT consider investing in the development of a hike and bike trail system along Little White Oak Bayou which runs under or parallel to I-45 for a significant portion of the project. Otherwise, the project must take into account the City of Houston's Bike Plan and leave the route open and available for future bike path development. This trail could serve as a catalyst for revitalization and increased mobility for both Independence Heights and even areas further north.	In meeting with the Houston Parks Board, TxDOT understands there is a vision to extend trails along Little White Oak Bayou. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible.
442	Clark, Glenn	7/27/2017	Email	Constructability improvement: Route new IH45 parallel to IH69 to IH610 north, then across IH610 north ROW to existing IH45 alignment. Downtown connector and IH45 MAX lanes still use IH45 alignment to go downtown. Much easier to construct, less traffic flow/economic impact during const., cheap ROW available, improves 5th ward.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals. Multiple studies were conducted to determine traffic patterns and destinations within the region, including using I-610. The results of the study showed that destinations inside the I-610 loop still required a north-south facility to support the traffic demands.
443	Clark, Glenn	7/27/2017	Email	Downtown traffic flow--east side: Downtown traffic flow on east side needs help. Look at big picture flow during detail design. Partner w/ COH on larger study. Direct connect TX/Harrisburg. Improve Metrorail at feeders. Traffic circle for Franklin/Congress @ N&S feeders. Improve 2-way to 1-way transitions. Bike trail connections.	Improvements to access to/from downtown include making Hamilton Street continuous to US 59, improving north-south connectivity. Although Polk St. would not be continuous to downtown, other benefits in the downtown area of the proposed project include: - Removing the Pierce Elevated structure, a visual barrier south of downtown - Depressing freeways to accommodate park/open greenspace east of downtown - Accommodating pedestrian access and bicycle access per the City of Houston bike plan
444	Clark, Glenn	7/27/2017	Email	Buy ROW for rail: This plan spends Billions and requires hundreds of demolitions. Add 30ft to the ROW to allow for future rail or BRT transit. This can be accomplished along 80% of ROW for minimal additional cost--structures will be razed, what's another 30ft to allow future rail? Lay the foundation for real transit in HTx.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
445	Clark, Glenn	7/27/2017	Email	Midtown suggestions: Like buried plan fwy thru Midtown & ROW is expensive there, but planned ROW limits creates difficult const. logistics. Buy addt'l ROW, then use ROW to continue MAX lanes (or rail) through midtown. Build bus drop under moved Metrorail Wheeler Sta. Also partner w/ COH to remove gridlock at Wheeler/Richmond/Main.	Extending Spur 527 through Midtown is being studied under a separate TxDOT study (Planning and Environmental Linkage Study: I-69 from Spur 527 to Beltway (BW) 8) (https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/houston/houston-pel-i-69.html). The results of this study will be integrated into NHHIP as appropriate. TxDOT has and will continue to partner with the COH and METRO regarding optimizing the freeway and local system operations.

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447	Cognata, Thomas	7/27/2017	Project Website	I am providing comment about concerns with the segment 3 improvement along I-69 between Almeda Rd. and Caroline St. I am concerned that the feeder added to the north of I-69 in this region is superfluous as there is ample infrastructure at the Almeda intersection to support exiting south bound traffic and this feeder ends at Caroline St in such a way that it is only feeding a grocery store. I recommend this feeder to the North of I-69 be removed from the plan.	The frontage road is being provided in this area to provide access to existing streets, and to minimize cut-through traffic on residential streets that could result due to eliminating some cross streets.
447	Cognata, Thomas	7/27/2017	Project Website	I am concerned that sections of this feeder as planned are too wide and thus impact my property line more than necessary as a result. There is no point West of Almeda on this feeder road that that should be wider than 2 lanes.	Improvements to access to/from downtown include making Hamilton Street continuous to US 59, improving north-south connectivity. Although Polk St. would not be continuous to downtown, other benefits in the downtown area of the proposed project include: - Removing the Pierce Elevated structure, a visual barrier south of downtown - Depressing freeways to accommodate park/open greenspace east of downtown - Accommodating pedestrian access and bicycle access per the City of Houston bike plan
447	Cognata, Thomas	7/27/2017	Project Website	I am concerned that this region of the improvement will impact noise in the area detrimentally and request that a wall be added to the outside edges of this segment of I-69 that is sufficiently tall to block road noise, or that the covers region is committed to and that this region is extended east to Almeda Rd.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. In addition, longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
447	Cognata, Thomas	7/27/2017	Project Website	I would appreciate contact from the project as my property is directly impacted by the new ROW. Earlier plans that did not include the feeder now shown on the North side of I-69 between Almeda and Caroline St. were far more acceptable and I would prefer to see the plan return to that baseline.	The project design required that a frontage road be added to the north side of US 59/I-69 in order to maintain access to adjacent properties. The frontage road would also minimize cut-through traffic in the area.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	1. Planning efforts need to be done in collaboration & input from multi-modal transit agencies· METRO, Bike Houston, etc. Hire consultants from other fields such as urbanists, architects, landscape architects, environmentalists, etc. People with alternative street positions like Jeff Speck & Janette Sadik-Khan can provide balanced data that can result in a more successful project. There needs to be a cohesive urban plan with the city & adjacent neighborhood management with this section	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO, the City of Houston, and other stakeholders during the preliminary design and will continue to coordinate during detailed design. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	2. Focus on walkability. This is a project that runs through an urban city center. Transportation isn't only about moving vehicles. People in dense urban centers travel by foot & bicycle. Good street & sidewalk infrastructure is absolutely vital. Make streets safer.	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.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	3. Develop a plan with the city to have minimal impact on East Downtown. Plan currently calls for demolishing everything to the left of St. Emanuel St. This will have adverse consequences for the adjacent business. A large majority of East Downtown's food & entertainment options fall along St. Emanuel Street. This project will threaten their very existence & the vitality of the neighborhood. Find a way to keep at least half block available for development on blocks bounded by Chartres & St. Emanuel (similar to how Cheek-Neal Coffee building is being preserved) at least until the capped parks start at Lamar St Businesses & homes in an urban setting should not be facing a huge freeway.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. The proposed project requires new right-of-way between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St. in the EaDo area. Businesses on those parcels would be displaced. The preliminary schematic design prepared in 2015 was shown at the public meetings in April 2015, and was available for viewing online and at TxDOT. Since then, as the design was further refined, the proposed right-of-way width increased slightly in part of the area between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St., and decreased slightly in other areas. The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	4. Towards the north side of the convention center, there are plenty of empty parking lots to trace through. Instead, successful businesses and coworking spaces (like Tout Suite) will be demolished along Commerce St. The intent to keep the roadway as straight as possible (for vehicular flow & speed) at the expense of these businesses is misguided.	Due to current design standards and the need for main lanes and connectors to/from the interchange to the north (US 59/I-69, I-10, and I-45) and geometric constraints of the area, it was not possible to accommodate a curve of the highway alignment that would avoid the mentioned businesses.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	5. Maximize connections & crossings between East Downtown & Downtown. Do not eliminate Polk Street as a connection into Downtown. At the very least, provide a bridge for pedestrians that is comfortable for both walking & bicycling. This is an important connection.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	6. Capped park area really needs to extend to Polk Street instead of stopping at Lamar St. Provide noise barriers that incorporate greenery.	Capped area cannot extend to Polk Street due to height clearance criteria. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	7. TXDOT should not begin construction/demolition until capped parks are planned & fully funded. Adjacent neighborhoods will suffer otherwise. The scope of responsibility for TXDOT has & should be expanded to deal with these issues as their project will be the cause of such issues to arise. Be a part of the solution, not the problem. It is irresponsible for TXDOT to think it is only responsible for getting a highway built. There are consequences that need to be addressed immediately.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	8. Again, consider the scale of this project from that of a person walking, or biking, or otherwise not in a vehicle. 20-something lanes of road do not belong inside of an urban core. This is not the suburbs, where people are spread out. These are communities that are tightly knit. The more land given to roads means less land available for development, less land available for successful communities. Large freeway infrastructures against the fine grained grid of the city, where connections and interactions are maximized and open. It's great that the highway will be capped (in some parts at least) but the scale of visible portions is anti-human scale. The city is meant to operate at human-scale & humanspeed.	The number of lanes of traffic were determined based on projected traffic volumes. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's traffic mobility goals. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	9. Reduce the number of lanes where possible. We don't need 3 or more frontage roads leading onto a highway in smallscale neighborhoods. Again, this is not the suburbs. 1-2 lanes of frontage roads are enough to access the highway in these areas. Allocate the other ROW to bike lanes and street parking, sidewalks & landscaping (TREES). Reduce the number of freeway lanes where possible. TXDOT needs to design with the knowledge that autonomous vehicles are the future. That means narrower lanes, higher speeds, & higher capacity. You can carry a large volume of vehicles through less space. This is a cost savings for TXDOT.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	10. Integrate public transportation. As this city becomes more and more populated, public transit will need to fill the gap. Take into account that not every new resident will be driving a car (or will want to). People, both old and young, are eschewing drivers licenses these days, especially with services like UBER and Lyft operating around town. 1 more person does not equal1 more car, and your computer models need to adjust for this if they don't already. We need to be thinking about the future technologies of transportation, not building on the models of the past.	Comment noted.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	11. Integrate the capped parks with the Buffalo Bayou park system. Engineer capped parks to be able to take on the loads of 1-3 story buildings I pavilions. Places like Klyde Warren park are an example of how this can be done successfully. This needs to be planned for now.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	12. Work with Downtown Management District & Plan Downtown on an overall masterplan for the East Downtown & Downtown area. There needs to be a larger vision for the project, not just a piecemeal approach that keeps everyone thinking in silos. Build on the collaboration & ideas of others. This project is larger than just a freeway. It cuts through city, an already existing urban ecosystem that, which means the freeway is interacting with a set of very complex rules & conditions that are interdependent. A successful place for cars does not make a successful place for people, and often times it makes the opposite.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the Downtown Management District during detailed design and construction. TxDOT has also coordinated extensively with local government and other local groups, including those noted in your comment. The proposed project was developed in consideration of existing and proposed future streets, bikeway, greenway, and transit networks. TxDOT also received and considered input from the public and other stakeholders during the project development process.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
448	Conte, Shawn	7/27/2017	Project Website	13. In general, I am against the realignment of i45 with i59/69. This widens the divide between East Downtown & Downtown. The commercial area of East Downtown will be negatively affected (if not already demolished), as well as the painful process people living in East Downtown will have to undergo during construction. This project will take several years to complete at an incredible expense, for the purpose of serving cross-city commuters. I am for the capped parks, but this must be done successfully, and funded, in my opinion, by TXDOT. You are taking away businesses (amenities) and not paying to replace them. That is wrong. The city (taxpayers) should not have to step in to clean up your mess on a project that we didn't even get to vote for. The park component is the equivalent to the carrot at the end of the stick. If you're going to punish us (the residents), at least commit to giving us the carrot too. East Downtown is young, vibrant, and growing fast. It stands to have a lotto lose with this project, and if done right, a lotto gain. This project will ONLY be successful if there is a larger master plan & vision for the area.	TxDOT coordinated with City of Houston and EaDo representatives during the project development process. TxDOT has worked closely with the City of Houston, HDMD, and EaDo to optimize the project design. Additional coordination will be performed as the project is further developed in detail design. TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction. TxDOT will maintain access to adjacent properties. The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency. The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
450	Crawford, James C.	7/27/2017	Written	My property is located adjacent to I-10 as it passes through the north side of downtown Houston. My comments are limited to that portion of the NHHIP involving the realignment of I-10 near downtown. Byway of background, I own an historic building located at 1200 Rothwell which is the south bound feeder of I-10. The building was built in 1881 by Henry Henke for his 5th Ward grocery store near Allen's Landing on the banks of Buffalo Bayou. My building is designated as a City of Houston Historic Landmark. A photo of the building is attached. The proposed realignment of I-10 directly affects my property.	The former Henke's Grocery has been determined individually NRHP-eligible as well as contributing to the Warehouse Historic district (also NRHP-eligible) through studies associated with this project. The resource would not be impacted by the proposed project; in fact, the existing elevated portion of I-10 that currently bisects the historic district would be removed. Further, measures will be taken during construction to avoid adverse effects to this and other historic properties in the area.
450	Crawford, James C.	7/27/2017	Written	While I generally support the NHHIP, I have a few vital concerns which need to be addressed as part of the engineering, planning and construction of this portion of the project. I have met with TxDOT officials during the past year so that planners and decision makers could better understand the issues raised in this letter. First, the historic warehouse district frequently floods even during modest rainfall events. These recurring floods threaten the very survival of my building and the other historic buildings in the area. I have attached a photograph which shows the conditions around the building after only a few inches of rain. As part of the realignment of I-10, TxDOT needs to immediately commission a comprehensive engineering study to identify the specific factors causing the flooding in the warehouse district adjacent so that the findings can be incorporated into the design of the I-10 realignment. This new study can build on the preliminary drainage study recently completed by AECOM, however, it needs to be specifically focused on the historic warehouse district. As part of the study, the engineers should hold meetings with property owners in the warehouse district to get a complete understanding of	The Warehouse historic district was determined NRHP-eligible through recent studies. An existing visual and physical barrier of the elevated section of I-10 through the area would be removed with the proposed NHHIP. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. TxDOT is coordinating with Harris County Flood Control District and the COH regarding regional drainage and flooding issues. See Section 3.8.3 of the Final EIS for additional information about studies that will be conducted by TxDOT during project design.
450	Crawford, James C.	7/27/2017	Written	As a long time property owner, I have had meetings with state and local officials about the flooding in our area. From these meetings and my own personal observations of flooding conditions, I believe the flooding is being caused by several factors including: (1) massive amounts of rainfall runoff from I-10 into our neighborhood, (2) inadequate TxDOT drainage infrastructure along I-10 in our area, (3) inadequate City drainage infrastructure inside the warehouse district, and (4) the failure of the current infrastructure to account for topographical features that trap runoff water in our neighborhood. A comprehensive study by AECOM or other qualified engineering firm is necessary to determine the precise causes of the flooding and allow for design solutions to be incorporated into the design for the I-10 realignment.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. The proposed project will include flood mitigation measures to prevent adverse impacts to adjacent properties during construction.
450	Crawford, James C.	7/27/2017	Written	Second, the realignment of I-10 will be an expensive and disruptive construction project which presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make needed improvements to the underground storm water infrastructure in and around the historic warehouse district. If we do not seize this opportunity to make these infrastructure improvements part of the overall project, the warehouse district will not survive and its historic buildings will be lost. The repeated flooding of the buildings jeopardizes the economic viability of these structures and, consequently, their very existence.	TxDOT requires the construction contractors to have all gas lines and other underground facilities located ahead of construction and will follow procedures for marking such lines clearly to avoid construction activities that may impact these lines. Gas lines in conflict with the proposed construction will be relocated or adjusted ahead of construction activities to mitigate the conflicts. TxDOT requires a health and safety plan be submitted by their construction contractors for review and approval prior to beginning construction activities. These plans will require that the Trigas company facility be addressed in the plan for any work activities in close proximity to that facility or that might present a concern. The safety plan will address identification of properties and facilities of potential concern and will be required to address the approach for appropriate construction site notifications to construction personnel and proposed field markings near sensitive facilities. The plan will also address protocols for notifications and actions to be taken should an emergency situation occur.
450	Crawford, James C.	7/27/2017	Written	Because underground storm water infrastructure involves the various governmental entities, TxDOT should closely collaborate with City and County officials to design and implement effective solutions as part of NHHIP. For example, if TxDOT designs and builds the customary, large storm water inlets on the realigned I-10, the inlets will be useless if they flow into the existing small diameter storm sewer pipes installed 100 years ago. The neighborhood inlets routinely fill with water and do not drain even during a modest rain fall. The vast nature of the NHHIP opens the door for various government entities (City, State and County) to work together to leverage the tax dollars already being spent on NHHIP to concurrently upgrade the aging and inadequate storm water system in this area.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. The proposed stormwater system will be designed to adequately convey stormwater runoff from the project. Upgrading of existing facilities not owned by TxDOT and that are not a part of the NHHIP (i.e. COH or HCFCD facilities) would be the responsibility of the respective owner.
450	Crawford, James C.	7/27/2017	Written	Third, as presently drawn, the design provides significant green space between my building and the new location of I-10. It appears that this green space results from the relocation of the highway and the abandonment of current TxDOT right of way. As an adjacent property owner, I request to have a voice in the decisions about how this land is ultimately used. It is possible that this land may be needed as part of the flood mitigation solutions (see my comments above). If it is to be sold, the adjacent property owners should have a right of first refusal to purchase the land.	At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
450	Crawford, James C.	7/27/2017	Written	Finally, I request that TxDOT utilize construction strategies and methods that do not damage or undermine the structural integrity of my building. My building is constructed of brick and care must be taken as to not damage it when demolition and construction work is being performed on the adjacent work site.	During detailed design, TxDOT will prepare a plan to ensure that construction would not damage adjacent or other nearby buildings.

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451	Curtis, John	7/27/2017	Email	1)Whether rail or BRT, there has to be room for faster and more frequent 2-way commuter options.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.
451	Curtis, John	7/27/2017	Email	2)The freight rail coming into the DT area from Wash. Ave. corridor should be rerouted to be only 1 line.	TxDOT met with and continues to coordinate with the Union Pacific Railroad. Union Pacific Railroad desires to maintain its current track and ROW locations.
451	Curtis, John	7/27/2017	Email	3)The exit on West side of DT should stop at Allen parkway. Make a green parkway for the extension further into DT(addtl drainage).	This is not feasible. Terminating at Allen Parkway would increase congestion and would create a bottleneck situation.
452	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	7/27/2017	Email	**An Environmental Justice Issue** TxDOT identified our neighborhood in their Community Impact Assessment for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the North Houston Highway Improvement Project, as a low income, high minority area, however TxDOT failed to adhere to federal guidelines pertaining to Environmental Justice (EJ) with our community. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) describes Environmental Justice (EJ) as "identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects of the agency's programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations to achieve an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens".i The FHWA's website goes on to say that one of the fundamental principles of EJ is "to ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process".ii Knowing this project would have repercussions on our community, TxDOT did little to engage Independence Heights to be a part of the decision-making for our affected area.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements TxDOT met with the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council. TxDOT will continue coordinating with representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses used by low-income and/or minority populations, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Documentation of the coordination and outcomes is included in the Final EIS.
452	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	7/27/2017	Email	**Some Background on Our Community** Independence Heights is a predominately African American community with a rich and historic cultural background. Our neighborhood was settled after the Civil War like many African American communities during this time. These settlements were known as freedom colonies, and some even incorporated as independent municipalities. Many of these places have gone unnoticed and the few that are left, like Independence Heights, are desperately trying to survive. Across America, people are working to preserve these places and reclaim their heritage by revitalizing them into inclusive communities and cultural destinations. Many of these communities are listed on the National Register of Historic Places because they are part of the true authentic American story that is rarely told. Independence Heights in particular is known as the first city incorporated by African Americans in the State of Texas. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the local residents have created a vision for our community that includes preserving it as a cultural destination. The TXDOT plan is a threat to Independence Heights and communities alike. If we are going to protect the true cultural and historical assets of our communities, entities like TXDOT must find ways to work in tandem with us rather than make plans about our community without us being at the table. Current plans to expand this freeway would dissolve some of our most historic assets including a 130 year old church that was recently rebuilt by the pastor himself after Hurricane Ike destroyed it. If our community is historically important to the fabric of the United States as noted by being listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is our hope that state agencies, like TxDOT, would operate with respect to that community and not expedite deterioration by expanding freeways through them.	As part of historic resources investigations associated with the proposed NHHIP, TxDOT conducted documentation and NRHP evaluation of the Independence Heights neighborhood. The investigations were conducted in response to stakeholder comments regarding previous evaluations contained in earlier Historical Resource's Survey Reports. The stakeholder comments identified a need for re-evaluation of areas in and close to the proposed NHHIP ROW for inclusion in a historic district and/or individual NRHP eligibility. Appendix F of the HRSR Update (September 2019) contains the full report concerning the documentation and re-evaluation of historic-age resources in the NHHIP Area of Potential Effects (APE) in the Independence Heights neighborhood, as well as survey maps, streetscape photography, and updated survey forms. Part of the Independence Heights neighborhood is an NRHP-listed district; however, the proposed NHHIP would not impact the district. The district is outside of the project APE and any potential project impact. The proposed project would displace single-family residences and multi-family apartment units and the Greater Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church. TxDOT's relocation assistance program for the NHHIP will provide the opportunity for residents to relocate within the community if they so choose. Additionally, enhanced counseling and assistance for displaced residents will be available to facilitate the planning and transition associated with the relocation process. This program is outlined in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report, Section 5.1.2.2 Residential Relocation Assistance discussion. TxDOT has met with the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council and extensively with the pastor of the Greater Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church to discuss relocation options for the church with the goal of finding a new location in the community. TxDOT has attempted to avoid the church in previous designs, but more recent communications from the pastor has indicated that relocation to a new area in the community is preferred. See Section 6.0 Mitigation and Commitments of the technical report for required mitigation and additional measures that have been developed to address specific impacts identified.
452	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	7/27/2017	Email	**An Affected Area Yet No Outreach Done** Independence Heights has approximately 14,000 residents living in this neighborhood, and our community works hard to ensure our area is well represented and has a voice in issues that significantly affect us. In looking at the DEIS, in particular the Community Impact Assessment, we are surprised to see the communities that were designated as low income and high minority, like Independence Heights, had only one meeting with TxDOT regarding this project. These communities will be heavily affected by this endeavor, yet in the three year planning process for this venture, it appears many of these low income and high minority areas were only talked to once. In comparison, Houston Downtown Management District, Houston's largest management district whose focus is improving the quality of life downtown with a budget of over $2,000,000, 000 a year(iii), had the most interaction with TxDOT. They had 27 meetings about how this project will affect them. Our community's quality of life is just as important as the businesses and residents represented by Houston Downtown Management District. We are frustrated that TxDOT's priority in their communication about this project were with groups who had the most resources and wealth.	TxDOT met with the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council. TxDOT will continue coordinating with representatives of community facilities, housing, and businesses used by low-income and/or minority populations, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Documentation of the coordination and outcomes was included in the Final EIS. The analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts was updated in the Final EIS (further evaluation of the Preferred Alternative).
452	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	7/27/2017	Email	**The Effects of This Project on Our Community** Federal guidelines to address EJ were established so communities like ours could be involved in every stage of the planning process.(iv) We believe our community has not been adequately engaged in this project. We have major concerns about the 100 or more families, and businesses, that will be taken due to the construction of this freeway. This will affect our community financially, historically, culturally, and environmentally. Furthermore, to us, the plans are not just a physical attack on our community's revitalization, but also a psychological one, as these proposed ideas put additional stress on the seniors and generations who have called our community home for so long. Studies show that when people experience forced displacement, this type of trauma causes health issues and mental disorders that put an added strain on already limited medical resources(V).	The analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts was updated in the Final EIS (further evaluation of the Preferred Alternative). TxDOT met with the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council. TxDOT will continue coordinating with representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses used by low-income and/or minority populations, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Documentation of the coordination and outcomes is included in the Final EIS.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
452	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	7/27/2017	Email	This freeway expansion will further exacerbate financial resources for our residents. As housing prices continue to climb in communities around the downtown Houston area, like ours, any money offered for families to relocate will not allow these displaced residents to repurchase a home within the Houston city limits let alone Independence Heights. To date, there is no housing replacement plan for Independence Heights residents being discussed. To add fuel to this fire, Independence Heights is already experiencing displacement as the area just west of I45 between Tidwell and Airline is poised to lose 163 homes due to a volunteer flood buyout. In addition, we are especially concerned about the impact of future flooding in our community. We understand that you have included proposed detention ponds along the I45 corridor in segment 1. However, we are seeking assurance that this expansion will not add any additional impact causing flooding in our neighborhood.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process. TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
452	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	7/27/2017	Email	**TxDOT's Responsibility to Affected Communities** With all of these issues, we question the due diligence of TXDOT to meet and communicate with affected communities to discuss the negative effects these proposed changes to I45 will definitely create. In an article called, "The Role of Highways in American Poverty," published by The Atlantic in March of 2016, writer Alana Semuels talks about how, in some cities, freeways are being torn down to help urban renaissance.vi She goes on to say, "These cities have tried to tear down barriers that prevent all of their residents from reaching their full opportunity. Sometimes those barriers are highways. Sometimes they're something else entirely. Tearing down a highway isn't the only way to make a city healthy again. But building a new one—or expanding an existing one—seems a surefire way to make a city sick."vii TxDOT must look at how their transportation plans are making "cities sick". Plans like the North Houston Highway Improvement Project thwart the efforts of so many communities, especially communities of color, from reaching their full potential as vibrant and thriving areas	TxDOT has coordinated with representatives of communities in the project area and has considered their input during development of the proposed project. TxDOT sought additional input from residents and groups in affected neighborhoods after the May 2017 public hearing. TxDOT revised the project design in many areas to avoid and minimize adverse impacts, and has worked to identify measures to mitigate adverse impacts in consideration of the needs of communities in the project area. Details about public involvement are included in Section 2 of the Final EIS and in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report (see Appendix A of the technical report).
452	Independence Heights Redevelopment Council	7/27/2017	Email	**Our Request** We request that TxDOT adhere to the federal guidelines of EJ and do a better job of addressing and engaging the minority and low-income populations who will be severely affected by this massive transportation undertaking. Before this project comes to our community, we insist that TxDOT representatives talk to and listen to the concerns we have about this project. As with many of your projects, we believe there are opportunities for this project to have a positive effect on our residents. We encourage you to peruse our community plans to gain a better understanding of what stakeholders desire for the community. It is our hope that you will identify items that will benefit the community and compliment the on-going efforts already in action. A few of our plans can be found online by searching, Independence Heights-Northline Livable Centers Study. In addition, we also have the Independence Heights Quality of Life Plan. In conclusion, we believe our neighborhood is just as important as any other area in Houston. We deserve the opportunity to discuss in detail the impact of this expansion on our community.	The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report was updated to include input from outreach efforts to EJ communities, organizations, and businesses. The updated analysis is included in the Final EIS. The analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts was updated in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS. As part of the updated study, TxDOT reviewed the future vision and goals of the neighborhoods as stated in the Independence Heights - Northline Livable Centers Planning Study, reviewed the status of the projects and goals. TxDOT will continue coordinating with representatives of other the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council.
454	Everhart, Jonathan	7/27/2017	Email	The TxDOT I-45 project needs to incorporate multi-modal high capacity transit, including elevated rail, for the City of Houston. As a Houston resident and head of an international company headquartered here, I see the City's growth and infrastructure necessitates a multi-level approach to improve the gaps in the current overall transit system.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
455	Farrar, Jessica	7/27/2017	Email	I appreciate TxDOT's willingness to accept invitations to civic meetings in neighborhoods who are directly impacted by this project. This proactive approach is an important step towards building an inclusive relationship with the neighborhoods, municipalities, and government entities the project will impact. However, there is much work to be done. Historically, the IH-45 North Freeway serves as a detention pond for excess rainfall from the Little White Oak Bayou and adjacent neighborhoods. Please consider and address how the proposed expansion project will include flood mitigation techniques to prevent future flooding in residential areas surrounding the freeway to Buffalo Bayou both during the construction phases and completion of the project.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. The proposed project will include flood mitigation measures to prevent adverse impacts to adjacent properties during construction. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies (Harris County Flood Control District and City of Houston) to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties.
455	Farrar, Jessica	7/27/2017	Email	Current historical neighborhoods, both in the Heights and the Northside, have grown accustomed to the existing footprint of the freeway's entrances and exits. In Segment 2, my office continues to receive the most feedback regarding the on and off ramps (along IH-10, IH-45, and IH-610) the potential impact of noise in residential areas, and the need for notification.	TxDOT has mailed public meeting/hearing notices since 2011 to thousands of stakeholders, including adjacent property owners and others on the project mailing list. Attendees of meetings and commenters who provide mail and email addresses are added to the mailing list for future communications. In addition, TxDOT posts meeting notices in newspapers and via social media. The proposed project would combine and/or relocate some ramps in Segment 2 to meet current design standards and improve safety, but proposed improvements would not eliminate access to I-45. The proposed project would also provide continuous frontage roads at the I-610 interchange to improve connectivity and access. Noise impacts have been assessed and preliminary noise barrier locations are identified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Noise barriers are proposed in many locations of the proposed project, including in Segment 2. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners.

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455	Farrar, Jessica	7/27/2017	Email	Residents and commuters need easier access in and out of their communities without feeling isolated because of the distance between entrances and exits. The neighborhood does not want to bear the brunt of the future freeway construction projects and not have the ability to utilize them. Accessible routes into downtown and the Texas Medical Center are critical for those who are employed in the area or are in need of services.	The study team attempted to maintain all existing connections between neighborhoods along the freeways, and to improve connections where feasible. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT has coordinated with the COH, METRO, and surrounding neighborhoods to develop a plan that provides improved highway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian, and local street connectivity.
455	Farrar, Jessica	7/27/2017	Email	A creative way to connect communities along IH-45 is the foundation for a deck park between Cottage and N. Main. The proposed park connects the Northside community to the Woodland Heights via shared public green space.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
455	Farrar, Jessica	7/27/2017	Email	Additionally, please consider both providing solutions to address noise mitigation for residential areas throughout Segments 1-3, such as sound walls and methods to reduce asphalt pavement noise.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. FHWA does not currently allow state DOTs to consider pavement as a noise abatement measure. Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels. This pavement treatment will be placed on all non-elevated structures. Structures such as overpasses and elevated connectors will not have the longitudinal-tined pavement.
455	Farrar, Jessica	7/27/2017	Email	Lastly, I also continue to hear concerns from constituents of their desire to receive notifications from TxDOT on the proposed project, especially those who will experience a direct impact as a business owner or resident.	TxDOT has mailed public meeting/hearing notices since 2011 to thousands of stakeholders, including adjacent property owners and others on the project mailing list. Attendees of meetings and commenters who provide mail and email addresses are added to the mailing list for future communications. In addition, TxDOT posts meeting notices in newspapers and via social media. Regarding acquisition of property for right-of-way, TxDOT typically contacts property owners after the project has environmental clearance.
455	Farrar, Jessica	7/27/2017	Email	Moreover, the expansion of IH-45 is an opportunity to lay the groundwork for future mass transit projects, including high-speed rail. Dedicated lanes for high speed rail and high occupancy vehicles provide alternatives to private vehicles and relieve congestion on the freeway. The implementation of both pedestrian and bike friendly connectors to access adjacent historical neighborhoods will also complement existing hike and bike trails and mass transit options, such as METRO buses and the nearby METRORail.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO, the City of Houston, and other stakeholders during the preliminary design and will continue to coordinate during detailed design. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
457	Garcia, Sylvia	7/27/2017	Written	As we move forward with one of the largest highway improvement projects in the long history of the Houston Area, I would like to submit a few requests to be included in the public comments. I would first like to thank the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for undertaking this important and needed project. All Houstonians appreciate your efforts to relieve congestion in our region, especially in Houston's Downtown.	Comment noted.
457	Garcia, Sylvia	7/27/2017	Written	But as we move forward and I respectfully request that you consider the community and small businesses that this project will adversely affect. This is particularly important because many of the Senate District 6 neighborhoods affected by this project are low income and particularly vulnerable in real estate transactions and reduced connectivity. I ask that TxDOT to treat every neighborhood with the same respect you would a more affluent community with access to legal representation.	The analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts was updated in the Final EIS (further evaluation of the Preferred Alternative). TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the Houston Housing Authority and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses used by low-income and/or minority populations, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Documentation of the coordination and outcomes is included in the Final EIS.
457	Garcia, Sylvia	7/27/2017	Written	In the 85th Legislative Session I filed HB 1294 which would have required TxDOT to coordinate and communicate any highway closure with public officials from municipalities that will be affected by the closure. Despite HB 1294 not passing, I urge you to make every effort to implement the core principles of the bill, which only requires a line of communication with the department and local municipalities, it does not require the department to suspend or delay construction or road closures. We have a real opportunity to help people with increased connectivity and to minimize the negative impact to the community.	TxDOT will coordinate with the City of Houston, METRO, school districts, and others during planning of the phasing of construction of the proposed project so that impacts to communities of temporary road closures are minimized. During construction, TxDOT will provide advance notification of any planned temporary road closures and detours.
457	Garcia, Sylvia	7/27/2017	Written	Up to this point in the planning stage, I appreciate how TXDOT has listened and shown a willingness to work with our community, and for working to build a modern highway system to move vehicles faster and safer. I look forward to Implementing the plan, and continuing to work with the agency to ensure the best transportation project for all concerned.	Comment noted.
458	George, Thomas	7/27/2017	Project Website	I strongly object to designing the 288 Toll Lane ramps to be directed from / into Chenevert Street in Midtown. This area is surrounded by a very actively attended, quiet, and very safe community park with amenities for adults, children and pets. It is also sandwiched between a school and high density housing. This area is not conducive to channeling the high volume downtown sourced or destined, southbound destined or sourced rush hour morning and afternoon traffic onto the high occupancy tool lanes. I am a 7 year resident on La Branch Street, a former President and Board Member of the 167 unit Baldwin Square Homeowners Association. I have worked hard with our residents to improve Midtown to be a safe and prosperous, active community. This plan, as designed, will destroy the multi-year work of so many taxpayers to improve the community.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
459	Gibson, Steven	7/27/2017	Email	As the property owner of Silver Street Studios and partner in Sawyer Yards Creative Campus, I support the re-routing the freight train lines North of downtown in conjunction with the TXDoT rebuild plan. This potential project alignment is the best opportunity to fix a major transit, safety, noise and infrastructure issue here. https://goo.gl/tKK2Vj	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**CTC foresees downtown construction impacts as the greatest NHHIP impact, and there is no documentation regarding construction impacts.** **CTC cannot support the NHHIP Project without further written analysis, supplementation of the Constructability document, public input and input from elected officials addressing the long term construction impacts of Segment 3, its impact on the downtown viability, and the operability of the finished interchange segments**. Long-term construction impacts, direct and indirect, on the resilience and viability of our downtown are foreseeable and must be numerically documented as to reductions in ingress and egress speeds and impacts on businesses and residents after holding extensive meetings regarding these issues. TxDOT did a Constructability document that should be incorporated into an RDEIS, and the foreseeable impacts occurring during construction (including mobility and business and job impacts) should be addressed in a Second Document. Elected officials and the public need to know just how long the construction will take, and more importantly, just how long they will have to endure congestion to get downtown. Pass through vehicle operators have the option of using I-610, Beltway 8, and the Grand Parkway, all of which were constructed in part as bypasses, but downtown business drivers, residents, and employees do not. Achievement of the project goals will be many years out, if ever. By then technology changes in mobility, not mentioned in this DEIS, may overtake the concrete design.	Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction. TxDOT will maintain access to adjacent properties. TxDOT will have a project-specific public involvement office throughout the construction period to provide advance information to the public, local businesses, and others about construction schedules, and temporary roadway detours and closures. TxDOT's constructability analysis continues and is not included in the Final EIS.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Interchange Reconstruction: Capacity Utilization, Avoiding Built In Bottlenecks, And Meeting Performance Metrics** CTC agrees with HNTB's description of the entire NHHIP project as one large interchange at least for the Segment 3 interchanges and the I-610 /I-45 interchange. CTC almost always supports improving road mobility and safety by reconstructing interchanges first, rather than last. The interchanges need to be planned first through iterations or directly. Generally, completed interchange designs lack capacity to keep traffic from moving at the project design speeds, thereby generating bottlenecks that are misconstrued as congestion, and falsely creating a perceived spiraling need for yet greater capacity or road miles on the pancake portions of the road. Further, if roads are going to be built, it is the interchange that should be overbuilt if anything. The interchange should be built with enough capacity to avoid creating automatic bottlenecks due to speed reductions. This is not the sequence that has been followed in most cases. It appears to CTC that measurable amounts of land will be added to the I-69 and I-10 interchanges and design of the other interchanges will rely on stacking to improve capacity. The addition to the Constructability Memo, suggested below, is intended to elicit discussion regarding which Segment 3 interchanges will improve performance and how.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	The City of Houston must become involved with mitigation for this project: (a) first, the city needs to coordinate with TxDOT to determine temporary routes stakeholders can take to get to downtown during Segment 3 construction; and (b) second, the city must take an active role to protect city parklands from project impacts. **Downtown construction will necessitate active coordination with city officials to plan local routes for persons to take who work downtown.** TxDOT should encourage the city to make plans for traffic during construction. A plan should be developed for access to downtown using major streets and optimized signalization. CTC does not see any coordination in the DEIS and such efforts should be made available to the public for comment.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston during the detailed design phase. TxDOT will have a project-specific public involvement office throughout the construction period to provide advance information to the public, local businesses, and others about construction schedules, and temporary roadway detours and closures.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Flooding and drainage issues are probably the second greatest impact of this project. TxDOT acknowledges the presence of these impacts. These issues can and must be mitigated. Written financial mitigation commitments, particularly for flooding and drainage to achieve safety and evacuation goals, are needed for all 3 segments.** Manmade flooding is an ongoing problem for the I-45 corridor, and it will be exacerbated by the reconstruction and its huge amounts of additional impervious surfaces and elevation buildup causing storm water runoff to at grade feeder lanes and adjacent stakeholders. The Segment 3 depressed areas require particular analysis and provision for funding and equipment to achieve normal mobility, and the safety, emergency preparedness, and evacuation goals of the project and of FAST.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**CTC particularly asks for full disclosure of the construction operations timeline, mobility impacts, and financial, business, and residential impacts of the Segment 3 Downtown Loop stakeholders.** The highly complex Segment 3 is slated to be constructed first. FAST Performance Metrics must show that the Segment 3 impacts far outweigh its benefits once it is built as designed years from now. Based on our observations of other interchange reconstructions, downtown may be gripped by construction induced gridlock for at least 7 years. The TxDOT/HNTB's very helpful Constructability Technical Memo, which became available after the DEIS, indicates that come of the downtown interchange structures will not be let or commenced until 2026 if CTC reads the memo correctly. This document is very elegant and informative in terms of explaining whether all the Segment 3 interchanges can be reconstructed at all and what is the optimum sequencing of the construction of the various pieces of each of the interchanges. The Constructability document, with modifications as necessary, should be incorporated by reference to the RDEIS. But the Constructability Memo fails to address a major concern of CTC: the multi-year and crushing construction congestion. CTC is especially concerned about the possibility of very great and negative impacts on the viability of downtown businesses and mobility during construction due to the multi-year reconstruction of the Segment 3 interchanges. Based on our observations regarding other interchange construction projects, CTC thinks the Segment 3 Downtown Loop, as planned, will cause many years of choking congestion to our already vulnerable downtown. TxDOT must explain in meetings with both the public and elected officials and in written studies, the extent and duration of downtown access and egress congestion. It must include an avoidance or mitigation plan for business losses, the need to relocate businesses out of the downtown area, and related job losses. City officials must get involved in planning alternate local routes so drivers can get into the city and to offset the economic harm the city will in all likelihood suffer during the construction. Besides downtown construction operations impacts, there are many significant issues which require further analysis and mitigation before proceeding to an FEIS. Flooding and drainage and road buildup or fill impacts are probably the second greatest of the readily foreseeable impacts.	Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction. TxDOT will maintain access to adjacent properties. During construction, TxDOT will maintain a comparable number of travel lanes as currently exist. TxDOT will have a project-specific public involvement office throughout the construction period to provide advance information to the public, local businesses, and others about construction schedules, and temporary roadway detours and closures. The project plans and specifications will include provisions requiring the construction contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work-hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems. TxDOT contractors and developers shall comply with local construction noise ordinances. Some portions of the proposed project would be on new location, which will allow some construction to take place without impacting existing traffic. TxDOT's constructability analysis continues and is not included in the Final EIS.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**A Revised DEIS (RDEIS) Is Needed Prior To Proceeding To An FEIS In Order To Treat These Impacts and To Provide Mitigation Plans, and To Incorporate Additional Documentation, Studies, and Analyses** The Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") is a premature tool to use to proceed to an FEIS and does not identify or consider sufficiently or at all major economic, safety, mitigation, and environmental issues arising from the revised design and construction of the NHHIP project. TxDOT states on its website that design changes are not included in the current evaluation of alternatives for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, but will be presented at the public hearing and included and evaluated in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. The purpose of the DEIS is to pick the Preferred Alternatives, or Proposed Recommended Alternatives (PRA) in TxDOT parlance, not to postpone showing those to the public until the FEIS or hiding them from scrutiny until it is too late to do anything. We do not think TxDOT executives, its excellent project managers and environmental staff, and consultants really want to do this. These are rather errors it is not too late to fix. Further, because of the MOU between TxDOT and FHWA, TxDOT can approve its own FEIS and issue its own Record of Decision (ROD) or final approval as to environmental clearance. CTC thinks this self-certification is too risky for a project that "only comes along every 50 years," and CTC asserts that FHWA should at least review, formally or informally, any revised Segment 3 analysis. The NHHIP is unnecessarily unwieldy in scope for proper and efficient environmental clearance.	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. Accordingly, TxDOT is not required to prepare a supplemental DEIS. TxDOT is mindful that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, updated/revised technical reports were posted on the project website and were available at the TxDOT Houston District office.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**CTC recommends to separate the 3 segments into two separate environmental documents: one for Segment 3 and one for Segments 1 and 2. Consider constructing Segments 1 and 2 first.** CTC sees no segmentation issues preventing the separation of the segments into 2 projects. Constructing Segment 1 first, particularly the I-610 /I-45 interchange, will provide mobility and safety benefits that should not be deferred while waiting on Segment 3. If Segment 3 is gridlocked, so is Segment 1 TxDOT chooses to construct Segment 3, the newest design, first. It has no really good reason other than a press statement that Houston's problems are in the downtown area first and foremost. Even though this is essentially a brownfield project, it is too complex, the stakeholders are too varied, and the impacts too significant for the public to grasp in one document. If the Segment 3 is going to be constructed first, there will be an unnecessary and unsupportable multi-year lead time between environmental clearance for Segments 2 and 1 and actual construction unless it is a funding question. Timing clearance closer to construction reduces aggravating and incorrect claims regarding portions of major projects such as "a meeting was held" five years ago on the other side of town when commencing projects that surprise the public. A stated purpose of the project is to improve "pass through." CTC thought that was the purpose of I-610, Beltway 8, and the Grand Parkway; road users should not get both a pass through and a bypass.	The proposed project is a single project; therefore, it is addressed in one environmental document. The project is not proposed for "pass through" traffic. The proposed improvements will also benefit local traffic. I-10, I-610, Beltway 8 and SH 99 are intended to service movements beyond Downtown. The traffic modeling indicated that there was a heavy demand for traffic to pass through downtown to points inside of I-610. The proposed improvements were designed to address this demand.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Funding Commitments Must Be Included In The DEIS And Earmarked For Mitigation Of Certain Impacts Arising From The Preferred Alternatives For Each Segment** Funding commitments must be included in the DEIS and earmarked for Mitigation of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts arising from the Preferred Alternatives. Without a clear understanding at the DEIS stage of environmental project costs and provision for their mitigation, the public gets a false sense of how efficient the project will be, and how many costs will be shifted to stakeholders. Adequate compensation and infrastructure must be set aside for drainage, flooding, and Environmental Justice issues triggered by the project. Mentioning possible mitigation, particularly for drainage and flooding, is not sufficient. Nor is stamping on a project birds eye document "Planned Subject To Change." CTC has seen "Planned Subject To Change" detention structures for I-10 that have yet to be built, and probably will never be. We have had tragic results from not addressing these commitments earlier, rather than later.	Project funding will include mitigation. The Final EIS includes mitigation and other commitments, including for drainage, Environmental Justice, and other issues. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Future Vehicles and Freight Automation; Air Quality and Congestion Management** The project is being built for old year vehicle models for a design year that will span many changes in automotive types and surface roads use that cannot be forecast. These vehicle and transport operations changes are not referred to in the DEIS, but it is CTC's understanding from its research, that changes are coming soon whether we are ready or not. The vehicle changes may have positive impacts on Air Quality and Congestion Management. The freight automation may have to avoid downtown due to construction congestion and difficulty of operational use. TxDOT should confer with H-GAC and with staff internally as to whether it can take conformity credits and whether it approves of such vehicular changes.	Traffic projections used for the proposed project are based on the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), developed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council, which is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the eight-county Houston-Galveston Transportation Management Area. The MaX lanes could accommodate autonomous vehicles.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Achievement of I-45 As An Evacuation Route Requires Financial Commitments and Cost Estimates For All 3 Segments** CTC has a major issue with emergency evacuation as a stated purpose of the project. There is no discussion in the DEIS regarding evacuation plans other than to say I-45 is a major evacuation route, and that there is extensive flooding that impedes that purpose. If evacuation is a major purpose of the project, flooding and man-made build up runoff must be abated or the project goals should be changed. Written financial mitigation commitments, particularly for flooding and drainage to achieve safety and evacuation goals and a brief analysis of how much flooding mitigation will cost, for all 3 segments should be included in the RDEIS. There will be multi-year congestion in Segment 3 constraining access and traffic flow, let alone evacuation. The DEIS acknowledges there are currently multiple depressed areas, and there will possibly be more. With proper pumping, distributed/onsite generation, and air circulation, and rerouting signage, the constraints of the depressed areas can be reduced for both evacuations and other emergencies. Segments 1 and 2 also require funding earmarks for drainage to achieve the evacuation purpose. Some sort of hazmat spill and terrorist plan should be considered as a separate document, perhaps as an exhibit or technical memorandum. (Surely those plans already exist, perhaps with a federal agency. Houston already has the I-610 Loop, Beltway 8, and the Grand Parkway to assist pass through traffic during construction and those features were all constructed with hurricane "evacuation" as a stated purpose and need.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. TxDOT will coordinate with the City of Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering, and Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) as needed, relative to regulatory floodplains and floodplain management during the design and evaluation of the proposed project. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. Houston TranStar is a partnership of representatives from the City of Houston, Harris County, METRO, and TxDOT who share resources and exchange information to keep motorists informed, roadways clear, and lives safe in the Houston area. TranStar manages the region's transportation system and is the primary coordination site for state, county and local agencies when responding to incidents and emergencies. The mission of Houston TranStar's collaborative effort is to provide highly effective transportation and emergency management services through the combined use of the partners' collective resources to maximize safety and mobility to the public.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1: Construct The IH-610/IH-45 Interchange First Of All Project Segments; Consider Design Modifications To Increase The Planned Capacity Of The Interchange To Avoid Creating A Built-In Bottleneck.** This interchange is considered as the southern boundary of Segment 1. As a common sense matter and to conform to FAST Optimization requirements, ALL the interchanges need to be rank ordered, not just for Segment 3, for both mobility and safety. CTC strongly recommends that this structure be rebuilt first because it is out of date and unsafe. Its reconstruction will provide better access to I-610 and I-45, to I-69 from I-610, and to the Hardy Toll Road, thereby providing better utility and access to a large number of alternate road opportunities. This will provide a good opportunity for TxDOT to develop better signage and lane marking for merging from one road to another to improve the functionality of the interchange. Those markings may be adopted for the Segment 3 interchanges which will pose significantly greater complexity of use by drivers. CTC almost always supports improving road mobility and safety by reconstructing interchanges first rather than last. The interchanges need to be planned first through iterations or directly. Generally completed interchange designs lack capacity to keep traffic from moving at the project design speeds, thereby generating bottlenecks that are misconstrued as congestion, and falsely creating a perceived need for yet greater capacity or road miles on the pancake portions of the road. Further, if roads are going to be built, it is the interchange that should be overbuilt if anything. The interchange should be built with enough capacity to avoid creating automatic bottlenecks due to speed reductions. This is not the sequence that has been followed in most cases.	This interchange is a high priority and will probably be the next construction project after the Downtown area (highest priority).
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1: Design Change For MaX Lanes** CTC always supports combined toll lanes and transit where it can pay for itself or even nearly pay for itself. CTC, however, here recommends that the interconnectors to the I-610 /I-45 interchange allowing access from I-610 to the I-45 toll and HOV lanes be dropped as a design change. This is a very convoluted and expensive feature for a small gain in mobility. Traffic counts, unless they are restated in the RDEIS, or unless CTC misconstrues them, do not support these direct connectors just at this particular interchange. If traffic counts and fares justify the feature, CTC could support it.	TxDOT has coordinated extensively with METRO on the mentioned connections. The T-ramps are being eliminated because their position interferes with other freeway operations; the wishbone ramps will replace the T-ramps that must be removed.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1: Taking of Land, Environmental Justice, and Compensation For Business Owners and Business Tenants** CTC objects to the continued construction of feeder roads and reliance on abutting businesses as a source of the economic development and redevelopment, but feeder road businesses are already well established along Segment 1. Many of those businesses present Environmental Justice issues and compensation payments are not transparent, often are late, and are often discriminatory. Takings and Environmental Justice: TxDOT Real Estate Must Treat Stakeholders Fairly. Mitigation Is A Small Part Of The Project Cost. Environmental Justice is a big issue for business owners and business tenants in this segment. Many of the stakeholders adjacent to or whose land will be taken or who will be forced to move their business are underrepresented and lack access to legal counsel. Due to significant expansion of the footprint of this segment, much land will be taken and much of it is owned or rented by small or minority businesses. Most of these businesses appear to have little negotiating power and cannot afford legal representation. TxDOT appears to have a low ball strategy for these areas of Environmental Justice impacts. This is not conducive to economic growth and certainly is not fair. TxDOT real estate should be punished rather than praised for exercising undue pressure on these businesses. The FHWA should review these purchases if TxDOT thinks this is an acceptable strategy, but it is one that is seen on many TxDOT road construction projects. For a massive, multi-year project such as this, TxDOT must be able to make fair and reasonable commitments to stakeholders whose property or businesses are taken. The document "State of Texas Landowner's Bill of Rights" provides "Your property cannot be taken without adequate compensation. Adequate compensation includes the market value of the property being taken. It may also include certain damages if your remaining property's market value is diminished by the acquisition itself or by the way the condemning entity will use the property." TXDOT appears to ignore this statement. There is no restriction on paying compensation for business relocation and business losses to business renters as well as business owners. These persons should not have to rely on business owners to share their compensation.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. All property acquisition and relocations will be handled in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to all persons and businesses required to relocate. Displaced persons and businesses will receive relocation benefits as provided by federal and state law. There are multiple examples where the proposed project will remove physical barriers and add new connections to improve connectivity (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) between minority and/or low-income communities. Additional information is included in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS. TxDOT and the NHHIP Study Team contacted owners/representatives of some of the businesses that would be displaced to better understand the impacts to business, employees, and customers, including determining if the business are minority-owned, if their employees are minority, and to understand if they serve specific minority, low-income, or other sensitive populations. Based on information received, TxDOT has proposed and will implement reasonable mitigation measures to assist businesses owners and their tenants.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1: This segment of NHHIP already has small signs delineating a no-trucks for this lane. There are also a few metered ramps. CTC recommends that the RDEIS make reference to studies examining metering and truck restrictions as performance measures.** CTC observes that these restrictions are often ignored by drivers on this Segment 1 portion, but meters and truck lane restrictions may make this Segment work better. This same remark is applicable to Segment 2.	The existing truck lane restrictions in Segment 1 were implemented for safety because of the lack of inside shoulders on I-45. One of the primary safety improvements of the NHHIP is adding the missing or width-deficient inside shoulders back to the corridor to allow for emergency breakdowns. The decision to reinstate the inside lane as restricted truck lane will be handled during the detail design phase or later. This decision would not change the footprint or operations of NHHIP as planned.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3: While Scenario Planning is Voluntary Under FAST Regulations, It is Necessary For Segment 3.** Scenario planning and optimization must be considered to minimize interchange construction impacts for downtown. As mentioned above, TxDOT should work with HNTB to prepare an addition to its Constructability Technical Memo to analyze construction impacts. It should work backward to see if the Constructability memo needs to be modified. CTC remarks that in accordance with MAP-21 and FAST Transportation Planning and Collaboration requirements, TxDOT must meet with local officials and business stakeholders and explain in detail the construction sequence, construction congestion, the expected completion date of all the various interchange structures to be constructed downtown and the business, financial, and mobility impacts on downtown businesses during the multi-year construction phase. A new mandate for State departments of transportation (hereafter referred to simply as "States") and metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) to take a performance-based approach to planning and programming; a new framework for voluntary scenario planning; new authority for the integration of the planning and environmental review processes; and a process for programmatic mitigation plans. CTC thinks the public and elected officials lack information about the duration or sequencing of the Segment 3 interchange structure construction plans and particularly the ongoing and major financial and mobility impacts arising from the reconstruction of the downtown interchanges because they are not explained in the DEIS. The public and elected officials especially need a clear explanation of the mobility and financial impacts of the construction and gridlock that Segment 3 as designed and sequenced will cause. The public must be made aware that one interchange will not be finished, and then TxDOT will move onto the next. Normally CTC views construction as a temporary impact. But the downtown project segment will have ongoing construction for years, with the last structures being commenced in 2026. Local officials, including the county officials who complained about I-69 congestion, must understand the duration of construction congestion, the failure of the downtown to benefit until the entire Segment 3 is reconstructed, and the financial impacts on businesses and neighborhoods in the Segment 3 area. CTC is concerned about the detriment of the project to our downtown to survive the project. Further the DEIS fails to address at all or adequately many of the major problems and impacts and mitigation plans of the project.	Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction. TxDOT will maintain access to adjacent properties. TxDOT will have a project-specific public involvement office throughout the construction period to provide advance information to the public, local businesses, and others about construction schedules, and temporary roadway detours and closures. TxDOT will require the Segment 3 Design-Build contractor(s) to maintain a list of key stakeholders including downtown businesses, agencies, and organizations and hold regular periodic meetings with these groups as part of the public information plan. These meetings will be used to provide updates on major sequences of work and the time periods for these activities as well as notification of major traffic shifts, ramp closures or other key construction activities. This will include media releases to these groups discussing these activities in advance of their occurrence. This will allow both the advance communication of key sequence activities and the timely update for any adjustments in these activities based on construction conditions, weather conditions, or other impacts to the timing of scheduled activities. TxDOT will also utilize lane rental charges which require the contractor to make payments if lanes are reduced or closed during identified peak periods. These lane rental charges provide incentive to perform closures and lane reductions during evenings and weekends to maximize available lane capacity during the peak periods.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3: The DEIS does not discuss performance-related provisions and particularly efficient investment of funds; this is a statutory requirement and a rulemaking is being developed. TxDOT should be out ahead of the rulemaking given the magnitude of this project and its self-oversight.** CTC , at previous scoping meetings, addressed the lack of forecasted gains in mobility for the NHHIP. With a previous forecast, the gain was to be 4 mph. Now the completed downtown gain is 20 mph. CTC is skeptical but thinks discussion is necessary in the RDEIS as to how the mobility performance is so drastically improved by completion of the Segment 3 interchanges and whether it is, on net, worth the investment. This can be explained in greater detail at the FEIS or TIP level. MAP-21, and now FAST, requires a performance-driven, outcome-based program that provides for a greater level of transparency and accountability, improved project decision making, and more efficient investment of Federal transportation funds. See, e.g., 23 U.S.C. 150(a). As part of this performance-based approach, recipients of Federal-aid highway program funds and Federal transit funds are required to link the investment priorities contained in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to achievement of performance targets. In a series of rulemakings, FHWA and FTA will establish national performance measures in key areas, including safety, infrastructure condition, congestion, system reliability, emissions, and freight movement. "The Proposed Recommended Alternative (PRA) for Segment 3 includes the complete reconstruction and reconfiguration of the highways that comprise the "Downtown Loop." When combined, Segment 2 (I-610 to I-10) and Segment 3 function as "one large interchange". Therefore, it is critical to construct the entire interchange to realize the congestion relief benefits that this alternative offers."	As part of the NEPA process, the evaluation of alternatives included engineering, traffic, and safety performance measures. The primary performance measures for developing alternatives were reducing vehicle hours traveled (VHT) and crash reductions due to the high number of crashes in Segment 3. The early alternatives studied, including underground tunnels and converting the downtown freeway ring into a traffic circle, did not address the safety and congestion issues. After a comprehensive traffic study update in 2014, it was determined that an approach that provided a downtown destination and a through movement was needed for each interstate in the downtown freeway ring. This is what generated the Proposed Recommended Alternative that was presented at the Public Hearing in May 2017. From a measurable safety investment, the FHWA required Interstate Access Justification Report (IAJR) found that the Segment 3 Proposed Recommended Alternative will provide a reduction in crashes between 30 and 60 percent.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3: The H-GAC TPC and public should oppose Segment 3 from being moved to the TIP until the issue of mid-term and long-term damage to downtown viability are fleshed out.** "$1.3 billion of the estimated construction costs was approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in March 2017. This will cover the first three segments of the "one large interchange" with a letting date of FY 2020 for the starter project. It is anticipated that the remainder of the funding will be approved by the Commission in the August 2017 UTP update." CTC agrees with HNTB's description of the entire NHHIP project as one large interchange at least for the Segment 3 interchanges and the I-610 /I-45 interchange. CTC almost always supports that road mobility and safety are improved by reconstructing interchanges first rather than last. The interchanges definitely need to be planned first through iterations or directly. Generally completed interchange designs lack capacity to keep traffic from moving at the project design speeds thereby generating bottlenecks that are misconstrued as congestion falsely creating a perceived need for yet greater capacity or road miles on the pancake portions of the road. Further, if roads are going to be built, it is the interchange that should be overbuilt if anything. The interchange should be built with enough capacity to avoid creating automatic bottlenecks due to speed reductions. This is not the sequence that has been followed in most cases. Discussion and analysis of FAST-required Optimization and sequencing of the projects should be added in the Revised DEIS text or as a supporting exhibit. Incorporating the TECHNICAL MEMO, April 28, 2017 from HNTB to TxDOT styled "Constructability" goes a long way to addressing construction issues, but does not address operability or impact issues. That Technical Memo focuses more on mobility than safety. These interchanges, taken together or severally, are very complex and pose difficult driving conditions and choices for drivers and unimaginable choices for autonomous vehicles such as automated freight and passenger cars. Optimization needs to consider not only whether the interchanges can be constructed—CTC has absolutely no doubt that they can be—but also how they will operate and how impacts can be minimized so the greatest net gain can be achieve. As for which interchange in Segment 3 should be rebuilt first, CTC defers to TxDOT, but states that biases in favor of pass through traffic should not dictate the sequence.	The Segment 3 portion of the project is currently programmed to be built as two projects: One is along I-69 between Spur 527 and SH 288 which is being designed for a traditional letting to construction. The remainder of Segment 3 which covers the interchanges with I-69 and SH 288; I-69 and I-45; I-69/I-45 and I-10; and I-45 and I-10 to west of Houston Street on I-10 and to north of Quitman Street on I-45 which will be delivered under a Design-Build project delivery. The Design-Build project will include specifications limiting the lane closures along the major interstate roadways based on time of day and day of the week and will also limit impacting adjacent cross streets at the same time. The technical provisions will also include restrictions on closure of adjacent ramps at the same time to focus on maintaining access to and from downtown throughout construction. These provisions will also require the Design-Build Contractor to submit a Traffic Management Plan in advance for review and approval. TxDOT is already conducting regular meetings with METRO and the City of Houston concerning requirements for coordination during construction including advance notifications and approaches to mitigate impacts such as detours of bus routes, temporary relocation of bus stops, maintaining light rail service using shoe-fly tracks, and local street sequence requirements. There will also be restrictions during identified special events including events at the George R. Brown Convention Center and downtown sports facilities. Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during final design in accordance with required technical specifications, and coordinated with METRO and the City of Houston as they are developed. Generally the same number of through main-lanes will be maintained during peak periods as in the existing condition. The existing I-45 Pierce Elevated section will remain operational until traffic can be re-routed to the realigned I-45 on the east and north sides of downtown. Including the multiple interchanges into a single Design-Build Contract will aide in coordination and sequencing to avoid multiple projects that may create conflicting closures or detours.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**FAST Regulation 23 CFR Part 450 Requires Funding to Be Committed for the Several Types of Mitigation; It Should Be Earmarked** FAST regulations have specific requirements for Planning that do not appear to be documented and may not have been investigated internally. Further CTC sees only a minimal amount of coordination with agencies and other entities who will provide transportation facilities of the future. There are many significant impacts for which a commitment to mitigation should be made at the DEIS level so stakeholders can evaluate the commitments and be assured that mitigation will actually take place. These include, among others, financial commitment and earmarking for (1) drainage, detention, and pumping facilities and associated lighting facilities; (2) proper and prompt compensation for underserved entities, (3) proper and prompt compensation to persons and property owners who have been offered inadequate compensation for their property at entrances and exit ramps (4) financial commitments for transportation alternatives; and (5) ongoing funding for emergency procedures for depressed portions of the freeway. For CTC to support the project, we recommend that funds be cabined, earmarked, and escrowed for these purposes and that a reasonable sinking fund be established.	All mitigation and other commitments included in the NHHIP Final EIS and ROD will be implemented by TxDOT and will be included in the project funding.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**All Segments: Flooding, Drainage, Pumps, Detention, and Changes To Flood Mapping & Prediction; Changes To LIDAR Mapping** Apart from downtown construction congestion, our currently unmitigated flooding impacts are the greatest safety and evacuation impacts and cause of property damage for the NHHIP corridor. TxDOT's DEIS acknowledges flooding and flood impacts in several places. TxDOT's schemata are drawn in terms of proposed detention ponds, flood ways, and flood plains. The DEIS text mentions the impediment to evacuation, safety, and mobility caused by flooding. Flood mapping is an official government process. There will be changes to official flood mapping; and, consequently, there may be revised mitigation needs to be presented on the DEIS schemata to meet the project goals of safety and evacuation as well as property damage caused by failure to contain flooding and runoff. TxDOT has an Emergency Operations Center, but the mitigation topic here is infrastructure. Further, mapping of flood plains and flood ways and TxDOT required infrastructure need to be kept separate. TxDOT is only responsible for TxDOT floods, and the increase in TxDOT impervious surfaces will yield a considerable amount of TxDOT caused flooding and drainage constraints. Mapping changes represent a foreseeable need to update the DEIS. TxDOT will need to review its flood and drainage mapping to make certain it conforms to new drawings. The requirement may be ongoing until the science settles out, but TxDOT has no basis not to have its drawings conform.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. FEMA is responsible for promulgating and maintaining NFIP Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). FIRMs depict flood hazard information such as regulatory floodways, one percent annual exceedance probability (100-year) floodplains, and 0.2 percent annual exceedance probability (500-year) floodplains. FIRMs are used as the basis for the planning and design of flood risk reduction programs and projects. The Draft EIS, Final EIS, and preliminary drainage study for the NHHIP include exhibits that show floodplain mapping effective at the time of the studies. In 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released revised precipitation-frequency data for Texas, termed "Atlas-14" data. The data included in Atlas 14 updates rainfall depth information that had been used since the 1960s, and included data in Texas through December 2017, which incorporates rainfall from Hurricane Harvey. It is estimated that the future Atlas 14 1% (100-year) floodplain can be estimated by using the current published 0.2% (500-year) floodplain (HCFCD 2019). As of July 2019, the Atlas 14 data must be used when designing and constructing drainage features as part of development in Harris County. Using the Atlas 14 data, studies to update floodplain mapping for Harris County are ongoing. TxDOT is using the updated precipitation-frequency estimates when designing new construction projects.
460	Handy, Dexter	7/27/2017	Email	**All Segments: Flooding, Drainage, Pumps, Detention, and Changes To Flood Mapping & Prediction; Changes To LIDAR Mapping** The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (HFIAA) requires FEMA to implement a flood mapping program, after a review by the Technical Mapping Advisory Committee (TMAC). In several of the FEMA reallocation bills before Congress, recommendations of the TMAC have been followed. Specifically, TMAC recommends that because 26% of flooded properties nationwide are outside of any mapped floodplain, National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) be based upon relative elevations rather than strictly on riverine floodplain maps. The plan is to transition from a 1% annual chance of flooding to a structure-specific flood frequency determination. New technologies such as Geiger LIDAR will allow rapid assessment and deployment of new FIRMs. Further, TMAC has recommended that FEMA both drive the research and application of the science necessary for this transition. This presents a problem for Houston, where 65% of homes that flooded are outside mapped floodplains, and for Harris County where that number increases to nearly 70% according to FEMA data (unreported or uninsured flooding would likely make these numbers higher). In July, the NSF/FEMA Committee for Urban Flooding held its meeting in Houston, having identified Houston as one of the worst offenders. It should be clear that the Houston Metropolitan area will be significantly impacted by these changes. By extension, large multi-year projects that both impact the floodplains and are impacted by floodplains should be delayed pending which reallocation bill is adopted. GAO asked FEMA to evaluate the impact of future conditions on the National Flood Insurance Program. In their report the GAO concluded that by the year 2100 our floodplains will increase by an average 45% nationally, the number of polices will increase by 80% and our average loss per policy will increase by 50% based on today's dollars. There is a perception that if a roadway is a few feet outside of a floodplain that it is exempt from flooding. It isn't. This DEIS shows increased impacts on existing floodplains. HFIAA requires FEMA to look at design for future risk conditions even if TxDOT is not required to do so. Almost surely there will be greater impacts once new FIRMs are released.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. In 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released revised precipitation-frequency data for Texas, termed "Atlas-14" data. The data included in Atlas 14 updates rainfall depth information that had been used since the 1960s, and included data in Texas through December 2017, which incorporates rainfall from Hurricane Harvey. It is estimated that the future Atlas 14 1% (100-year) floodplain can be estimated by using the current published 0.2% (500-year) floodplain (HCFCD 2019). As of July 2019, the Atlas 14 data must be used when designing and constructing drainage features as part of development in Harris County. Using the Atlas 14 data, studies to update floodplain mapping for Harris County are ongoing. TxDOT is using the updated precipitation-frequency estimates when designing new construction projects.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1: Impervious Surfaces, Storm Water Runoff, And Flood Detention. Flood Mapping Updates.** Due to the massive change in the footprint of I-45 for Segment 1, there will be massive changes in the impervious surfaces and storm water runoff in this area. The DEIS notes that current flooding, and a fortiori expanded footprint flooding, must be mitigated for I-45 to serve as an evacuation route. Mitigation must be provided both for existing and new project caused flooding and any changes in flood mapping. Such mitigation is also needed to preserve normal mobility during rainstorms and to protect adjacent businesses from runoff due to permitted or unpermitted fill and run off from the highway. In several places, the lands are already low and some construction will take place at or near flood plains and flood ways. In our low lying area, flood mapping is being updated. DEIS project maps should be checked for a need to update. Mitigation should be updated as necessary and a sinking fund should be set aside for changes in LIDAR and other mapping and forecasting technology; see next topic below. As stated elsewhere, funding should be committed to and earmarked for the construction adjacent to, or on, floodways. The amount of impervious surface will greatly increase due to the greatly increased amount of concrete. CTC appreciates the TxDOT's decision to avoid the floodway impacts on Little White Oak Bayou that would be posed by Alternative 4. We are sure this avoidance provides an environmental co-benefit.	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increases in impervious surface. TxDOT plans to mitigate for more impervious surface than required but will not mitigate for all existing pavement. In 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released revised precipitation-frequency data for Texas, termed "Atlas-14" data. The data included in Atlas 14 updates rainfall depth information that had been used since the 1960s, and included data in Texas through December 2017, which incorporates rainfall from Hurricane Harvey. It is estimated that the future Atlas 14 1% (100-year) floodplain can be estimated by using the current published 0.2% (500-year) floodplain (HCFCD 2019). As of July 2019, the Atlas 14 data must be used when designing and constructing drainage features as part of development in Harris County. Using the Atlas 14 data, studies to update floodplain mapping for Harris County are ongoing. TxDOT is using the updated precipitation-frequency estimates when designing new construction projects. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. TxDOT is coordinating with Harris County Flood Control District and the COH regarding regional drainage and flooding issues. See Section 3.8.3 of the Final EIS for additional information about studies that will be conducted by TxDOT during project design.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**CTC is conflicted about building depressed lanes for Segments 2 and 3 to serve as hurricane evacuation routes.** CTC appreciates the cantilevered design for our depressed routes on Segments 2 and 3 of the NHHIP. Using this bi-level configuration is an excellent way to increase capacity without extra space. Plus the at grade feeder roads can serve, to an extent, as evacuation routes as long as they are not inundated with ground level run off. Every road TxDOT builds has as a stated purpose "evacuation" and "safety." CTC does not know if that is serious or if it is an attempt to prevent litigation attacks on the purpose and need of a project. We do not know how many evacuation routes we need: SH99 (all segments), SH288 (which flooded), southern I-45, SH146, local roads in the southern part of H-GAC! Plus we do not have a sustainable policy regarding insurance costs, risk shifting, environmental costs, and land developers encouraging more land development near the coast. Of interest regarding the magnitude and frequency of our flooding problem is the recent testimony of Scott Edlemann, Senior VP of AECOM, the Senate Banking Oversight Committee. testified - *We also have a great deal of uncertainty within the calculations. In all actuality, the current 100-year average line shown on the flood insurance maps is perhaps closer to a safe design level of a 10-year event. This testimony shows a significant need to harden the equipment for our depressed portions of I-45 if we are serious about I-45 also being an evacuation route.* - Given the comment above and the requirement that FEMA rely more on science, it is highly likely that the definition of a 100-year event will also change and TxDOT's obligations will change. CTC also notes that there are more below-grade lanes than before. Numerous times below grade lanes along I-10, I-69, and SH-288 have flooded, most memorably during tropical storm Allison when trucks floated in the roadway. (picture of flooding)This was often cited as the reason the main lanes of I-10 were elevated. While we recognize that aesthetics and noise are improved by below-grade construction, building a hurricane escape route below grade strikes us as questionable, particularly given clear indications that severe rain events are increasing and sea levels are rising. At the very least, where stacked roadways are planned, the top deck should always be the path leading away from the Gulf.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation. Adding capacity to I 45, especially lanes that are flexible in operation, such as MaX lanes, would increase the carrying capacity of the roadway, thereby providing more efficient evacuation capabilities. Bringing I 45 up to current design standards would also improve operation and safety during normal and emergency operations. In 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released revised precipitation-frequency data for Texas, termed "Atlas-14" data. The data included in Atlas 14 updates rainfall depth information that had been used since the 1960s, and included data in Texas through December 2017, which incorporates rainfall from Hurricane Harvey. It is estimated that the future Atlas 14 1% (100-year) floodplain can be estimated by using the current published 0.2% (500-year) floodplain (HCFCD 2019). As of July 2019, the Atlas 14 data must be used when designing and constructing drainage features as part of development in Harris County. Using the Atlas 14 data, studies to update floodplain mapping for Harris County are ongoing. TxDOT is using the updated precipitation-frequency estimates when designing new construction projects. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. TxDOT is coordinating with Harris County Flood Control District and the COH regarding regional drainage and flooding issues. See Section 3.8.3 of the Final EIS for additional information about studies that will be conducted by TxDOT during project design.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Analysis of Emergencies Re Depressed Freeway Areas.** The FAST Act expands the focus on the resiliency of the transportation system. It newly requires strategies to reduce the vulnerability of existing transportation infrastructure to natural disasters, but also, terrorists, hazmat, and major natural disasters. The RDEIS should include strategies to reduce the road's vulnerability to these events. These can be strategies developed by 3rd party government agencies or others.	The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The COH has designated the I-610 Loop as a hazardous materials route. Hazardous material vehicles transporting hazardous materials product must use the I-610 Loop route and not travel through the city.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**TxDOT's truck freight plan:** The plan should have some address of TxDOT's new Truck Freight Plan apart from noise from the trucks. Specifically CTC is interested to know the reliance that will be made on the Segment 3 interchanges by truck freight operations.	This comment requires further clarification before a response can be written.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Metering and Access; Truck Only Lanes for Segments 2 and 1; On Off Ramps For Multiple Layers of the Project** The RDEIS should contain a discussion of metering, truck restrictions, and access from lower to higher (at grade) levels of depressed projects. The metering and truck use restrictions were mentioned above for Segment 1, but there should be a discussion regarding metering or other access provisions for vehicles to come from depressed levels of the project to an at grade level	The existing ramp metering system was implemented in the late 1970s due to lack of freeway capacity and ramp challenges. Ramp metering has been discussed as a potential freeway management strategy, but this decision will be made in a later phase of the project. Adding ramp meters would not change the footprint or operations of the NHHIP as planned. Metering of trucks between the depressed and at-grade sections of NHHIP has not been discussed and would be challenging to implement and manage. The planned improvements in NHHIP will increase overall safety by flattening horizontal curves, providing the newly-required federal standard for vertical curves of at least 18.5 feet of vertical clearance, and minimizing weaving areas.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	***CTC strongly supports multimodal transportation and access to mobility for all who cannot drive or who do not have a car. The NHHIP is a very complex project, but it is not a 21st Century project in terms of multimodality .*** MAP-21, strengthened by FAST, included provisions to make the Federal surface transportation more streamlined, performance-based, and multimodal. If TxDOT is ever going to get serious about air quality and congestion (and maintain access to funding), it is going to have to use more innovative ways of getting cars off the freeways. Multimodality will only result in a highway project either with coordination with agencies utilizing other modes or TxDOT's investment in commuter rail. It is true that by the time the Segment 3 project is finished, we may well be on our way to driverless, electric cars and automated freight and can claim CMAQ and other Air Quality credits.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Integration of NHHIP With Bus Transit.** Page 255 of the DEIS quotes in part: "The NHHIP aims to provide congestion relief and added capacity to I-45 in addition to supporting transit operations. Project objectives include "provide expanded transit and carpool opportunities with two-way, all-day service on MaX lanes, and access to METRO Park & Ride facilities. CTC is not certain how much coordination of planning there was with METRO regarding allowing METRO to use the planned NHHIP structures and whether that meets the 21st century spirit of MAP and FAST. Coordination with other agencies and private investors was not discussed in the DEIS. Other modes of automated transit were not discussed. No space is saved in the interchange alignments for other modes and in particular, no space is saved for a light rail to run along I-10 and through the I-10 interchange to downtown to serve the Texas Central Railway which is currently slated to terminate at METRO's Northwest Transit Center. CTC would think TxDOT would want to play some sole in the development of the bullet train and ancillary facilities.	TxDOT has coordinated extensively with METRO and will continue to do so during detailed design and construction. TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project. If this separate project moves forward, TxDOT will accommodate its design where possible, and will coordinate with the lead agency.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**CTC strongly supports multimodality.** One of CTC's 10 Transportation Principles is to "Provide access for all. Across the Houston region and the state, Texans want our transportation system to provide safe and affordable access to jobs and neighborhoods for all travelers. Many young people, seniors, and individuals with disabilities need safe alternatives to achieve desired mobility. One in five adult Texans cannot drive, and across Texas, more than 280,000 workers have no access to a car. We must invest in transit, bike paths, and sidewalks that provide access for all. Likewise, we must invest in transportation alternatives – including freight and passenger rail – that make efficient use of scarce resources while preserving quality of life in our communities.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3 Design (Long-dated change): CTC questions the need for removing the Pierce Elevated thus destroying efficient westside access to Segment 3. This is a long way off, however. The Pierce should also be considered for evacuation capacity.** There is really no efficient way for persons coming from the westside of Houston to access the Segment 3 interchanges. Without the Pierce Elevated, persons coming from the westside who want to go south, say to the Airport, or to the eastside of downtown or to the convention center, will have to go north to IH-10 or south to the dreaded I-610 Loop West, then I-69 north into town or stay on IH-610. This is awfully out of the way for such a big class of traffic. The Pierce, ugly and as bumpy as it is, has some utility as an evacuation route to move people to the west side of the city.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**All Segments: TxDOT must consider and mitigate adverse neighborhood impacts of the NHHIP design. The DEIS fails to identify measures for neighborhoods to mitigate the impact of its design choices.** Generally, CTC prefers to defer to neighborhood wishes regarding transportation projects and designs especially insofar as the design impacts their homes, safety, and use of local streets. It is after all, often their property that provides the route for the project. It is a long-standing CTC Application Principle to "Abate damage and harms to communities and property owners caused by transportation projects such as unlawful noise impacts and disruption of established communities and businesses caused by suboptimal project designs." Historically, highway projects in Houston have divided neighborhoods; yet neither that history nor the potential for future division of neighborhoods, is adequately addressed in the DEIS. CTC does not know if these suboptimal design flaws are a result of carelessness or lack of any feasible alternative, but feasible mitigation is still necessary. Segment 3: For example, Segment 3 traverses the center of Houston passing through downtown and skirting if not bisecting the city's oldest and most historic neighborhoods, i.e., First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Wards, creating barriers between these historic neighborhoods and downtown. The current Segment 3 plan includes the addition of managed lanes aimed solely at easing the ability of traffic to pass through the center of the city where not surprisingly traffic is highly congested. The project should be designed to ensure that traffic entering the central and most historic areas of the city is traffic destined for these areas and not traffic whose only intent is to pass through them.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation including, but not limited to, METRO, City of Houston, and Bike Houston. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report includes more detail about coordination with stakeholders.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**The DEIS should evaluate as an alternative the impact of eliminating pass through traffic from the central and most historic areas of the city.** Failure to design the NHHIP to eliminate pass through traffic from the city's center and most historic neighborhoods will impose many adverse impacts that are not adequately addressed, e.g., noise, air quality, visual, water quality and flooding, without identifying any benefit that clearly outweighs these adverse impacts. Segment 2: An additional example of how the proposed project will further divide and adversely impact existing neighborhoods is evidenced on the segment between I-610 and Beltway 8, which includes the edge of the historic African-American Acres Homes neighborhood where TxDOT proposes widening I-45. Apart from suboptimal design, this presents an Environmental Justice issue. Unlike higher income areas of town, or even the area between I-10 and I-610, TxDOT does not propose to build the widened freeway in this area below grade. Segment 1: TxDOT's proposal to widen the freeway immediately north of downtown also threatens significant community impact by further dividing the Woodland Heights and Near Northside communities. Moreover, the project's proposal to eliminate North Street will eliminate a significant low volume neighborhood connection across I-45. Another example of an adverse dividing impact is Polk Street, whose connection to downtown will be eliminated despite its role as a critical east-west connector between downtown and routes to the East End and Third Ward, traditionally Hispanic and African-American neighborhoods. The proposed project will not only exacerbate physical barriers between neighborhoods, it will also separate low-income neighborhoods from economic opportunities by displacing dozens of single family homes, hundreds of multifamily housing units (including many public housing units), houses of worship, schools, jobs, and social services.	1. The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation including, but not limited to, METRO, City of Houston, and Bike Houston. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report includes more detail about coordination with stakeholders. 2. The decision to depress or elevate a freeway is based on several factors. For the engineering analysis, the primary consideration was how to most effectively address safety issues, enhance connectivity, and reduce congestion. Building below grade was not feasible in this area; a depressed freeway would restrict access to commercial and residential intersecting streets. 3. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. To elevate I-45 above the 100-year base flood elevation in the vicinity of the Little White Oak Bayou crossing, the North Street bridge must be removed. N. Main St. will be the nearest street (to existing North St. bridge) to cross I-45 and will have pedestrian-bicycle accommodations. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. Any trail will be constructed by entities other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of a proposed trail. TxDOT will continue to evaluate the design of frontage roads, which will be further refined during detailed design. 4. The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation including, but not limited to, METRO, City of Houston, and Bike Houston. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report includes more detail about coordination with stakeholders.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**On the east side of downtown** where TxDOT proposes to build the highway below grade, the project will nevertheless exacerbate existing divisions between downtown and the historically Hispanic Second Ward and the historically African-American Third Ward by creating a massive trench that will double the width of the freeway. Although the DEIS refers to the potential for deck parks to be built above depressed sections of the freeway, the DEIS does not identify any entity or party who has agreed to take responsibility for funding, creating, or maintaing deck parks. While the possibility of building deck parks may help mitigate the further divisions and loss of connectivity resulting from the project, mitigation will occur only if the decks and parks are fully funded by the project, and the parks are not separated from the neighborhoods by the high speed access roads contemplated by the DEIS. Unless the project is designed and built to carry the weight of the potential deck parks, and unless residents of the adjacent neighborhoods can safely access the parks, any the potential benefit offered by such parks is illusory. Segment 1: At Chenevert, not only is TxDOT taking many of a condo's parking spaces to build a ramp, but it is also taking their trash dumpster. Then it low balled the residents for the taking. This is just wholly unnecessary and is not in the spirit of the US or Texas constitutions or the document "State of Texas Landowner's Bill of Rights" which is used by TxDOT as a guidance for takings. Ramp entrances and exits should be reviewed at all locations to check their operability and to locate any impacts particularly to safety, but also to neighborhood mobility. A ramp that requires trucks to drive through neighborhoods or past schools or an entrance or exit that requires U-turns in congested areas needs to be redesigned or relocated to eliminate those constraints.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards, including 11-foot wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets, will be used for street design. The COH sets speed limits on city streets. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Environmental Justice Situations For Neighborhoods: The DEIS omits any identification of, or suggestion regarding, mitigating measures.** Environmental Justice situations often arise when the highway agency is really just shifting costs of a highway project the agency should pay for out of public funds, to the affected poor or underrepresented. Regarding environmental justice, the DEIS just states: "All alternatives would cause disproportionate high and adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations." The DEIS does not propose any mitigation strategy for the noted high and adverse environmental justice impacts. Executive Order 12898 requires that Federal agencies make achieving environmental justice part of their mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. The Federal Highway Administration delegated to TxDOT their Federal and NEPA compliance responsibilities; the DEIS fails to explain how TxDOT will fulfill this responsibility with regard to this project.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Preservation of City Parklands:**TxDOT must provide all possible planning to avoid impacts and to mitigate unavoidable impacts to the affected public Parklands. There are procedural steps that must be followed to insure all possible planning and all reasonable and feasible mitigation is made if use of the parklands cannot be avoided. These steps are not being followed. As a result, the public and city are being deprived of mitigation possibilities and the City's right to concur or object to the determination. Contrary to TxDOT's claim, the public is entitled to public participation regarding these impacts. A mitigation plan for each park must be proposed in an RDEIS. The city must be actively involved in order to represent and protect the parklands. The parklands have special legal protections which CTC wants to comment on. CTC will leave to experts and the public the substance of how to make sure that "all possible planning has been done to minimize harm" to the parklands. 23 U.S. Code § 138 – "Preservation of parklands"and implementing regulations and guidances.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. During preparation of the Draft EIS, TxDOT met with the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department to discuss existing city parks, plans for future parks, potential project impacts, and regulatory requirements. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston during final design and construction. Additionally, TxDOT has conducted extensive public involvement during this phase of project development. The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	TxDOT acknowledges the all possible planning requirement in the DEIS in 3.18.1 REGULATORY OVERVIEW and 4.1.17 SECTION 4(F) RESOURCES and has tabulated what it considers to be the 4(f) resources affected by this project 3.18.1.1 Description of Section 4(f) Properties: being Table 3-32 Publicly Owned Parks and Recreational Facilities, which are Segment 1: 1 park; Segment 2: 2 parks; and Segment 3: 19 parks. All of these parks appear to be "significant"; none of them are pocket parks. CTC leaves to the experts to discuss in public meetings whether these parks are purely recreational or whether parts of the parks are passive, which entitles those parts to special protections. TxDOT only tabulated facilities "within 500 feet" of the project. There is no regulatory basis for this 500 foot test. Part 771 requires TxDOT to look at all direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on parklands. CTC does not know if there are other parkland facilities that might be more than 500 feet from the project right of way (which is not far from an elevated highway) and calls on other commenters to address the location of other parks that might be impacted by traffic noise or other nonphysical invasions. TxDOT must address its regulatory basis for not considering any parklands beyond 500 feet of the ROW regardless of the indirect and cumulative impacts. TxDOT also has an explicit responsibility to abate existing as well as project noise impacts.	The Study Team initially considered a park and recreation resources study area distance of 1,000 feet from the project area. After mapping the resources and considering potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project, the Study Team's subject matter experts determined that, based on preliminary schematic design - including project ROW and elevated structures, the potential impacts were most likely to be within 500 feet of the proposed project. Hence, the 500-foot study area was used. Based on the analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts (documented in the Draft EIS), no analysis of project impacts to park and recreation resources beyond 500 feet is warranted. The Draft EIS included a preliminary evaluation of noise and visual impacts. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. An addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report was prepared. Both documents are included in the Final EIS. The determination of, and impacts to, Section 4(f) properties were addressed in accordance with the regulations. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents potential impacts to parks. The Final EIS includes an analysis pursuant to 23 C.F.R. 774.15 of whether any noise impacts to public parks and recreation areas rise to the level of a Section 4(f) constructive use and, specifically, whether the projected noise level increase attributable to the proposed project would substantially interfere with the use and enjoyment of a noise-sensitive facility. In addition, provisions would be included in the construction plans and specifications that require construction contractors to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work-hour controls and proper maintenance of muffler systems.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	There is an exception to the 23 USC §138 requirements for impacts that are determined (not unilaterally by TxDOT) to be de minimus. 23 USC §138 (b) De Minimis Impacts.—sets forth the requirements for a finding of de minimis impacts. 23 USC §138 (b) De Minimus Impacts. (1) Requirements.(B)Requirements for parks, recreation areas, and wildlife or waterfowl refuges. — The requirements of subsection (a)(1) shall be considered to be satisfied with respect to an area described in paragraph (3) if the Secretary determines, in accordance with this subsection, that a transportation program or project will have a de minimis impact on the area. Nowhere does this statute say that no public involvement is needed, and no presentation of mitigation is not required. Regulations for the de minimum finding are discussed below. TxDOT takes the position that no public involvement is necessary and it has notified the city of its intent to make a de minimus finding. This is not adequate to satisfy legal requirements of a de minimus finding: 1. No mitigation plan has been proposed so the DEIS is not sufficient. A mitigation plan must be put forward in an RDEIS. 2. A de minimus finding must be the result after the mitigation plan is applied. It is not sufficient to say we might have a plan later 3. Coordination with officials and the public is required; 4. Written concurrence by the city or other governmental organization is required.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions. Notifications and the May 2017 public hearing disclosed/provided notice of the proposed project's impacts to parks and historic properties in accordance with regulations.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	TxDOT cannot assert that the DEIS provided a NEPA document for comment about mitigation because no mitigation was offered. No claim is made the agency intends to get city concurrence in acceptance of the mitigation plan and that any remaining impacts are de minimus. State highway agencies insisted on these streamlined steps and must follow them. In the past TxDOT has not. For example, TxDOT never got the city to sign a Programmatic "Net Benefit" Agreement for a parkland land swap when the I-610 Loop was being rebuilt. Sometimes TxDOT does not do any sort of 4(f) analysis or mitigation plan at all, e.g. for noise and other impacts on Memorial Park arising from the IH-10, Katy Freeway, reconstruction. Noise abatement, the improper 500-foot restriction, plans to mitigate other impacts such as loss of access, loss of parkland acreage all must be addressed in an RDEIS. CTC makes a special request to other commenters to address the issue of highway traffic noise.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions. Notifications and the May 2017 public hearing disclosed/provided notice of the proposed project's impacts to parks and historic properties in accordance with regulations.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	The regulations behind these steps are found in 23 CFR Part 774 and, among others, include§774.3(b) and its coordination requirements: § 774.5 Coordination. (b) Prior to making de minimus impact determinations under §774.3(b), the following coordination shall be undertaken: (2) For parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges: (i) Public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment concerning the effects on the protected activities, features, or attributes of the property must be provided. This requirement can be satisfied in conjunction with other public involvement procedures, such as a comment period provided on a NEPA document. (ii) The Administration shall inform the official(s) with jurisdiction of its intent to make a de minimus impact finding. Following an opportunity for public review and comment as described in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section, the official(s) with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) resource must concur in writing that the project will not adversely affect the activities, features, or attributes that make the property eligible for Section 4(f) protection. This concurrence may be combined with other comments on the project provided by the official(s). Some of the 22 identified project parklands may qualify for a Programmatic Agreement, but TxDOT has to identify which parks and get proper documentation. Public involvement and notice to the city is still required.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions. Notifications and the May 2017 public hearing disclosed/provided notice of the proposed project's impacts to parks and historic properties in accordance with regulations.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	CTC as a transportation group, thinks it is better to leave specific mitigation measures to experts and even residents near the local parks, but we take a position about the treatment and protection of the parklands generally. The city has a number of civic stakeholder groups that work tirelessly, raise money for, support before the city officials, and represent the parklands. There efforts should be strongly supported and not ignored by the city. We call on the city to take an active role in park protection and scrutiny of the park impacts caused by the project. We hope with our new parks director there will be a shift in attitude toward the issue of TxDOT or other governmental agencies and highway building and our parks. CTC is not certain it agrees with positions of commenters who address "net loss" of parklands. There is a "net benefit" programmatic agreement that the city must sign off on after public comment, but CTC thinks that "net benefit" applies to each individual park, not a group of parks whose acreage losses are lumped together. Again, here CTC is more interested that mitigation must be specified in an RDEIS, and that the full process be followed rather than that any particular mitigation plan be adopted.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions. Notifications and the May 2017 public hearing disclosed/provided notice of the proposed project's impacts to parks and historic properties in accordance with regulations.

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460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Houston's Complete Streets Executive Order and Houston's Bike Plan are not mentioned in Section 7.3 of the DEIS.** Local Interfaces with NHHIP project Entrances & Exits should be coordinated as to safe design and safe operation with these city guidances. Separated bike and pedestrian facilities (e.g. sidewalks) should be built at interfaces and across bridges. All bridges should have space available for separated bike and pedestrian facilities with adequate lighting and designs in conformance with the Complete Streets and Bike Plan guidances. And at grade crosswalks should be timed accordingly. To enhance neighborhoods and preserve community, bridges should compatible with the historic fabric of the neighborhood much like along the current I-69 leading into downtown or like bridges crossing freeways in Colorado. There are federal funds to pay for such coordination: the FAST Act continues the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) with minor revisions. If safety is one of the three goals of the project, this is an area that would benefit from investigation of these funds to be applied for at grade facilities and interfaces with other pedestrian and bike facilities. Complete Streets. Houston's Complete Streets policy aims to build local streets and crossings that are safe for all users. Yet, there is no indication in the DEIS that TxDOT intends to design the project's highway-urban interfaces to comply with Houston's Complete Streets policies. Houston Bike Plan. The DEIS includes no reference to the extensive, citywide Houston Bike Plan. At a minimum all bridges over the freeway, and all street crossings under the freeway should provide for a minimum 6' unobstructed sidewalk, a minimum 6' protected bike lane, and NACTO criteria should be incorporated into all highway/surface street intersections. In short, all intersections in the proposed plan should be designed for safe crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. TxDOT notes that the City's policy contemplates the inclusion of the City's own Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan. And the policy acknowledges that "Complete Streets" do not mean that all streets are identical. The scope of the City's policy (executive order on Complete Streets) describes the goal that transportation entities (such as TxDOT) will partner with the City, which TxDOT has done. The policy also states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. As described in the Final EIS, the function of the frontage roads on the project is different for different locations. In some locations there are no frontage roads. TxDOT must propose a design that is safe and efficient for the function of the roadway. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**TxDOT's policy toward applying for Clean Water Act §404 permits is not in the spirit of CWA or FAST.** To CTC, Clean Water is as important to the health and economic and social well being of our city and region as is Clean Air. There are just not any federal CMAQ funds associated with Clean Water so there is an inappropriate dismissiveness of the issue of clean water. But Clean Water Act permits is a huge issue for all segments of the project, particularly Segment 3. The Segment 3 Constructability Technical Memo, p1, states that "The Segment 3 PRA is massive in size and complexity and construction for this project will require large amounts of materials such as over 8 million cubic yards of excavation, 1 million cubic yards of embankment, 1.5 million square yards of pavement, over 2 million square feet of retaining walls and over 9 million square feet of bridge." Requests for Jurisdictional Determinations and/or §404/401 Permits to cross navigable waters or to dredge and fill in areas where there would be runoff should be identified and applied for now to avoid noncompliance and holdups to Project Delivery. A 909 grading permit may be required in other than just Segment 3. If the Preferred Alternatives are known, all of these permits should be evaluated in an exhibit to the RDEIS. The only exception should be where design changes will not be mere refinements, but rather adoption of another alternative. On page 246 of the DEIS, TxDOT states its intent to wait to apply for Clean Water Act, §404 permits "until the final design is completed." Section 404 permits would be needed for discharge of any pollutants, including dredged or fill material, to "navigable waters" or Waters of the United States. There will be a lot of such fill. Waters of the United States is much broader than water into which you can put a canoe, but less broad than a gravel pit that may fill up with water occasionally. Permits would be needed for many bridge structures (elevated on piers) for wetlands and stream crossings that feed into Buffalo or White Oak Bayous. (There is a proposed rulemaking that proposes to rescind the 2015 definition of Waters of the United States and revert to the pre-2015 definition. The NPRM states that the rulemaking would not affect governmental agencies.)	TxDOT will obtain all necessary permits for the proposed project, including federal, state, and local permits. The Final EIS documents navigable waters, other streams, and wetlands within the project ROW. Many of these areas would be avoided, some would be bridged, and some would be impacted; however, the project design and drainage study are still preliminary and not to the level of detail needed for permitting. As detailed design is performed, including for drainage, specific impacts and permit requirements will be determined. TxDOT will apply for USACE permits during detailed design. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the regulatory and other resource agencies during permitting, and anticipates the USACE, USCG, and TCEQ would refer to the EIS during permitting processes.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	Applying for the 404/401 permits is a matter of compliance. It causes much more problems not to apply. CTC does not want to read the DEIS that TxDOT only intends to seek out these permits for crossings of actually navigable portions of White Oak and Buffalo Bayou and would probably only be looking at Segment 3. CTC asserts this is not correct from a legal standpoint, nor is it timely in terms of FAST planning and project delivery requirements. Permits also have to be acquired for dredge and fill that may cause runoff to navigable waters. With a large construction project in an area with a lot of water, multiple dredge and fill permits will likely be required. If TxDOT does not wish to apply for permits now, it can at least make a list of navigable waters, being more than literally navigable water and commence seeking a jurisdictional determination (JD) whether a particular water in the project's alignment is navigable in terms of permitting processes. As for a 909 permit, there is a two-step process, so it is harder to evade permitting: a preconstruction meeting shall be done prior to the issuance of a Grading Permit to discuss compliance with NPDES Storm Water Program. So construction cannot begin until the preconstruction meeting.	TxDOT will obtain all necessary permits for the proposed project, including federal, state, and local permits. The Final EIS documents navigable waters, other streams, and wetlands within the project ROW. Many of these areas would be avoided, some would be bridged, and some would be impacted; however, the project design and drainage study are still preliminary and not to the level of detail needed for permitting. As detailed design is performed, including for drainage, specific impacts and permit requirements will be determined. TxDOT will apply for USACE permits during detailed design. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the regulatory and other resource agencies during permitting, and anticipates the USACE, USCG, and TCEQ would refer to the EIS during permitting processes.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	Past practice seems to be that notwithstanding TxDOT's excellent environmental staff, it is a common TxDOT practice in the Houston District to defer application for a 404 or 404/401 permit for major highway projects until after construction has begun if at all. For the Grand Parkway, TxDOT's deferring applying for a 404 dredge and fill permit held funding up and generated environmental litigation. For the 290/610 project, TxDOT was constructing a bridge across White Oak Bayou and dropping construction materials in the water for well over a year. CTC is still not certain whether a permit was ever acquired for crossing Buffalo Bayou when the I-610 Loop West was reconstructed. Because the USACE does not have real transparency of its processes, it is hard for the public to determine when a permit has been applied for or granted except for a narrow window of time. The two bayous and feeding streams will be crossed many times for this very large NHHIP project and a lot of fill will be required for segments 1 and 2, as well as segment 3, above. FAST requires that for Acceleration of Project Delivery: "To the extent practicable all Federal permits and review for a project shall rely on a single document prepared under NEPA. TxDOT has some excellent and experienced environmental staff, and that department ought to start compiling lists of where it will need the permits.	TxDOT will obtain necessary permits and certifications from the USACE and TCEQ prior to construction, as discussed in the Final EIS. The project design and drainage study are still preliminary and not to the level of detail needed for permitting. As detailed design is performed, including for drainage, specific impacts and permit requirements will be determined. The USACE is a cooperating agency for the NHHIP EIS. TxDOT anticipates the USACE, USCG, and TCEQ would refer to the EIS during permitting processes.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**There are legal, environmental, and business needs for an Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement.** Too much information about too many issues, and in particular crucial information regarding long-term, choking construction impacts on downtown Houston and its viability, and mitigation commitments regarding flooding, detention, and runoff, is missing from the DEIS to proceed straight to an FEIS. City and county officials, as well as downtown stakeholders and the entire area public, should demand more information about Segment 3. They must also become active in the planning of alternate local street routes so persons can access the downtown during the multi-year construction period. Moving to an FEIS and including the missing information in the FEIS precludes meaningful public participation and scrutiny. TxDOT stated on the face of the DEIS that it intended next to publish an FEIS with a possible combined Record of Decision. That is not a stage when decisions can easily be modified or when the public has any meaning chance of public scrutiny, participation, and comment. TxDOT as FHWA's assignee under the TxDOT/FHWA MOU would in effect move to an FEIS and approval thereof by issuing a ROD without further scrutiny. This DEIS is so inadequate as to key issues as to preclude meaningful analysis. 40 C.F.R. § 1502.9(a) provides: "If a draft statement is so inadequate as to preclude meaningful analysis, the agency shall prepare and circulate a revised draft of the appropriate portion." Id. (emphasis added). Correcting these deficiencies will require significant new analyses and the incorporation of high quality and accurate information regarding the Project's impacts.	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. Accordingly, TxDOT is not required to prepare a supplemental DEIS. TxDOT is mindful that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, updated/revised technical reports were posted on the project website. The reports were also available at the TxDOT Houston District office.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	The agency must allow public scrutiny of the omitted analysis and resulting changes, if any, in a Revised or Supplemental DEIS. An RDEIS should be prepared, presented and submitted for comments. Public meetings must be held regarding the downtown construction impacts, the number of businesses that will fail, the number of jobs that will be lost, and other negative impacts. Only the issuance of a revised or supplemental DEIS that thoroughly analyzes this missing information will satisfy NEPA's public comment procedures, which "[encourage] public participation in the development of information during the decision making process." Half Moon Bay Fishermans' Mktg. Ass'n v. Carlucci, 857 F.2d 505, 508 (9th Cir. 1988). Simply adding this missing information in the FEIS is insufficient, as it does not allow the same degree of meaningful public participation. Id. (citing California v. Block, 690 F.2d 753, 770-71 (9th Cir.1982) ("It is only at the stage when the draft EIS is circulated that the public and outside agencies have the opportunity to evaluate and comment on the proposal…. No such right exists upon issuance of a final EIS."). 40 CFR § 1500.1(b).	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. Accordingly, TxDOT is not required to prepare a supplemental DEIS. TxDOT is mindful that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, updated/revised technical reports were posted on the project website. The reports were also available at the TxDOT Houston District office.
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**TxDOT should consider breaking the NHHIP project in two projects (e.g. NHHIP-I and NHHIP-II) for environmental clearance and construction.** TxDOT should reassess breaking the project in two for environmental clearance: (Project 1) Segments 1 and 2; and (Project 2) Segment 3 and commencing Project 1 first. CTC urges TxDOT to consider flipping the construction schedule and building Segments 1 and 2 first to give more bang for the buck in the shortest time and with least interference with mobility. To that end, CTC strongly supports reconstruction of the I-610 /I-45 interchange first as both a mobility and safety measure. For those segments, our especial concern is environmental justice for Segment 1 and need to set aside business impact mitigation funds for owners and renters of businesses and need to optimize entrances and exits to minimize shifting of impacts to neighborhoods for Segment 2. Neighborhood impacts are issues for Segment 2 (as well as Segment 3). CWA Permitting will be required for all segments.	Constructing the proposed improvements in Segment 1 and 2 without improvements to Segment 3 would increase congestion on the Downtown freeway system. Neighborhood impacts and mitigation for adverse impacts are addressed in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. Prior to construction, TxDOT will obtain all permits needed for the project, including permits required for compliance with the Clean Water Act.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
460	Citizens' Transportation Coalition	7/27/2017	Email	**Important concerns CTC has with respect to Segment 3 need to be resolved in an RDEIS.** Specific major concerns CTC has with Segment 3 include these and other issues in our comments above: • Long-dated construction processes and multi-year construction gridlock downtown: Keeping at least one lane open does little to offset this and is a highly unsatisfactory solution. If TxDOT knows there will be multi-year gridlock, it must explicitly state this so business owners and elected officials can plan for the worst. • Adequacy of real estate devoted to the interchanges to maintain design speed and to avoid built in bottlenecks; TxDOT states it will start with I-69 and I-10 because ROW is being acquired. However, this is not an adequate reason to bring those interchanges to the front of the project. TxDOT should reexamine its change in design speed and advise what year that will happen. • Need for city officials to coordinate with TxDOT and to plan local street routes stakeholders may use to access the city during Segment 3 interchange reconstruction • Possible to probable intervening radical changes in road use and vehicle types including automated freight handling and driverless cars reducing the amount of lane miles needed for mobility and reducing ozone precursors. • Difficulty of average drivers using the complex interchanges, once completed, both for current and future vehicles. • Space for highly visible signage, metering at entrances, better control of unnecessary weaving. • Drainage and flooding, pumping and air circulation equipment, and funding earmarks. • Segment 3 has significant unmitigated neighborhood impact issues and Environmental Justice concerns. • Safety issues: the capacity additions from cantilevered projects are desirable, but adequate exit plans from the lower levels have to be put in place or at least blocking of entrance during major rain storms and terrorist alerts. Not only should TxDOT conduct further analysis and studies and publish an RDEIS with attachments to the public, but also Segment 3 impacts should be reviewed formally or informally by FHWA as an independent set of eyes.	1. TxDOT is using the design-build delivery method to minimize construction duration for Segment 3. TxDOT will plan to keep as many lanes as possible open during construction. 2. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's traffic mobility goals. The complex traffic model (VISSIM) developed for this project was based on the proposed project design and Year 2040 projected traffic volumes. 3. TxDOT has coordinated with the City (including Mayor Turner, city council members, and city departments) during development of the NHHIP. The COH is an EIS Participating Agency and TxDOT held five group meetings for participating agencies at key project milestones. In addition, TxDOT and the NHHIP Study Team have attended dozens of coordination meetings with City representatives to discuss the City's desires and concerns related to the project. TxDOT is coordinating with COH, including consideration of the Mayor's goals as described in the Complete Communities initiative (four of the five identified communities are adjacent to NHHIP). 4. Comment noted. 5. The intent of the proposed improvements is to separate the decision points outside of the downtown freeway system which will reduce the weaving movements and improve traffic flow into and around downtown. The key element of the proposed project include physically separating the local and through traffic movements along each of the three interstates entering downtown. The decision points for all three interstates will be supplemented by a signing and driver communication plan to alert drivers well in advance. 6. Signage will be determined during detailed design. Ramp metering can be an effective way to manage freeway congestion, but needs to be studied on a case by case basis. Metering at access points (ramp metering) will be determined during final design. 7. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections. 8. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. Proposed mitigation commitments will be more specifically defined, as a result of continuing coordination and evaluation of the Preferred Alternative. TxDOT has properly considered mitigation. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. The analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts was updated in the Final EIS (further evaluation of the Preferred Alternative). TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses used by low-income and/or minority populations, and other sensitive populations. Documentation of the coordination conducted during the EIS process is summarized in the Final EIS. 9. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. Accordingly, TxDOT is not required to prepare a supplemental DEIS. TxDOT is mindful that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, updated/revised technical reports were posted on the project website and were also available at the TxDOT Houston District office.
461	Harris, Mark	7/27/2017	Written	I am writing to submit my comments on the construction project planned for I -45 through downtown Houston. I disagree with the plans to destroy the Pierce Elevated and re-route the road (Segment III). This will only provide a very short term benefit for a long term headache at a cost that is almost certainly going to be far higher than the initial projections indicate. Boston's "Big Dig" project is a great example on how these projects can help in a city without a prior "ring" set up for downtown but it also highlights just how these projects always cost more than originally projected and take far longer than originally projected.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
461	Harris, Mark	7/27/2017	Written	The city's money should be spent wiser than this. The current improvements to the Pierce Elevated have already shown an improvement to travel times and traffic flow. Houston needs to invest in mass transit instead of simply adding concrete onto concrete for roads. We will end up just like Los Angeles if we keep just building roads without alternate means of transport.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
462	Harrison, Abby	7/27/2017	Project Website	1) taking away the Irvington exit and entrance is a real problem on many levels for the neighborhood (I live in North Lindale). The idea of people wanting you to spend massive amounts to extent under 45 will not hold up over time once they realize the problems of the train on Fulton unless you do a feeder fly over Fulton. a) the trains come frequently enough that one can be stopped for 10 or more minutes. The local won't tolerate that (the gates get broken regularly by people frustrated that they cannot go right at the stop. b) the train engineers have a gun which allows them to change the lights to their favor. This translates to the lights not resetting where they left off they restart their whole cycle. c) Because of the narrowness of the one lane on each side, this has the potential to screw up timeliness if there were an accident. Ifs not like the trains here are rated for lowest accidents with cars (actually we are rated no.1 for the most accidents country wide if you must know. Read it in the paper in the last couple of days).	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
462	Harrison, Abby	7/27/2017	Project Website	d) People will drive through the side streets to avoid taking the cut through so they can get onto the freeway to avoid it. However, these streets can be quite narrow (look at Fulton and Mel borne on Google or some other street view). That is just over 1 car width once you get past the cars parked on the sides. Notice the deep ditches on the sides. No nice sidewalks (which actually can be to our favor as we have less flooding problems than some areas). But my point is that there will be increased driving on those streets to access the freeway. People will drive around to get to the ramp and they are not likely to do U turns on the feeder.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
462	Harrison, Abby	7/27/2017	Project Website	e) I don't recall if you have done some sort of traffic survey about the amount of traffic currently on the Irvington entrance and exit but it is a pipe dream to think that all those cars will take the under45 cut throughs to avoid getting on or off at Cockran. Oh, they might take it once or twice if they don't know about the potential of being stopped by the train. But don't count on it long term. Ihat is such a huge amount of money which won't generate the return because of the train problems. Nope, all the traffic will double down and go to Cockran. Keep Irvington. No one says that the spacing on is really great but it's like the one farther down on 610 from TC Jester right before 610 splits for 610/290 and then 10. That's a short run too. It can be done. These ramps get used a lot.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
462	Harrison, Abby	7/27/2017	Project Website	f) And then there is a train which runs east west north of 610.This stops traffic north south. Regularly. This can impact the ability of people to cross Irvington north of 610 after the train bars have lifted (this can back up the Irvington south traffic for4 or so blocks). When people are running late because of this train, are they really likely to risk another train stop on Fulton if going west or will they cut through the side streets to make up time to get onto 610 so they can drive ''faster''?	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1.From eastbound I-610 a.Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2.From southbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3.From northbound I-45 a.Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b.Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1.Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2.Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
462	Harrison, Abby	7/27/2017	Project Website	45 between 10 and 610: You are taking away a lot of entrances and exits. People use those. No one will thank for increasing their drive time by having them exit north before North Main, North Main traffic light, Patton traffic light (because the amount of traffic won't handle a stop sign), Cavalcade traffic light to be able to turn left on Link. Or right. That's a lot of lights and traffic. Actually the hop on just after North Main, avoid Patton and back off really works nicely because the traffic in that lane is either getting left to stay on 45 or they want to exit right and get off. And all of it wants to avoid Patton if possible. And then, if someone, like those trucks at Patton or points south or east (not so much west but it can happen), want to go on 610, they will now have to drive around on the feeder ... or drive through all the city streets to get to Cockran or after Airline. No one will thank you for adding more trucks to clog their driving in the already busy city streets. And I doubt the truck drivers will be thrilled as they are more likely to get into an accident from someone who runs a red light.	There will be a comparable level of access along I-45 between I-10 and I-610. Due to current design standards, entrance and exit ramps could not be replaced as close together/frequently as existing; spacing the ramps out reduces weaving, improving traffic flow and safety.

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462	Harrison, Abby	7/27/2017	Project Website	The idea of a covered space over North Main, turn it into a park would be nice but are you planning on cars park on site? We don't have people drone delivery (yet) so where would the cars park? Would it be safe for kids to cross all those lanes on the feeder? How old would your kids be for you to allow them to run ahead of you and cross by themselves? On the flip side of the idea of covering over North Main is visibility? Those tunnel spaces can get a little dark and, well we who live in the area, do not drive in the deep section there as it is well known for flooding. Why make it dark so people have less time to stop and not drive into it?	Parking availability will depend on the design of the open space. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design. Lighting design is part of the final design process. TxDOT plans to coordinate with outside groups and organizations to seek input during detailed design. Safety is always a primary concern and is considered at all stages.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Measures of Project Success* In my opinion, there are several general metrics that we can and should measure to define this project's success: 1. Impact on local roadway network capacity, operations, and safety, including that of all modes of travel (e.g. driving, walking, biking, and transit) ... I present these metrics in what is, in my opinion, increasing order of importance. I acknowledge that other stakeholders may order these differently – especially #1 and #2 – but I would expect that most stakeholders would keep improvements to the local roadway and freeway network near the top and place the others near the bottom. The other factors are clearly important, but for a roadway project they should typically be considered secondary to capacity and safety improvements. First: economic development is a natural result of improvements to transportation infrastructure. If the project is good and connects more people to more destinations, the regional economy will also benefit. Transportation access and connectivity may not directly drive the economy, but they are necessary components for the creation and support of a strong economic environment. Second: minimizing project cost should be an overarching goal of public projects but never a primary goal. The entire point of any large public infrastructure project is to spend taxpayer money to maximize OTHER community desires and goals. A multibillion dollar project would never be undertaken if minimizing cost was the main objective. Finally: visual aesthetics should be considered a desirable side effect of a roadway project, not a primary goal, because there are more direct, cost effective ways to address visual aesthetics.	The proposed recommended alternative was analyzed along with other alternatives using engineering, traffic, and environmental criteria to determine which alternative would best meet the project's need and purpose.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Measures of Project Success* In my opinion, there are several general metrics that we can and should measure to define this project's success: 2. Impact on freeway network capacity, operations, and safety	Sections 1 and 2 of the Final EIS discuss needs in the project area and the analysis, including the criteria (metrics) used to evaluated the project alternatives. Measures (criteria) used to evaluated the Reasonable Alternatives included (among others): Engineering and Traffic: Desirable/Undesirable/Neutral. Based on assessments of the potential reduction in system-wide traffic delay, increase in system-wide travel speed, and improvements to freeway ramping and access. These factors influence operations and safety. The proposed project will add highway capacity, manage congestion, enhance safety, and improve mobility and operational efficiency.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Measures of Project Success* In my opinion, there are several general metrics that we can and should measure to define this project's success: 3. Impact on economic development opportunities 4. Project cost	Comment noted.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Measures of Project Success* In my opinion, there are several general metrics that we can and should measure to define this project's success: 5. Impact on public visual aesthetics	Visual impacts were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on the viewscape in some areas are likely unavoidable. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the during detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design, where feasible.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Applying the Metrics* **Freeway safety and operations:** As far as I can tell, this is the one metric on which the Downtown Loop design clearly delivers. I am not convinced that the proposed design is the ONLY way to achieve these improvements, but this does seem to be one area where the vision succeeds.	Comment noted.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Applying the Metrics* **Local roadway safety and operations:** The rest of the metrics are a mixed bag. As I discussed in my previous comments, I have many concerns about the project's impacts on east-west local and regional connectivity, local traffic safety, and walking, bike, and transit modes of transportation. In my opinion, any further degradation of the already constrained east-west roadway network more than offsets the gains to north-south connectivity between the 2nd Ward and EaDo provided by the proposed frontage roads. That new north-south connectivity is highly desirable, but it should not come at the expense of east-west connectivity. The metric for local roadway safety and operations appears to be negative.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.

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463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Applying the Metrics* **Economic development opportunities:** The proposed removal of the Pierce Elevated would open up several partial blocks of undeveloped, desirable real estate between Pierce Street and Gray Street (approximately 60% of the blocks are already available for development, and many of them already enjoy high levels of development). These partial blocks of undeveloped, desirable land would be made available at the expense of entire blocks of rapidly redeveloping, desirable land in EaDo. Many businesses would either close or be forced to move. Other businesses would be negatively impacted by the loss of leveraged commerce activities. For example, diners at Huynh restaurant may be less likely to walk down the street to Lucky's Pub for a drink after dinner if Huynh was forced to relocate, resulting in a loss for both Huynh and Lucky's Pub. This sort of leveraged commercial activity is one of the main components of a strong commercial district; the loss of businesses and business opportunities between Chartres and St. Emanuel would result not only in the direct loss of those businesses, but also a weakening of leveraged commercial activity for the remaining businesses and EaDO overall. The metric for support of economic development appears would therefore appear to be mixed, and in my opinion, slightly negative overall for the project.	The proposed project requires new right-of-way between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St. in the EaDo area. Businesses on those parcels would be displaced. The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Applying the Metrics* **Visual aesthetics**: The Downtown Loop Realignment would improve public aesthetics in some ways. By removing the aerial concrete structure that is the Pierce Elevated, the already beautiful Downtown skyline would be further improved. Burying the freeway on the east side would further remove some unpleasant aerial concrete obstructions and put them underground – at least for some blocks. For the 8 blocks between St. Joseph Parkway and Lamar Street, the amount of above-ground freeway structure and ramps would be approximately doubled from existing to accommodate both I-45 and I-69 as well as their managed lanes. Properties adjacent to those blocks on both the Downtown side and EaDO side would face a massive gulf of concrete structure that is much more significant than the Pierce Elevated and, as a result, suffer from a sharply degraded aesthetic environment.	The Draft EIS included evaluation of visual impacts. An addendum to the Visual Impacts Assessment Technical Report was completed for the Final EIS. The highways on the east side of downtown would be depressed as much as is feasible; the interchanges require elevated roadways. The depressed, and covered in-part, sections of highway would improve the visual character of the area. During planning for the proposed project, visual and aesthetic resources were considered. The bridges will be designed in consideration of visual aesthetics. TxDOT plans to coordinate with outside groups and organizations to seek input during detailed design.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Applying the Metrics* **Visual aesthetics:** Even in the EaDO neighborhood adjacent to the proposed buried freeway section – that neighborhood which theoretically stands to gain the most from the visual benefits of a buried freeway – the overall aesthetic benefit is questionable. St. Emanuel Street serves as something of a Main Street for EaDO and is a relatively quiet, slow, bidirectional street with a wide sidewalk, full street tree canopy, and development on both sides that embraces the street and sidewalk network. Pedestrians walk comfortably down the street from business to business; bicyclists and cars safely share the roadway. It is quite a lovely street that is rapidly improving as private land owners redevelop property to take advantage of the street's benefits. There are few other streets in the region that create the same kind of comfortable, quaint urban environment. With the proposed freeway plan, St. Emanuel Street would be replaced with a one-way northbound frontage road. Businesses on the east side of the road would no longer open to face other, complementary businesses on the other side of the road. They would instead open onto a wide, highspeed, high-traffic roadway with a vast open space beyond that may or may not eventually be converted into park space. Park space or no, it is hard to see this as a net aesthetic improvement over the unique environment that already exists along St. Emanuel. The metric for supporting an appealing aesthetic would therefore appear to be mixed and, in my opinion, slightly negative overall for the project.	St. Emanuel Street will remain a city street for local traffic circulation and will not become a frontage road. St. Emanuel would be designed per COH standards and would include a sidewalk. Although the view from St. Emanuel will change because of the widening of the right-of-way in the area, depressing the highways would improve the visual quality on the east side of Downtown.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*Applying the Metrics* **Minimize project costs:** An argument has been presented that TxDOT needs to sell the land under the Pierce Elevated to offset other project costs. However, the sale of those partial blocks will come at the expense of full blocks between St. Joseph Parkway and at least Texas Avenue – 13 blocks, with many more partially impacted. Many of these blocks have existing development, including the substantial Lofts at the Ballpark Apartments between Capitol and Texas. This land may be less valuable than the Pierce land, but it does have value, and that will offset many of the cost savings. Additionally, if cost savings are a primary objective, then it is hard to make a case for burying the freeways at all because burying is one of the most expensive construction methods. Buried roadways also have higher ongoing maintenance costs related to massive pumps, ventilation systems, and lighting. An above-ground structure would likely prove to be a much more cost-effective way to achieve roadway capacity and safety goals. The metric for minimizing project cost would therefore appear to be mixed and, in my opinion, slightly negative, because there appear to be other ways to achieve project goals at lower cost.	TxDOT has not stated that land under the Pierce Elevated must be sold to offset project costs. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. Section 2 of the Draft EIS describes the alternatives analysis process in detail. Following publication of the Draft EIS, the study team considered comments received and the project design was revised, as discussed in Section 2 of the Final EIS.

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463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	Alternatives I believe there exist other options that may do a better job of maximizing these metrics. Such a project would likely exhibit these general characteristics: • Maintain general existing freeway layout and rebuild with improvements. • Maintain and add to local roadway network. • Maintain and add to local and regional connectivity. • Elevate all freeways where burying them would impact local roadway network. • Minimize takings of already-developed properties. • Improve north-south connectivity between EaDO and 2nd Ward. • Maintain St. Emanuel Street as a bidirectional street with adjacent development on both sides. Several alternative designs with these characteristics have been presented. For example, I like many of the design elements of the Purple City plan. Among many other proposed modifications, the plan would keep the Pierce Elevated for managed lanes and minimize the width of the freeway segment adjacent to EaDo. The plan can be viewed here: Summary Report: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9Ygq5Ilh865b09XMWQyLWc0M2s/view?usp=sharing Full Plan: http://purple.city/pdf/PurpleCity_DowntownRing_Sketch_March2016.pdf One suggestion of the Purple City plan that would further support improved aesthetics as well as project cost is the idea to use the area under the Pierce Elevated for development opportunities. Instead of fenced parking, the space could be developed and rented out to businesses, thereby creating an interesting, appealing street that also generates ongoing rent revenue for TxDOT. Other alternatives have imagined the freeway ring around Downtown as a one-way loop, like a giant roundabout. I have not studied the idea in detail, but I think it is worth analyzing to determine if it could also better deliver on project metrics.	The Purple City Plan was extensively reviewed by the design team and carefully evaluated. The Plan was found to not be feasible at the major interchanges and did not account for the required railroad grade separations. Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
463	Hlavacek, Ian	7/27/2017	Email	*CONCLUSIONS* Again, I would like to applaud TxDOT for its ongoing efforts to support innovative design solutions that incorporate extensive public feedback. I acknowledge that TxDOT has been pursuing the Downtown Loop Realignment and larger I-45 reconstruction project for many years already, but I would urge them to continue embracing a patient spirit to solicit feedback, analyze alternatives, and present the best project possible. To this point, the organization has given me no reason to believe that they wish to abandon this spirit. I have presented several metrics in these comments that I believe will be important to ensure project success. TxDOT is probably measuring many more and more detailed metrics, but I am confident that my general metrics are in their list in some form or fashion, presumably with high priority. Here's how I see the current plan for the Downton Loop Realignment scoring on the metrics presented here. I also present the scoring of a theoretical project with the characteristics discussed above. Option 1: Current Plan • Local Operations/Safety: DECLINE • Freeway Operations/Safety: IMPROVE • Economic Development: MIXED • Cost: MIXED • Aesthetics: MIXED Option 2: Alternative that maintains general existing freeway layout • Local Operations/Safety: IMPROVE • Freeway Operations/Safety: IMPROVE • Economic Development: MIXED • Cost: IMPROVE • Aesthetics: MIXED Out of these metrics, the two that matter the most are the first two: local network and freeway network. Neither should be compromised at the expense of the other three. However, it appears that the current proposed design compromises on local roadway operations and safety for questionable benefits to economic development, project cost, and aesthetics. I believe we can and should do better. I would strongly encourage TxDOT to vet other options that may score better based on these and other metrics before making a final design decision. We get one shot at this. This project will be a massive expenditure of taxpayer resources, and it will dramatically impact the economy and culture of the Houston region for generations. Let us spend whatever time and resources required to make sure we get it right.	Analysis shows the proposed project will improve operations and safety. The proposed project balances needs for freeway mobility and local mobility. The proposed project separates local traffic movements from through movements in the Downtown area.
464	Holston, James S.	7/27/2017	Project Website	The proposed plan of dumping high-speed 288 toll traffic onto Chenevert between our neighborhood school and park, endangering our pet's and children's lives, is ill-conceived. This will reduce the walk-ability and bike-ability of the neighborhood. You will increase the likelihood of fatal accidents, notably pedestrian. Why? Because you are turning a neighborhood street into a highway. This type of traffic should be kept to thoroughfares and feeders exclusively. I propose that you route this traffic to Crawford. Please leave my neighborhood alone. Do not put the 288 Toll Lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood. Further, if I feel my remarks are not being heard, I will begin exploring alternative actions to ensure I am being heard.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

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465	Huffmaster, Michael	7/27/2017	Email	I offer the following points to improve the proposed I-45 project. I also endorse the comments submitted by the neighborhood coalition under the letter consolidated by Michael Skelly. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement does not adequately addresses the following points: • The roadway facilities and related drainage and detention should be designed for 500 year storm event.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. In 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released revised precipitation-frequency data for Texas, termed "Atlas-14" data. The data included in Atlas 14 updates rainfall depth information that had been used since the 1960s, and included data in Texas through December 2017, which incorporates rainfall from Hurricane Harvey. It is estimated that the future Atlas 14 1% (100-year) floodplain can be estimated by using the current published 0.2% (500-year) floodplain (HCFCD 2019). As of July 2019, the Atlas 14 data must be used when designing and constructing drainage features as part of development in Harris County. Using the Atlas 14 data, studies to update floodplain mapping for Harris County are ongoing. TxDOT is using the updated precipitation-frequency estimates when designing new construction projects. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
465	Huffmaster, Michael	7/27/2017	Email	• In this project TxDOT should provide the amount of detention to meet full requirement for storm water runoff mitigation for the entire amount of impervious surface in the project. This should be a minimum of 0.5 ac ft of detention per acre of impervious surface. Detention requirement should not be set at the low bar of incremental impervious surface addition. What was built in past freeways and development is known to burden bayous with excessive storm water runoff load and flooding. This project should reduce those loads with detention to accommodate all impervious surface and also address any development runoff from property adjacent to ROW which would be accepted by TxDOT.	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increases in impervious surface. TxDOT plans to mitigate for more impervious surface than required but will not mitigate for all existing pavement. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies (Harris County Flood Control District and City of Houston) to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. See Section 3.8 of the Final EIS for additional information.
465	Huffmaster, Michael	7/27/2017	Email	• Multi use detention such as structural detention (eg under parking structures) or integrated with green spaces or parks is recognized as adding value to community. The preference of wet bottom detention is questioned as regards impact of large areas of stagnant water and potential adverse influence on public health.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative that is documented in the Final EIS and associated technical reports. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
465	Huffmaster, Michael	7/27/2017	Email	• Deck parks should be designed to accommodate real world loads, not proposed as structures inadequate to even support even a truck. High load circumstances should be adequately handled such as massive rains which would saturate soils or large crowds of people let alone light trucks or cars.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
465	Huffmaster, Michael	7/27/2017	Email	• Noise impact – should consider and evaluate use of linear (axial) grooving as low noise option for hydroplaning control	Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
465	Huffmaster, Michael	7/27/2017	Email	• Access roads should not be alternative freeway lanes; design for local use and slow traffic	City streets requiring reconstruction will be designed per City of Houston design standards. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
465	Huffmaster, Michael	7/27/2017	Email	• An alternative to massively modifying existing serviceable freeway infrastructure should be assessed. Handling of traffic which is destined to flow through town rather into downtown should be addressed by routing around town rather than through downtown. In particular consideration should be given to improving capacity of 610 from I45 to I45 along the east side of Houston. Impacts on communities, land use and land values could well be substantially lower.	I-610 is and will remain the commercial and hazardous materials route, however, not all large trucks are commercial and many will continue to come into Downtown for local deliveries, pickups, etc.
466	Hunter, Veralisa	7/27/2017	Project Website	Over 300 affordable housing units will be demolished during this project. We need 1:1 replacement of affordable housing units in Fifth Ward for low income residents who need access to downtown and public transportation... and the right to stay close to the support network they have spent years nurturing.	TxDOT recognizes the challenges of affordable housing in the project area. In consideration of the impacts of the Preferred Alternative, TxDOT intends to support affordable housing initiatives in those communities most affected. The mitigation is intended to compensate for the direct effects of residential displacements, the indirect effects of potentially contributing to ongoing housing affordability problems, and past and present contributions to recurrent adverse effects. TxDOT will provide financial assistance to neighborhoods to support specific affordable housing initiatives. The eligible initiatives include construction of affordable housing and supporting programs that provide assistance and outreach related to affordable housing. Additional information is in Section 5.9.3.2 of the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
468	Klein, Barry	7/27/2017	Written	TxDOT is proposing a needless redesign of the local freeway system in central and north Houston. $4 billion will be spent just on changes in the downtown network ...	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high-capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area. Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
468	Klein, Barry	7/27/2017	Written	... including tearing down the Pierce Elevated and redirecting traffic into an enlarged US 59, placing it below grade. To repeat: BELOW grade! ... instead ofleaving it elevated where it is safe from flooding.	Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
468	Klein, Barry	7/27/2017	Written	The No Build option is the wiser choice. This would mean acknowledging that:	Comment noted.
468	Klein, Barry	7/27/2017	Written	1. bottlenecks are something we motorists live with and they do not cripple our ability to travel, with proof being Census Bureau reports showing that the average commute time is under 30 minutes and has been for decades.	Comment noted.
468	Klein, Barry	7/27/2017	Written	2. the external costs will be huge, including land takes, ruined businesses, lost jobs, endless road work, narrowed lanes, fewer safety lanes for the duration, etc)	TxDOT will purchase property in accordance with state and federal laws. Efforts will be made to keep the existing number of lanes open during construction.
470	Liu, Frank	7/27/2017	Project Website	I am writing in regards to and in support of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project, and would like to make the following suggestion: This project provides the perfect opportunity to fix the freight rail situated just north of Downtown Houston. In conjunction with the current plan, TxDOT should construct a new line to connect and combine the best parts of the existing lines. Such a plan would look like the following: https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DFvurg-UMAERO3v.jpg:largeThis new line would have the same capacity as the existing lines, but this way, there would be no grade crossing on San Jacinto, and no trains running past the front porches of homes on Winter Street. This would both improve traffic flow in the area, as well as prevent disturbance to the area's residents. Furthermore, this addition would reduce the amount of bridge infrastructure required as part of the project's reconstruction. The IH-45 Project is the only and perfect chance to implement this, and I firmly believe that it would greatly benefit both downtown Houston and the Washington corridor.	TxDOT is working closely with the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) to coordinate the implementation of NHHIP relative to their existing network. A concept to combine UPRR's Houston Sub 1 and Sub 2 has been closely coordinated with UPRR and other stakeholders (aka railroad realignment). While it does provide the noted benefits, this realignment will require UPRR and others to provide funding. This realignment will continue to be discussed during future phases of the project.
471	Liu, Frank	7/27/2017	Written	We are writing to support the rerouting of the freight rail north of Downtown to create a reconstructed interchange. These plans were referenced by Mr. Christof Spieler on Twitter on July 27, 2017 and are appended below.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.
471	Liu, Frank	7/27/2017	Written	Currently, the freight lines north of Downtown serve to sever valuable green space, Harmony House and the University of Houston Downtown from the urban fabric of our CBD. Despite their proximity to the Theatre District, Harmony House and to a lesser extent UHD exist as isolated islands of development, cut off from the energy, vitality and social capital associated with downtown Houston. Moreover, the Warehouse Arts District, home to Last Concert Café is cut off from the Bayou. As Houston moves into the 21st century, we must commit to a more integrated and walkable city. We share with TXDOT the belief that the first step in creating a more integrated and dynamic city is repairing connections between neighborhoods.	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.
471	Liu, Frank	7/27/2017	Written	We hope that TXDOT will take this generational opportunity to reshape transit in Houston and redesign the freight rail system. As Mr. Spieler has noted, this is the one chance that we have to repair the connection between Harmony House and UHD with downtown as well as bring the promise of Buffalo Bayou Park closer to its neighbors.	METRO is responsible for transit planning in the area. Rail redesign is the responsibility of the rail companies. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP, including the area noted. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	I believe the North Houston Highway Improvement Project has the potential to improve quality of life in the communities it touches but needs several revisions to fulfil that promise. I am a coauthor of the Midtown Management District's comments and these notes are derived from them. I support the efforts being made through the project design to minimize negative impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, including the depression and capping of the freeway in the Wheeler Station area and the retirement of the Pierce Elevated. However, I have some concerns about particular design elements that I believe should be reconsidered in order to provide the most beneficial project possible.	Comment noted.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	1) SH 288 Managed Lane Acces: As currently proposed, the primary access to and egress from the SH 288 Managed Lanes would be provided on Chenevert Street south of Elgin, adjacent to the Houston High School for International Studies and Baldwin Park. We believe this configuration is suboptimal for everyone involved. Drivers using the Managed Lanes will more likely be destined for Downtown than Midtown, or may be trying access another freeway to continue on. Either way, ending up on Chenevert Street will introduce unnecessary delay and confusion. Neighboring residents are already displeased with the presence of the existing freeway ramps which disrupt the neighborhood fabric and introduce unsafe vehicle speeds in a residential area. The proposed design would set this problem in concrete for another 50 years.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	1) SH 288 Managed Lane Acces: Midtown residents are requesting that TxDOT consider tying the Managed Lanes into the frontage roads (Hamilton/Chartres) between McGowen Street and Elgin Street Doing so would make access much more intuitive, improving the chances of success for the Managed Lane project. The Managed Lanes would gain an advantage over the main lanes in terms of moving the access point closer to Downtown. It would also give drivers headed toward Downtown or other connecting freeways a more convenient mute for doing so than Midtown surface streets. I understand that there are geometric challenges associated with this change. However, I feel there are feasible alternatives that would realign the ramps near Elgin by reconfiguring currently proposed exits to and from Chenevert and Hamilton.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	1) SH 288 Managed Lane Acces: One option to evaluate is to maintain the Tuam Street bridge as a bicycle and pedestrian connection but not traffic. This would allow the express lane ramps to pass over Tuam Street with less clearance, allowing them to tie into the frontage roads between Tuam Street and McGowen Street. While Tuam Street would no longer allow passage of vehicles over the freeway, it would actually become a more comfortable bicycle and pedestrian route due to lower traffic volumes. This is consistent with the identification of Tuam Street as a shared bikeway in the Houston Bike Plan.	17-foot Pedestrian Realms have been added to the noted bridge. This includes a 7-ft sidewalk, 5-ft bike lane, and a 5-ft buffer behind the back of curb. Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. This will be further explored during detailed design.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	1) SH 288 Managed Lane Acces: As part of the removal of the ramps from the neighborhood, Midtown residents request that the grid of local streets be reconnected including Francis Street, Chenevert Street, and Holman Street. ... Connecting Holman Street through to Hamilton Street would obviate the need for the freeway-style ramps connecting to Chenevert Street south of Holman Street. Removing them would be more consistent with the context of the neighborhood while improving safety, reducing right-of-way acquisition, and creating more surplus right-of-way.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St. Connecting Holman St. between Holman St. and Chenevert St. is not possible due to conflicts with the proposed I-69/SH 288 interchange.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	2) Heiner Street Bayou Access: While the planned project will remove the I-45 main lanes from the west side of downtown, the planned "downtown connectors," their ramps and related surface streets will have significant impacts on Buffalo Bayou, Sam Houston Park, Fourth Ward and Midtown. The existing I45 right-of-way along Heiner Street between the Fourth Ward and Downtown is 300 feet wide and accommodates six elevated freeway lanes, four elevated ramp lanes, and five frontage road lanes with associated shoulders. In the proposed configuration, the facility through this section will only have five freeway connector lanes with shoulders and six frontage road lanes. This presents the opportunity to use the leftover space to create a transformational linear park connecting Midtown to Buffalo Bayou. The greenway would connect at the northern end into the trail system of Buffalo Bayou Park and the extension of the lamar Street separated bike lane, giving Midtown residents a high-comfort bike mute to Downtown jobs and destinations. A connection under/across the downtown connector at Andrews Street would also improve Downtown access from Midtown and the Fourth Ward. At the south end, the greenway would link to the Bagby Street streetscape and the proposed Brazos Street bikeway extending through Midtown. The proposed Downtown Connector should be designed with the minimum footprint possible in order to allow as much right-of-way as possible to be reserved for a linear park connection.	TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. 1. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated. 2. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership to accommodate plans for trails.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	2) Heiner Street Bayou Access: A bicycle and pedestrian connection across the Downtown Connector in the vicinity of Andrews Street should be incorporated into the design. This will help reconnect the historic street grid in the area south of W. Dallas Street. … Given the opportunity to connect 4th Ward, Downtown and Midtown, I strongly encourage TxDOT to design the Downtown Connector appropriately for the dense, urban, mixed-use context of the area. To the extent possible, the connectors should be kept below grade. While many other segments of the project will see elevated segments become depressed, the Fourth Ward side is proposed to have below-grade lanes elevated. This is not progress and is not fair or equitable.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	3) Wheeler Transit Center Area: The area around METRO's Wheeler Transit Center has the potential to be a hub of activity in Midtown but thus far has been hindered by the elevated freeway and the uncertainty around future infrastructure plans like the University line. The NHH IP proposes to move the freeway below grade in this section, reducing noise and visual impacts along the border of Midtown and the Museum District and benefiting the prospect of development. The Museum Park livable Center Study outlines this opportunity that can be envisioned soon since this is the first project where construction is expected to start as soon as 2020. However, details including ramps, bridges, and street connections will need to be worked out to enable the greatest potential for transit-oriented development around the station. Coordination with the City of Houston and METRO should continue. Provisions to elevate the Red Line, removing it from surface street intersections and improving circulation for buses and the future University line, should be incorporated.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.

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472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	4) Connections to Adjoining Neighborhoods: I am pleased that connections to adjacent neighborhoods like Downtown and Museum Park stand to improve considerably in the proposed design. The project should also bridge the gap to the Third Ward to the east, as well. The proposed bridges between Midtown and the Third Ward should be designed in a way that improves multi modal connectivity. This means including space for bike lanes on Almeda Street, Alabama Street, McGowen Street, Tuam Street (should the bridge retain a vehicular purpose), and Gray Street as specified in the Houston Bike Plan. It also means making sure sidewalks across the bridges are wide enough to provide comfortable separation from traffic. On the bridges crossing the wide 59-288 trench, including landscaping or shade structures would improve what can now be a scorching 500-foot tightrope walk along the existing bridge sidewalks. Elgin Street could be the focus of the most extensive bike/ped treatments in order to create a linkage between Baldwin and Emancipation Parks.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	5) Pierce Elevated: Midtown residents are excited about the opportunity created by the realignment of I45. Midtown is exploring options with the City and adjacent neighborhoods on the best solution that would meet the goals of the City and our neighborhoods regarding the retirement of the Pierce Elevated. We look forward to working with you over the next few years to discuss options along this corridor since this is the last phase of the NHHIP Segment 3 project.	Comment noted
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	6) Proposed bridges across I69 and SH 288: It is not clear if TxDOT has studied the impact and needs to the local roadway network and roadway capacity to the same level of the freeway itself. The bridges across the freeway should be designed based on capacity considerations of the existing roadway and the City's roadway classification identified in the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan. A number of bridges across the freeway are oversized. For example, Caroline Street functions as a local or minor collector street with on-street parking and is designated as a neighborhood bikeway. It is shown on the schematic widened to 4 lanes plus dedicated left tum lanes at Wheeler Street. Wheeler Street across I69 needs to be designed to accommodate a future University Corridor transit line consistent with METRO's current long range plan. Roadway capacity on other bridges should be designed to the context and the classification of the street.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. For example, in coordination with COH, TxDOT developed a plan for bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, which includes a 15-17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic. TxDOT will include this bicycle/pedestrian realm on city street crossing in other areas of the project.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	6) Proposed bridges across I69 and SH 288: Additionally, all bridges should have wide sidewalks instead of the minimum standards and incorporate dedicated bike facilities.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	Other Considerations: The project's design should recognize that this is one of the most densely populated and historic areas of Houston. The freeway surface should be design to reduce road noise with solutions such as grooved pavement to mitigate noise impact on the adjoining neighborhoods.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. In addition, longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	Other Considerations: The project should improve traffic safety with reduced speed limits as freeway traffic approaches the city street network. All surface streets should be designed as Complete Streets, not freeway frontage roads.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. TxDOT notes that the City's policy contemplates the inclusion of the City's own Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan. And the policy acknowledges that "Complete Streets" do not mean that all streets are identical. The scope of the City's policy (executive order on Complete Streets) describes the goal that transportation entities (such as TxDOT) will partner with the City, which TxDOT has done. The policy also states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. As described in the Final EIS, the function of the frontage roads on the project is different for different locations. In some locations there are no frontage roads. TxDOT must propose a design that is safe and efficient for the function of the roadway. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	Other Considerations: Shared lanes on frontage roads are not an acceptable bicycle provision. It should be professional malpractice to implement a design that mixes people on bicycles with 50+ mph traffic. Bicycle transportation should be incorporated in the corridor through the construction of the White Oak Bayou greenway and through shared-use paths separated from frontage road traffic. Any additional free capacity added by the project will fill with traffic and congestion will return.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.

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472	Llamas, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	Other Considerations: The only ways to ensure reliable travel times into the future are dynamic tolls and traffic-protected transit. Additional opportunities to enable reliable transit service should be explored. This means providing lanes protected from main lane traffic congestion. The proposed express lanes on IH 10 should be designed and managed to ensure that the hundreds of daily buses entering and leaving Downtown from/to the west have a free-flow experience. Two-way bus/HOV lanes should be implemented from Downtown along IH 10 East, IH 45 South, and IH 69 South with connection to Wheeler Transit Center. At the very least, provisions should be included so that such facilities can be constructed in the future.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
473	Maliga, Katherine	7/27/2017	Project Website	I think that the project needs to include efforts to improve our public transportation system. The Houston metro area needs to have a mass transit system that allows for easy travel within the city of Houston and outlying suburbs.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.
473	Maliga, Katherine	7/27/2017	Project Website	I believe that an elevated rail system would be ideal especially if modeled after LA to incorporate it along side major freeways to relieve the traffic congestion of today and the future. We need to prepare for the growth that will happen in the next century not just for current levels. I feel that our current transit situation is due to a lack of vision of what this City could be become if we had the infrastructure to support the growth that is desired by city leaders.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
474	McCants, Tom	7/27/2017	Project Website	The toll entrance and exit for 288to downtown Houston needs to stay on the feeder roads and not through the neighborhoods--We already have enough issues with the homeless--If you want to do this you move down here	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
475	McCulley, Catherine	7/27/2017	Email	I am opposed to certain aspects of the proposed reroute of I-45 around downtown Houston because of the detrimental impact on the environment and mobility in general. The Pierce Elevated should remain as a viable route to reduce congestion and provide access from the west side inside Loop 610. If the Pierce Elevated is removed, congestion will increase with more stop and go traffic with addition pollution as residents have to cross through downtown to reach I-45. The proposed connections are inadequate for the non freeway traffic to connect to I-45. The Pierce Elevated is an important alternative route to the proposed reroute of I-45 because we need the capacity to move traffic smoothly with a minimum of stop and go which pollutes the air. Also, it should remain as an alternative when the other route is shut down due to accidents so motorist don't sit with motors running polluting the air with no alternative. The Pierce Elevated should also be maintained as a significant evacuation route to move traffic efficiently and minimizing the deleterious impact of stop and go traffic. Please save the Pierce Elevated-the idea of a high garden up there is ridiculous in light of Houston	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
477	Medina, Sylvia	7/27/2017	Email	I-45 proj/59,segregates East End from Downtown; Wealthier communities in Downtown given priority. EE greatly underserved community this does nothing to help us develop. Polk St. is compromised GRB to expand. Polk gone, your team not transparent. No justice for the East End. Does away with biking into downtown. UNACCEPTABLE I OPPOSE THIS PROJECT!!	TxDOT coordinated with City of Houston and EaDo representatives during the project development process. TxDOT has worked closely with the City of Houston, HDMD, and EaDo to optimize the project design. Additional coordination will be performed as the project is further developed in detail design. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**Tx Dot- I45 North and More Freeway Expansion Comments** I am offering my support for the expansion project, but requesting that areas requiring further development, or parts of the expansion that remain unclear during schematic are completed vetted with neighborhood stakeholders and downtown entities. I suggest a process is developed ta address the specific comments during design development and report back to stakeholders regarding both the actual design and Tx Dot's revisions to meet requirements of the environmental impact study.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and other stakeholders during detailed design and construction.

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479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART I - 1 Comments regarding First Ward Neighborhood in Segment 3, Near Northside residential and Heights residential neighborhoods** All new roadway bridges over the new freeway expansion should have separated bike and pedestrian sidewalks with pedestrian friendly lighting. In the instances they are connecting residential neighborhoods, we are requesting attractive designs. We are requesting Tx Dot to work with the adjoining communities on specific bridge designs and give the cultural arts district an opportunity to consider added art installations particularly on bridges into the cultural arts district located in First Ward on Houston Avenue and Crockett.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development. Visual impacts were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on the viewscape in some areas are likely unavoidable. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the during detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design, where feasible.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** Continue to protect the President Head statues and park titled Statesmen park adjacent to the freeway in First Ward as shown on current plans.	The Recommended Alternative would not impact the American Statesmanship Park.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** Tx Dot to ensure the bike path at Spring Street in First ward remains. Current plans show lanes on grade, and engineers were unable to clarify the design intent at the meetings. We are requesting roadways remain somewhat elevated to accommodate the bike pedestrian clearances facilitating connectivity from Northside to First Ward and Heights.	The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The Spring Street trail (Heights Hike and Bike Trail) and the White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail along White Oak Bayou will be maintained.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** The roadway at 1201 Spring Street is shown to have more right of way for the expansion. Removing vehicular access along the road is a detriment to property access and again this area needs re-evaluation to maintain both the house and the access to the driveway etc.	The roadway design was revised to avoid this property.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** Tx Dot installed temporary stick bollards on the Houston Avenue Bridge driving lane to create a temporary bike alternative path during recent ramp construction in this area. They are an extreme safety hazard as cars are driving over them mowing those down daily. They are not sufficient interim protection for pedestrians and cyclists. Tx Dot needs to provide barricades capable of preventing cars from driving onto a roadway bike path which has no visibility over the crown of the bridge.	Houston Avenue is a City street and the COH installed the current temporary stick bollards. Houston Avenue would be reconstructed as part of the proposed project and would include a buffer space between bike/ped accommodations and the roadway. Pedestrian and bicycle safety will be addressed in the detailed design phase of the proposed project.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** Work in and near the "Trigas Company" at the exchange of I-45 and I-10 requires a safety plan for freeway demolition and construction to mitigate any potential for a gas explosion endangering adjacent communities and motorists.	TxDOT requires the construction contractors to have all gas lines and other underground facilities located ahead of construction and will follow procedures for marking such lines clearly to avoid construction activities that may impact these lines. Gas lines in conflict with the proposed construction will be relocated or adjusted ahead of construction activities to mitigate the conflicts. TxDOT requires a health and safety plan be submitted by their construction contractors for review and approval prior to beginning construction activities. These plans will require that the Trigas company facility be addressed in the plan for any work activities in close proximity to that facility or that might present a concern. The safety plan will address identification of properties and facilities of potential concern and will be required to address the approach for appropriate construction site notifications to construction personnel and proposed field markings near sensitive facilities. The plan will also address protocols for notifications and actions to be taken should an emergency situation occur
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** First Ward is requesting bike bridges be designed below the new fly ramps leading toward downtown, to provide a connection over the roadways for cyclists and pedestrians safely separated from cars. The purpose of the bike bridges extended below the new fly ramps is to provide connectivity from the current trails at Hogg Park/ Stude Park to Buffalo Bayou Park. Alternative methods of connectivity are important for inner city communities providing alternative safe methods of transportation. Many lower income residents must rely on bikes	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** The new cap park north of I-10 and I-45 exchange has multiple feeder lanes and doesn't provide a safe way for pedestrian access from the neighborhood to the future cap park. The traffic should be slowed and signals provided that would allow pedestrians to cross safely. Landscaped green sound walls versus unsightly concrete walls utilizing suggested hardscape materials which absorb water to mitigate flooding. We want to see landscape plans that are sensitive to the residential communities adjacent to the freeway. We are requesting that trees and shrubs are planted to provide sufficient buffering of both the car traffic noise and the massive concrete visual of the freeway which is not compatible with the general expectations of residential neighborhoods.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** We want Tx Dot to continue to work with Metro and accommodate revisions as needed for the new capital improvement plans they are currently launching and likely to float bonds to meet mass transit needs. Mass transit initiatives should be part of the I-45 expansion concepts and not place any added burden of right of way on communities adjacent to the freeways.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** We want to maintain the opportunity to potentially re purpose Pierce Elevated into an elevated public space beyond the Tx Dot I-45 Expansion project record of decision.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.

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479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART 1** Numerous neighborhood groups have endorsed a proposal from Houston High-Speed Rail Watch for a public-transit connection (either METRORail or Bus Rapid Transit) from downtown to the anticipated high-speed rail station at 290/610 area. This proposed connection would run elevated over the main lanes of I-10 and route in the I-45 expansion corridor adjacent to First Ward. It is preferred to enter downtown at the current location of the I-10 HOV ramp at Franklin Street which Tx Dot shows to demolition. We are requesting Tx Dot works with Metro to incorporate this plan without placing additional burden of right of way on adjacent communities	The Franklin St. ramp cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. Access for buses to Downtown from the I-10 HOV lane would be provided by a dedicated ramp to Smith St. from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT is aware of the ongoing studies for the proposed Texas Central high-speed rail project and METRO's desire to include BRT in the I-10 corridor to connect downtown to the HSR station. As part of a separate project, TxDOT is studying incorporating transit into the I-10 corridor in between I-610 and downtown.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART II - From the Downtown Connectors South of Buffalo Bayou- I am in support of depressed lanes on the west connectors that require new ramps into Midtown and the comments below from Make I45 Better Coalition-Houston** **General Statement** While the planned project will remove the I-45 main lanes from the west side of downtown, the planned "downtown connectors," their ramps and related surface streets will have significant impacts on Buffalo Bayou, Sam Houston Park, Fourth Ward and Midtown. With the assistance of the Downtown District, community representatives from the surrounding area have achieved consensus on modifications we are asking TxDOT to make to its plans from Buffalo Bayou to Pierce Street during its FEIS phase:	Responses to referenced comments are below.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	*PART II Buffalo Bayou and Sam Houston Park* Sam Houston Park is Houston's most historic park, and Buffalo Bayou is Houston's greatest natural resource. The project should protect and even benefit both important civic assets. 1. Configure NB cloverleaf and SB ramps to and from Allen Parkway to allow for a cleaner bridge design over Allen Parkway and Buffalo Bayou. 2. The design of both bridges over Buffalo Bayou (elevated connectors and surface street) should minimize bridge piers and be carefully coordinated with design features of the park and bayou. 3. Our groups are inclined to support a proposal for a "signature bridge" over the park and Buffalo Bayou (pending design details)	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project would significantly reduce the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. 1. During the schematic phase, TxDOT updated the cloverleaf design to provide a better connection over Allen Parkway to the northbound downtown connector and updated the southbound ramp to Allen Parkway to provide a better connection to Allen Parkway and Houston Avenue. 2. During this schematic phase, the bridges over Buffalo Bayou and the other bayous in the project area were designed to minimize piers within the floodway. Additional coordination regarding design features will occur during detailed design. 3. During detailed design, TxDOT will consider options for a signature bridge over the park and Buffalo Bayou.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**PART II Buffalo Bayou and Sam Houston Park** In many areas, the project is converting overhead freeway lanes to below-grade except here where a freeway underpass is being replaced with an overpass at West Dallas. 1. With "low profile" bridge structures (thin slabs) and minimal re-grading, current standards can be met and still allow the elevated connectors to pass over Allen Parkway and then go below West Dallas as the I-45 main lanes do today. 2. Continue the downtown connectors below grade south of Andrews. 3. Include a direct pedestrian connection and gateway at Andrews Street from downtown to Fourth Ward. 4. Shift all roadways within the existing right-of-way to open up more space on the Fourth Ward side for a linear green space and high-comfort trail (see below). 5. Include the possibility of a small cap park on the north side of Andrews as part of the Fourth Ward Gateway.	1. TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. 2. TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. 3. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated. 4. The design was revised to provide space for a shared-use path. 5. A freeway cap over the Downtown Connectors between West Dallas and Andrews was studied by TxDOT and coordinated with the COH and HDMD. It was determined that this cap would not allow for the southbound exit ramp from the Downtown Connectors to St Joseph/Bagby to be maintained and was decided not to include in the schematic. The profile of the Downtown Connectors was revised to allow for the reconnection of Andrews Street with a pedestrian bridge.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	*PART II Surface Streets* Reconnecting with Complete Streets communities that were split apart by the freeway is a critical component of the project scope 1. Provide direct connections from Walker and McKinney to Houston Avenue (terminate two-way north-south surface street at this direct connection on north side of bayou). 2. Eliminate the Walker Street roadway to Allen Parkway that bisects Sam Houston Park. 3. Reduce the two-way surface street north of Allen Parkway by one lane in each direction. 4. Reduce Heiner Street to two lanes (three lanes once the Bagby ramp merges with Heiner Street) to accommodate the green space and high-comfort trail (see below) 5. Extend the NB Pease Street to West Dallas over the depressed downtown connectors to access Allen Parkway. 6. As an Option to #5, consider extending the two-way surface street north of Allen Parkway along Heiner Street to St. Joseph Parkway to improve the legibility of the street network.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network and modifications to the local street network would be COH projects. The profile of the Downtown Connectors was revised to allow for the reconnection of Andrews Street with a pedestrian bridge. 1. TxDOT evaluated this in coordination with the COH and stakeholders and it was determined that a connection between Walker St./McKinney St. and Houston Ave. is not feasible due to vertical restrictions associated with the Downtown Connectors and Buffalo Bayou. Termination of the two-way north-south surface street north of the bayou would adversely impact local connectivity. 2. TxDOT met with the COH and maintaining a Walker St. connection to Allen Parkway was requested. At this time, no change to the project design is proposed. TxDOT is open to discussing this connection further with the COH. 3. Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network and modifications to the local street network would be COH projects. 4. In response to requests from stakeholders, TxDOT revised the design to provide additional space for a shared-use path along Heiner Street between Bagby and Dallas Street. The path itself will be constructed on this additional space by organizations other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of this path. 5. TxDOT coordinated with COH and it was determined that the requested street connection over the depressed downtown connectors is not necessary and would create a complex intersection at West Dallas/Allen Parkway. Access from Pease St. to Allen Parkway would be provided via the northbound surface street. 6. The proposed two-way surface street between West Dallas and Allen Parkway is intended to connect Pease Street to Allen Parkway. Extending the two-way surface street between West Dallas and St. Joseph would not provide enough room to accommodate your request for green space and would be a repetitive connection of Pease Street to Allen Parkway. TxDOT was, however, able to extend the one-way southbound movement of this two-way surface street to connect with St. Joseph to improve street network connectivity.
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	*PART II- Multi-Modal Trails and Green Space* Multi-modal connections between the area's high-density urban populations and Buffalo Bayou is a critical component of the project scope. 1. Along the west side of the right-of-way from Pierce to Allen Parkway, provide a high-comfort multi-modal trail from Midtown, south downtown and Fourth Ward to Buffalo Bayou. 2. It is critical that the at-grade Allen Parkway crossing be designed for pedestrian and cycling safety. 3. Provide a safe connection at Andrews Street from this high-comfort trail into the green space between the downtown connectors and then to Pierce Street (and possibly the Pierce Sky Park). 4. Preserve the option for the Pierce Sky Park from Andrews Street to Pierce Street, including a transition to the high-comfort trail accessing Buffalo Bayou. 5 Include gateways to Fourth Ward/Freedmen's Town at Andrews Street and West Dallas Street	1. proposed NHHIP provides the opportunity for innovative open space opportunities. For instance, TxDOT coordinated with the Houston Downtown Management District (HDMD) on their "Plan Downtown" efforts that engaged many of the Coalition members to develop the Green Loop. TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership and other stakeholders to accommodate plans for trails, where feasible. 2. Safety is TxDOT's highest priority and thus was one of the primary Purpose and Need criteria used to analyze the alternatives for NHHIP. TxDOT coordinated with the COH and other stakeholders regarding the design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing Allen Parkway. 3. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and stakeholders regarding the project and agree this coordination has resulted in many positive enhancements to the design presented in the DEIS. For example, TxDOT redesigned the Downtown connectors to be below grade at Andrews St. to allow for a pedestrian/bicyclist connection between Fourth Ward and Downtown. TxDOT will continue to work with these groups throughout future phases of the project to address community concerns. 4. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated. 5.TxDOT would coordinate during detailed design to accommodate gateways proposed and funded by local entities.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
479	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Email	**General Comments** The project's design should recognize that this is one of the most densely-populated and historic areas of Houston. 1. Reduce road noise with grooved pavement and slower speed limits. 2. Improve traffic safety with reduced speed limits as traffic approaches the city street network. 3. All surface streets should be designed as Complete Streets, not freeway frontage roads. 4. Roadway alignments and the project scope should allow for street trees and urban sidewalks. 5. Design of all structures should be high-quality and compatible with the surrounding urban and historic fabric.	1. TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. 2. TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. 3. The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. For example, in coordination with COH, TxDOT developed a plan for bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, which includes a 15-17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic. TxDOT will include this bicycle/pedestrian realm on city street crossing in other areas of the project. 4. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. 5. TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. TxDOT prepared simulations (renderings) of the project alternatives from the location of parks and bicycle/pedestrian trails adjacent to or intersecting the proposed project area.
480	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Written	**Repurposing the Pierce** The Pierce Skypark team is writing to Tx Dot encouraging they maintain the opportunity to potentially re-purpose the abandon sections of Pierce Elevated into an elevated public space beyond the Tx Dot I-45 Expansion project record of decision in Segment Three. As noted in public meetings, TxDot suggested it can credit any demolition costs saved by leaving components of Pierce Elevated in place to the City of Houston. The City of Houston should have the opportunity to use the real estate for public use as it was purchased with taxpayer funds. Our team has spent 4 years bringing awareness to many entities for the potential of re-purposing the Pierce Elevated may have to become an amenity and an economic driver to positive growth of our city.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
480	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Written	**Repurposing the Pierce** Our team was involved with studying the potential green belt and depressed lanes on the west side of segment three along with other entities. The connection from Midtown to Buffalo Bayou Park on the west portion of the I-45 expansion is crucial to facilitating a more complete connection that begins to circle downtown. We are in favor of depressing lanes in this area and support all the comments that have been outlined in detail below and the letter of DEIS comments from "Make I-45 Better Coalition."	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project would significantly reduce the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. 1. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated. 2. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership to accommodate plans for trails.
480	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Written	**General Statement** While the planned project will remove the I-45 main lanes from the west side of downtown, the planned "downtown connectors," their ramps and related surface streets will have significant impacts on Buffalo Bayou, Sam Houston Park, Fourth Ward and Midtown. With the assistance of the Downtown District, community representatives from the surrounding area have achieved consensus on modifications we are asking TxDOT to make to its plans from Buffalo Bayou to Pierce Street during its FEIS phase:	Responses to referenced comments are below.
480	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Written	**Buffalo Bayou and Sam Houston Park** Sam Houston Park is Houston's most historic park, and Buffalo Bayou is Houston's greatest natural resource. The project should protect and even benefit both important civic assets. 1. Configure NB cloverleaf and SB ramps to and from Allen Parkway to allow for a cleaner bridge design over Allen Parkway and Buffalo Bayou. 2. The design of both bridges over Buffalo Bayou (elevated connectors and surface street) should minimize bridge piers and be carefully coordinated with design features of the park and bayou. 3. Our groups are inclined to support a proposal for a "signature bridge" over the park and Buffalo Bayou (pending design details) 4. Include gateways to Fourth Ward/Freedmen's Town at Andrews Street and West Dallas Street.	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project would significantly reduce the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. 1. During the schematic phase, TxDOT updated the cloverleaf design to provide a better connection over Allen Parkway to the northbound downtown connector and updated the southbound ramp to Allen Parkway to provide a better connection to Allen Parkway and Houston Avenue. 2. During this schematic phase, the bridges over Buffalo Bayou and the other bayous in the project area were designed to minimize piers within the floodway. Additional coordination regarding design features will occur during detailed design. 3. During detailed design, TxDOT will consider options for a signature bridge over the park and Buffalo Bayou. 4. TxDOT would coordinate during detailed design to accommodate gateways proposed and funded by local entities.
480	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Written	**Downtown Connectors South of Buffalo Bayou** In many areas, the project is converting overhead freeway lanes to below-grade except here where a freeway underpass is being replaced with an overpass at West Dallas. 1. With "low profile" bridge structures (thin slabs) and minimal re-grading, current standards can be met and still allow the elevated connectors to pass over Allen Parkway and then go below West Dallas as the I-45 main lanes do today. 2. Continue the downtown connectors below grade south of Andrews. 3. Include a direct pedestrian connection and gateway at Andrews Street from downtown to Fourth Ward. 4. Shift all roadways within the existing right-of-way to open up more space on the Fourth Ward side for a linear green space and high-comfort trail (see below). 5. Include the possibility of a small cap park on the north side of Andrews as part of the Fourth Ward Gateway.	1. TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. 2. TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. 3. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated. 4. The design was revised to provide space for a shared-use path. 5. A freeway cap over the Downtown Connectors between West Dallas and Andrews was studied by TxDOT and coordinated with the COH and HDMD. It was determined that this cap would not allow for the southbound exit ramp from the Downtown Connectors to St Joseph/Bagby to be maintained and was decided not to include in the schematic. The profile of the Downtown Connectors was revised to allow for the reconnection of Andrews Street with a pedestrian bridge.

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480	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Written	**Surface Streets** Reconnecting with Complete Streets communities that were split apart by the freeway is a critical component of the project scope 1. Provide direct connections from Walker and McKinney to Houston Avenue (terminate two-way north-south surface street at this direct connection on north side of bayou). 2. Eliminate the Walker Street roadway to Allen Parkway that bisects Sam Houston Park. 3. Reduce the two-way surface street north of Allen Parkway by one lane in each direction. 4. Reduce Heiner Street to two lanes (three lanes once the Bagby ramp merges with Heiner Street) to accommodate the green space and high-comfort trail (see below) 5. Extend the NB Pease Street to West Dallas over the depressed downtown connectors to access Allen Parkway. 6. As an Option to #5, consider extending the two-way surface street north of Allen Parkway along Heiner Street to St. Joseph Parkway to improve the legibility of the street network.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network and modifications to the local street network would be COH projects. The profile of the Downtown Connectors was revised to allow for the reconnection of Andrews Street with a pedestrian bridge. 1. TxDOT evaluated this in coordination with the COH and stakeholders and it was determined that a connection between Walker St./McKinney St. and Houston Ave. is not feasible due to vertical restrictions associated with the Downtown Connectors and Buffalo Bayou. Termination of the two-way north-south surface street north of the bayou would adversely impact local connectivity. 2. TxDOT met with the COH and maintaining a Walker St. connection to Allen Parkway was requested. At this time, no change to the project design is proposed. TxDOT is open to discussing this connection further with the COH. 3. Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network and modifications to the local street network would be COH projects. 4. In response to requests from stakeholders, TxDOT revised the design to provide additional space for a shared-use path along Heiner Street between Bagby and Dallas Street. The path itself will be constructed on this additional space by organizations other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of this path. 5. TxDOT coordinated with COH and it was determined that the requested street connection over the depressed downtown connectors is not necessary and would create a complex intersection at West Dallas/Allen Parkway. Access from Pease St. to Allen Parkway would be provided via the northbound surface street. 6. The proposed two-way surface street between West Dallas and Allen Parkway is intended to connect Pease Street to Allen Parkway. Extending the two-way surface street between West Dallas and St. Joseph would not provide enough room to accommodate your request for green space and would be a repetitive connection of Pease Street to Allen Parkway. TxDOT was, however, able to extend the one-way southbound movement of this two-way surface street to connect with St. Joseph to improve street network connectivity.
480	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Written	**Multi-Modal Trails and Green Space** Multi-modal connections between the area's high-density urban populations and Buffalo Bayou is a critical component of the project scope. 1. Along the west side of the right-of-way from Pierce to Allen Parkway, provide a high-comfort multi-modal trail from Midtown, south downtown and Fourth Ward to Buffalo Bayou. 2. It is critical that the at-grade Allen Parkway crossing be designed for pedestrian and cycling safety. 3. Provide a safe connection at Andrews Street from this high-comfort trail into the green space between the downtown connectors and then to Pierce Street (and possibly the Pierce Sky Park). 4. Preserve the option for the Pierce Sky Park from Andrews Street to Pierce Street, including a transition to the high-comfort trail accessing Buffalo Bayou.	1. proposed NHHIP provides the opportunity for innovative open space opportunities. For instance, TxDOT coordinated with the Houston Downtown Management District (HDMD) on their "Plan Downtown" efforts that engaged many of the Coalition members to develop the Green Loop. TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership and other stakeholders to accommodate plans for trails, where feasible. 2. Safety is TxDOT's highest priority and thus was one of the primary Purpose and Need criteria used to analyze the alternatives for NHHIP. TxDOT coordinated with the COH and other stakeholders regarding the design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing Allen Parkway. 3. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and stakeholders regarding the project and agree this coordination has resulted in many positive enhancements to the design presented in the DEIS. For example, TxDOT redesigned the Downtown connectors to be below grade at Andrews St. to allow for a pedestrian/bicyclist connection between Fourth Ward and Downtown. TxDOT will continue to work with these groups throughout future phases of the project to address community concerns. 4. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated. 5.TxDOT would coordinate during detailed design to accommodate gateways proposed and funded by local entities.
480	Merrick, Tami	7/27/2017	Written	**General Comments** The project's design should recognize that this is one of the most densely-populated and historic areas of Houston. 1. Reduce road noise with grooved pavement and slower speed limits. 2. Improve traffic safety with reduced speed limits as traffic approaches the city street network. 3. All surface streets should be designed as Complete Streets, not freeway frontage roads. 4. Roadway alignments and the project scope should allow for street trees and urban sidewalks. 5. Design of all structures should be high-quality and compatible with the surrounding urban and historic fabric.	1. TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. 2. TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. 3. The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. For example, in coordination with COH, TxDOT developed a plan for bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, which includes a 15-17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic. TxDOT will include this bicycle/pedestrian realm on city street crossing in other areas of the project. 4. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. 5. TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. TxDOT prepared simulations (renderings) of the project alternatives from the location of parks and bicycle/pedestrian trails adjacent to or intersecting the proposed project area.
482	Moore, Roger	7/27/2017	Email	I am commenting on the $7B Houston District TxDOT I-45 project. We need to preserve the future opportunity to incorporate multi modal high capacity transit (i.e. elevated rail, etc.) into this project.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
483	Morillo, Natalie	7/27/2017	Project Website	This is in regards to rerouting the train tracks in Downtown. Recently came across this on twitter and I think it's a brilliant idea! This would save me so much time in the morning and afternoons where I usually get held up due to the train passing. It would be best to move the tracks to a more convenient area.	The proposed project would not permanently reroute existing tracks (freight railroad or light rail).
484	Morillo, Natasha	7/27/2017	Written	I recently came across a few suggestions made by Christof Spieler on Twitter regarding the idea of rerouting the train tracks north of downtown Houston, and I fully support this notion. I work near I-10 and Studemont where there are multiple train tracks in the area which are always causing lots of traffic/congestion. Additionally, there are often days when the system is being worked on and the gate arms are permanently down (I've waited well over 5 minutes before- trains usually do not take long to appear once the arms are down), and my fellow employees and I have to dangerously cross through the tracks hoping it is safe. I am sure there are better locations for the trains to pass through for where they are delivering to.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.
485	Nemec, Joseph	7/27/2017	Project Website	I oppose this project as it currently stands.	Comment noted.

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485	Nemec, Joseph	7/27/2017	Project Website	Why exactly is removing the Pierce Elevated highway right-of-way, a valuable asset for moving citizens, a priority for this project? Where was the alternative that kept the Pierce? Aside from a few developers who will buy the land and profit immensely (who for all the public know are conspiring with TxDOT), nobody benefits from the reduced options for transporting people in our area. Arguments for removing the Pierce are red herrings. In fact ifs one of the least destructive urban freeways ever built, as it results in zero street closures underneath it...	TxDOT evaluated alternatives that utilized the Pierce Elevated portion of I-45. At various stages in alternatives development, the alternatives that included leaving Pierce Elevated as is or modifying it were: Alternatives 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12. Section 2 of the Final EIS documents the analysis of the alternatives. Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements.
485	Nemec, Joseph	7/27/2017	Project Website	... the same which cannot be said for TxDOTs reposed replacement along the current I-69 right-of-way, which not only closes streets, but destroys and displaces a thriving new neighborhood and community forming in EaDo, effectively segregating the largely Hispanic East End from Downtown while "opening up" the largely white neighborhood of Midtown to Downtown.	Currently, the freeway in this section is elevated. The proposed project would include I-45 and US 59/I-69 as depressed in this section, allowing for the addition of greenspace above portions of the roadways. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to US 59/I 69 between Commerce Street and Leeland Street, which would reestablish connectivity of four streets (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker streets) across US 59/I-69 that was previously cut off when the George R. Brown Convention Center was constructed.
485	Nemec, Joseph	7/27/2017	Project Website	This is where the blatant institutional racism of TxDOT comes to play. When the rich, educated, politically connected Anglo neighborhood of Midtown theoretically wants something, in this case the Pierce elevated removed, (although it stands to be see who other than a vocal minority actually want this) TxDOT bends over backwards to accommodate this plan, at the expense of the Hispanic East End and really the entirety of the Houston area. The problems created by this destruction of the Pierce also extend to the whole region. Notable affected regions include the entire Gulf Freeway corridor. Any person living down this corridor, who might I add are of a lower socio-economic tier than the wealthier North Freeway, Woodlands commuters, and wishes to exit Downtown are now limited to the one exit and entrance downtown via St. Joseph or Pease street.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times. TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.
485	Nemec, Joseph	7/27/2017	Project Website	The all-important northwest downtown connection at Memorial or Allen Parkway are gone, adding significant traffic which currently uses those exits to the downtown street grid. Not only are these people subject to longer commutes as they cross the entirety of downtown twice a day to use their one exit and entrance to get home, but this added cross downtown traffic will cause more traffic for all downtown commuters, actually making traffic in the region worse for all citizens. The opposite goal of this project. In fact these exits and entrances at memorial and Allen parkway aren'tjust utilized by Gulf Freeway commuters. All freeways, thanks to circular structure of the downtown loop (which this project aims to decimate for no good reason) benefitfrom this west downtown connection including the Southwest, South, East and East Tex freeways.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of Downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated, and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. Where the Pierce Elevated is proposed to be abandoned, the city street grid (Leeland, Pease, Jefferson, St. Joseph and Pierce) would still provide east-west connectivity for local movements. Alternatively, the realigned I-45 lanes could be used to access the west side via the Downtown Connector. While the route along the east and north sides of Downtown may be longer in distance, the freeway will operate much more efficiently than it does today, resulting in reduced travel times.
485	Nemec, Joseph	7/27/2017	Project Website	The downtown connector ramps in this new TxDot plan are only available for North Freeway commuters, again showing the blatant geographic, racial, and socio-economic bias of the State government for rich, white commuters, from the North. This lack of concern for everyone else in the region is shown in the lack of public meetings in many parts of the city. For a project that affects people coming from far away suburbs, quite significantly, you would think the project would have included a meeting that was closer than the closest, over 25 miles away from their house.	The Downtown Connector ramps will have connections to and from all freeways surrounding downtown.
485	Nemec, Joseph	7/27/2017	Project Website	In addition, the lack of MAX lane connectivity in the current plan between the North and Gulf Freeways represents an extreme lack in foresight on the part of TxDOT. Both sides of I-10 have this connectivity even if the East freeway hasn't constructed the same managed lanes the Katy Freeway has, yet for future purposes it has been added. A similar arrangement could be established where the MAX lanes extend to the Gulf Freeway, down along which they could eventual be extended .	Realigned I-45 lanes will function similarly to MaX lanes for through traffic. Modelling shows there is not enough traffic demand on I-10 for MaX lanes for through traffic from one side of Downtown to another.

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485	Nemec, Joseph	7/27/2017	Project Website	I'd also like to change the fiscal wisdom of this project. Spending several billion dollars to actual decrease the transportation quality for the vast majority of Houstonians is quite simply the highest level of incompetency.	The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a highway facility with additional capacity in the I-45/Hardy Toll Road corridor to manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. As documented in the Final EIS, the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project is needed for several reasons: • There is inadequate highway capacity for existing and future traffic demands on the highways in the North Houston corridor. • Between the years 2015 and 2040, average daily traffic volumes in the project corridor are projected to increase by as much as 30 percent. • Traffic congestion, which is measured by traffic volume and roadway capacity, will increase if no improvements are made. • The current high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on I-45 serves traffic in only one direction during the peak traffic periods and is unused for large portions of the day. During peak hours, the HOV lane is congested. • I-45 is a designated evacuation route for the region. At its present capacity, evacuation effectiveness would be limited in the event of a hurricane or other regional emergency. • Portions of I-45 do not meet current roadway design standards, creating a traffic safety concern. Roadway design deficiencies also include inadequate storm water drainage in some locations. Intense rainfall causes high water levels at the I-45/I-10 underpass and on the outside lanes. I-45 would not operate effectively as an evacuation route with high water closures, especially during hurricane evacuations when high rainfall events are likely. • Forecasts for commuter service indicate that even with parallel high-capacity transit in the corridor, two-way managed lanes would be needed to support commuter traffic and express bus service. • In the most recent ranking of the Top 100 most congested roadways in Texas, eight of the Top 35 are in the project area. Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
486	Newport, Jonathan	7/27/2017	Project Website	Houston First is sensitive to the needs of the businesses and resident in EaDo for an efficient connection into the central business district and is supportive of using Leeland and Bell streets to be such a connection. Given the Proposed Recommended Alternative for Segment 3 includes the removal of the Polk Street connection into EaDo, the Leeland and Bell Street corridor becomes the natural southern entryway into the central business district from EaDo. We encourage TxDOT to continue its conversations with City of Houston staff, Mayor Sylvester Turner, Council Member Robert Gallegos, state elected leaders, and other interested stakeholders to determine how best to create a prominent connection point on Leeland and Bell. Additionally, Houston First continues to stress the absolute necessity of space behind the George. R. Brown Convention Center (GRB) to serve as load-in and load-out space. Without that space, the operational utility of the GRB will be severely and dramatically diminished. Access to these areas during construction is vitally important, as well. An extended period of severely restricted access to the area could greatly impact the conventions that have agreed to come to Houston during the proposed construction period.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. TxDOT will coordinate with Houston First and their consultant team during construction to ensure access to the GRB Center is maintained.
486	Newport, Jonathan	7/27/2017	Project Website	We encourage TxDOT to continue its conversations with City of Houston staff, Mayor Sylvester Turner, Council Member Robert Gallegos, state elected leaders, and other interested stakeholders to determine how best to create a prominent connection point on Leeland and Bell.	TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with COH regarding the local street network and TxDOT will accommodate the COH plans, where possible.
486	Newport, Jonathan	7/27/2017	Project Website	Additionally, Houston First continues to stress the absolute necessity of space behind the George. R. Brown Convention Center (GRB) to serve as load-in and load-out space. Without that space, the operational utility of the GRB will be severely and dramatically diminished. Access to these areas during construction is vitally important, as well. An extended period of severely restricted access to the area could greatly impact the conventions that have agreed to come to Houston during the proposed construction period.	TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with Houston First during detailed design and construction to ensure access for GRB operations, including considering planning for large events.

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487	Buffalo Bayou Partnership	7/27/2017	Email	**Southwest Quadrant of Downtown/Downtown Connector(DC)** Through the leadership of the Downtown Management District, community representatives including those from Buffalo Bayou Partnership, have reached consensus on the following recommendations for the Buffalo Bayou Sabine Promenade area in downtown. We believe these recommendations will provide for increased neighborhood connectivity between Downtown and the Fourth Ward in addition to improved connection between Midtown and the Buffalo Bayou Park/Sabine Promenade area. • Configure northbound cloverleaf and southbound ramps to and from Allen Parkway to allow for a cleaner bridge design over Allen Parkway and Buffalo Bayou. • The design of both bridges over Allen Parkway (elevated connectors and surface streets) should minimize bridge piers and be carefully coordinated with design features of the park and bayou. • Design a "signature bridge" over the park and Buffalo Bayou. • General modifications for DC alignment: With the indicated TxDOT right-of-way, adjust eastward the curvature of the DC and northbound/southbound frontage streets, in order to maximize the space on the western side of DC for north-to-south pedestrian, bicycle, and landscape amenities adjacent to the Fourth Ward. This DC shift eastward may involve reconsideration of the DC exit to Bagby Street. • To provide for the greatest improvement, grade separate the DC below Dallas and Andrews streets. Further, shift the "swing lanes" of the northbound frontage street to between Dallas and Andrews streets; this results in an eccentric bridging structure for the "swing lanes" which has been discussed within community meetings as a potential cap park benefitting both Fourth Ward and Allen Center. • As an alternative to the preferred solution described previously, shift southward the embankments at the southern end of DC such that an east-west pedestrian and bicycle connection along Andrews Street can be established. Due to the historic condition of Andrews Street in the Fourth Ward, the objective is not to increase vehicular traffic on this narrow, brick-lined street, but rather to allow for pedestrian and bicycle access across (under) the DC. The proposed "swing lanes" of the northbound frontage street between Dallas and Allen Parkway are unaffected.	1. During the schematic phase, TxDOT updated the cloverleaf design to provide a better connection over Allen Parkway to the northbound downtown connector and updated the southbound ramp to Allen Parkway to provide a better connection to Allen Parkway and Houston Avenue. 2. TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project also significantly reduces the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT will coordinate with stakeholders during detailed design to identify opportunities to enhance open spaces and amenities along the bayous. 3. TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project also significantly reduces the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT will coordinate with stakeholders during detailed design to identify opportunities to enhance open spaces and amenities along the bayous. Bridges over Buffalo Bayou would be designed to minimize piers within the bayou. Additional coordination regarding design features will occur during detailed design. 4. A freeway cap over the Downtown Connectors between West Dallas and Andrews was studied by TxDOT and coordinated with the COH and HDMD. It was determined that this cap would not allow for the southbound exit ramp from the Downtown Connectors to St Joseph/Bagby to be maintained and was decided not to include in the schematic. The profile of the Downtown Connectors was revised to allow for the reconnection of Andrews Street with a pedestrian bridge. 5. TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. 6. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated.
487	Buffalo Bayou Partnership	7/27/2017	Email	**Southwest Quadrant of Downtown/Downtown Connector(DC)** (RECOMMENDATIONS) Buffalo Bayou Partnership views this area as one of the most densely-populated and historic areas of Houston and therefore recommends the following: • Reduce road noise with grooved pavement and slower speed limits	Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels.
487	Buffalo Bayou Partnership	7/27/2017	Email	**Southwest Quadrant of Downtown/Downtown Connector(DC)** (RECOMMENDATIONS-CONT) Buffalo Bayou Partnership views this area as one of the most densely-populated and historic areas of Houston and therefore recommends the following: • Improve traffic safety with reduced speed limits as traffic approaches the city street network	Signage will indicate speed limits, and speed limits will decrease along the downtown connector as it approaches the city streets.
487	Buffalo Bayou Partnership	7/27/2017	Email	**Southwest Quadrant of Downtown/Downtown Connector(DC)** (RECOMMENDATIONS-CONT) Buffalo Bayou Partnership views this area as one of the most densely-populated and historic areas of Houston and therefore recommends the following: • All surface streets should be designed as Complete Streets, not freeway frontage roads	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways.
487	Buffalo Bayou Partnership	7/27/2017	Email	**Southwest Quadrant of Downtown/Downtown Connector(DC)** (RECOMMENDATIONS-CONT) Buffalo Bayou Partnership views this area as one of the most densely-populated and historic areas of Houston and therefore recommends the following: • Roadway alignment and the project scope should allow for street trees and urban sidewalks • Design of all structures should be high quality and compatible with the surrounding urban and historic fabric	The I-610/I-45 interchange is designed to maintain existing access to frontage roads where possible. Two way access to Reid Rd. from the frontage road will be maintained. Melbourne St. is a city street and any extension would be the responsibility of the City of Houston.
487	Buffalo Bayou Partnership	7/27/2017	Email	**Northeast Quadrant of Downtown** The new alignment of IH-45 across Buffalo Bayou northeast of Downtown offers a unique opportunity to create a major new green space near Downtown combining Harris County's James Bute Park with the current freeway right-of-way. This area could serve as a major gateway from Downtown and Eado to parks and trails along Buffalo Bayou and be an attraction in its own right. The DEIS drawings show detention in this area. Projects in Houston like Art Storey Park have shown that detention ponds cannot only be part of great open spaces but actually make them more interesting. Buffalo Bayou Partnership would like to work with TxDOT on the design of this detention area and on opportunities to link the area to the possible cap park between Downtown and Eado, possibly including a pedestrian/bike bridge over the IH-10 and IH-69 ramps. The Partnership also encourages TxDOT to look at options for moving the IH-69 exit ramps farther east, closer to the remainder of the freeway, to keep this area more open.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership regarding this detention pond concept and efforts will be made to accommodate the future plans of Buffalo Bayou Partnership during final design. The existing crossing in this area would be replaced as part of the NHHIP. TxDOT evaluated options for a new bridge, including possibly constructing it under Elysian St., as suggested by others. However, this is not possible because it would not meet vertical clearance requirements with the reconstructed Providence and Rothwell streets. The revised schematic shows the proposed location of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge just west of the BNSF rail crossing. This location will provide improved pedestrian connectivity compared to the existing conditions. The exit ramp for I-69 has been moved as far east as possible without compromising design and safety standards.

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487	Buffalo Bayou Partnership	7/27/2017	Email	Northeast Quadrant of Downtown (RECOMMENDATIONS) In this same area, Buffalo Bayou Partnership is concerned about several North Houston Highway Improvement Project plans, and recommends the following: • The closure of Runnels Street cuts off the area of the East End north of the West Belt Subdivision rail line and Buffalo Bayou, and limits access to Downtown to just the Franklin/Navigation underpass. • Evaluate options for a northbound exit from US 59 main lanes to Runnels Street. • Evaluate options for extending Canal Street across I-69/US 59/I-45 between Downtown and Second Ward. • Existing two-way connection of Nance Street to Jensen Street is being replaced by one-way frontage road along Rothwell. Identify another two-way connection between Jensen Street and Jensen Street. • Maintain Jensen Street exit from IH-10 eastbound or provide other alternatives to maintain connectivity without at-grade rail crossings. • Identify options for ingress and egress from I-69 near Buffalo Bayou areas to improve access to and from Downtown, East Downtown, East End and Fifth Ward • Proposed design has limited connectivity to the Fifth Ward areas north of Buffalo Bayou. The exit ramp for Jensen previously proposed has been removed. Provide alternate access from Fifth Ward to mitigate any loss of access. Evaluate options to extend Bringhurst across I-10 to enhance connectivity across I-10. • Providing an additional crossing at IH-10 between Gregg Street and Hirsch Street would be very beneficial, given the potential Midway East River development	1. GCRD has recommended a Runnels St. underpass at the rail line. Though that project is not currently funded, TxDOT will coordinate with GCRD to accommodate it. 2. Placing an exit at this location is not geometrically possible. 3. Canal Street is a city street, any extension across the highways would be the responsibility of the City of Houston. 4. & 5. Proposed access improvements include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. 6. (see responses to other bulleted comments) 7. Proposed access improvements include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. Bringhurst St. is a city street and an extension would be a City of Houston project; however, the extension of Bringhurst is not geometrically feasible. 8. A continuous frontage road does not currently exist in this area; the proposed project includes continuous frontage roads, which would improve access to/from McKee St. and Hardy St., which will cross the highways . Gregg St. and Hirsch St. are city streets and an extension across the highways would be City of Houston projects.
488	Noriega, Melissa	7/27/2017	Email	As a resident of Houston's East End, I am concerned about E-W connectivity into downtown. The grid has already been compromised w dead-ends into one-ways, poor signage, etc. It's not acceptable to cut off major connector like Polk or Leeland w/o a serious re-work of the one ways & the areas around stadiums. A poor workaround is not acceptable.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
489	Ramey, Carol	7/27/2017	Written	I strongly object to the current TxDot plan to place both the exit and entrance ramps for 288 Managed Lane traffic to/and from downtown at Chenevert & Elgin. My understanding is that TxDot's research estimates this will lead to 19,000 inbound and 15,000 outbound vehicles per hour in that area, which is a significant increase into a residential area onto streets not designed to handle that kind of traffic. I am concerned about not just about the# of vehicles it will add into the area but also those travelling at a high rate of speed. This could dramatically increase the# of accidents on residential streets both north and southbound through Midtown into downtown. Midtown residents are striving for a sustainable, walkable community. Commuters using the 288 Managed Lanes are more likely to be headed into downtown than Midtown, so dropping off into Midtown first will cause additional delay, confusion, and potentially frustration. I foresee a decrease in walkability and pedestrian safety due the significant increase in traffic.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
489	Ramey, Carol	7/27/2017	Written	Ensuring that the bridges between Midtown and the Third Ward, and others across I69 and 288, can be safely traversed by pedestrians and bicycles, with either dedicated bike lanes or sidewalks wide enough to allow those traversing to feel safe. In particular, there should be a safe way for bike/pedestrian traffic to get across 59 to traverse between Baldwin Park and Emancipation Park.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH.
489	Ramey, Carol	7/27/2017	Written	I strongly encourage that options be left open as long as possible for re-purposing the Pierce Elevated rather than tearing it down and leaving more undeveloped open space …	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
489	Ramey, Carol	7/27/2017	Written	… as well as for optional cap parks/green space at Wheeler and east of the GRB. Although I understand private funding would be needed for these efforts, it is an opportunity to create extended greenways around downtown that will encourage development and make the area a destination.	Comment noted.
490	Ramirez, Michael	7/27/2017	Project Website	DO NOT close down POLK street access from the east end residents! A bridge crossing MUST be part of the plan in order for US who live and commute to downtown have an easier/short route to work instead of going clear cross town jus to gain access.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
491	Bayou Preservation Association	7/27/2017	Email	Bayou Preservation Association is a non-profit organization whose mission is to "celebrate, protect and restore the natural richness of all our bayous and streams in the Houston area." Founded in 1966 by a group led by the late Terry Hershey, Bayou Preservation Association has been a consistent advocate for preservation and improvement of the beauty and cleanliness of Houston's bayous and watersheds and a consistent advocate for public policies that reduce water pollution of Houston area bayous and streams. Though Bayou Preservation Association recognizes that the development of the Houston metropolitan area has led in past decades to many drainage projects involving channelization and concreting of Houston waterways, Bayou Preservation Association is committed to restoration of Houston waterways to a more nearly natural condition wherever that can be accomplished. Bayou Preservation Association's concerns about the DEIS are the failure to adequately address the impacts on water quality and stormwater management. Bayou Preservation Association supports the comments of the I-45 Coalition on these points, as expressed in the excerpt of the Coalition letter that is quoted below. We have not addressed other points in the I-45 Coalition letter, because they fall outside the mission and goals of Bayou Preservation Association.	TxDOT will comply with all applicable water quality regulations. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
491	Bayou Preservation Association	7/27/2017	Email	**"Flooding Impacts and Water Quality Impacts** "The DEIS recognizes that 'potential impacts on surface water quality from the proposed project would be primarily related to storm water discharges into streams and drainageways that traverse' the project. Unfortunately, the DEIS analysis of water quality impacts falls into the same trap as the visual impact analysis. The latter suggests that because Houston is generally unsightly, making it a bit less attractive is not of great consequence. The water quality analysis basically says that Houston's bayous are hopelessly polluted, so a bit more pollution is not impactful. "The DEIS recognizes that Buffalo Bayou, Little White Oak and White Oak Bayou are classified by TCEQ as 'impaired streams', and that 'the discharge of storm water runoff into these drainage features' (i.e., in our parlance, bayous), would be unavoidable. Further, it argues that because White Oak, Buffalo and Little White Oak are impaired, TxDOT has a lesser burden to protect existing water quality. Because these streams are impaired, TxDOT should have a greater obligation not to harm them further—especially since TxDOT itself is already contributing to the problem with its current practice of dumping freeway water directly into Houston's bayous. "Any Houstonian who has walked along a bayou underneath a freeway in Houston knows exactly what this means – every time it rains, or even when it's windy, tons of trash are dropped into our waterways, and flow into Galveston Bay, an important estuary for the greater region.	Permit compliance with the Construction General Permit requires consistency with TMDLs for impaired water bodies, and discharges of the pollutants of concern to impaired waters are not authorized by the permit unless otherwise allowable under 30 TAC Chapter 305 and applicable state law. TxDOT follows permit requirements for permit coverage under the Construction General Permit. TxDOT minimizes potential pollutants during construction through the project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. TxDOT manages construction litter and debris through the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. TxDOT manages post construction litter and debris prevention and removal in a multitude of ways. TxDOT has developed Public education and outreach programs for litter prevention and pick-up through the Don't Mess with Texas Program, Adopt-A-Highway program, and the Texas Trash Off. Further, TxDOT performs regular roadway maintenance activities including street sweeping and litter removal. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT is required to minimize potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices.
491	Bayou Preservation Association	7/27/2017	Email	"TxDOT's DEIS sets forth that it will meet stormwater discharge requirements during construction. Nowhere is it clear how TxDOT will prevent the flow of the thousands of tons of trash that are transported from freeways to bayous during Houston's frequent 'gullywashers'. "Needless to say, the project will produce much more impervious surface with the potential to increase flooding and accelerate pollutants into the natural waterways. The DEIS should more clearly define creative strategies to minimize those potential impacts. Those strategies may include wet bottom detention basins that can filter water and roadside drainage filters to capture trash at its source. That work could be further expanded to include recreation and additional water quality functions	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project , pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures will be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. Specific best management practices for water quality will be determined during final design and updated throughout construction, as necessary. Additional impervious surface is accounted for in the proposed drainage infrastructure. This project will collect, convey, and detain where necessary the stormwater runoff from not only the highways, but adjacent properties that are currently draining to the highways. The project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be parks.
491	Bayou Preservation Association	7/27/2017	Email	"Waterways affected by the project are already listed as impaired waters. We ask that TXDOT model the runoff and stormwater discharges into Buffalo, White Oak, Halls and Little White Oak Bayous in order to meet state requirements that prohibit the addition of any pollutant load into impaired waters and focus instead on improving those waters through the additional application of more rigorous best management practices for stormwater and runoff. Similarly, please further adopt and disclose the best management practices and plans that will be adopted, including source controls, to avoid further discharge of trash into these waterways.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan is required for every project and therefore will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures would be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
491	Bayou Preservation Association	7/27/2017	Email	"Some of TxDOT's more recent flood control structures have made good strides in integrating the landscape with detention. Others have not. The detention basins planned on either side of Little White Oak Bayou, south of Patton, require thoughtful planning so that water edges are accessible to wildlife, and pedestrian and bicycle trails connect both to the existing bike trail going north along Little White Oak Bayou from Calvacade [sic] and to Moody Park to the southeast. The detention basin recently constructed in the Heights stands out as an example of lost opportunity, where despite extensive community involvement, citizen input and repeated requests from local City Council members, TxDOT built a detention pond with a single use that is completely isolated from the surrounding community – this in one of the highest land value areas of the City of Houston. "Despite requests to this effect during the scoping period in 2015, TxDOT has rejected the possibility of wet bottom detention areas unless someone else maintains them. We request that TxDOT further explain in the Final EIS why it should not have the responsibility for doing everything possible to deliver into Houston's bayous cleaner water from the highways it maintains and owns." Bayou Preservation Association specifically re-emphasizes and calls attention to the general point raised in the Coalition letter to the effect that: "The water quality analysis basically says that Houston's bayous are hopelessly polluted, so a bit more pollution is not impactful."	TxDOT can build the detention pond south of Patton Street where a truck stop is currently located with a wet bottom. TxDOT would need a partner to maintain the pond and any other amenities that may be added. As stewards of public funds, TxDOT is responsible for providing the stormwater facilities necessary for the safe collection and conveyance of runoff within project limits. Enhancing the facilities above and beyond this requirement will need to be evaluated during final design on a case-by-case basis. TxDOT will comply with its statewide permit for discharges of stormwater. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.

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491	Bayou Preservation Association	7/27/2017	Email	Houston area bayous are impaired. TxDOT is not responsible for the entirety of the impairments, but the design and routing decisions of TxDOT in hugging the flood plains of Houston bayous and treating those bayous as drainage ditches has been one of the significant contributory causes of these impairments. The Bayou Preservation Association respectfully but urgently requests that TxDOT conduct a thorough review of the design and engineering premises of the I-45 Expansion Project, as a whole, and correct to the maximum degree possible, the pollution impacts imposed by TxDOT's projects. The Bayou Preservation Association appreciates TxDOT's careful attention to the comments expressed in this letter and is ready to respond to any questions or issues TxDOT may have concerning it. With this project, TxDOT and its local partners could have an excellent opportunity to reverse many ill-effects of routing and design choices made during the early days of freeway construction in Houston, when adverse pollution and water quality impacts of highway infrastructure were not well understood, and mitigation of such impacts non-existent.	Permit compliance with the Construction General Permit requires consistency with TMDLs for impaired water bodies, and discharges of the pollutants of concern to impaired waters are not authorized by the permit unless otherwise allowable under 30 TAC Chapter 305 and applicable state law. TxDOT follows permit requirements for permit coverage under the Construction General Permit. TxDOT minimizes potential pollutants during construction through the project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT minimizes potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices. TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	The Greater Northside Management District (GNMD) again appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) proposal for the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. As we have commented before, this is a project that covers a majority of our District and will have an everlasting impact on our area. We want to acknowledge the ongoing efforts that the TxDOT Houston office has made to meet with us and listen to our concerns. We feel that they have made attempts to listen to the community and, for that, we are very grateful. District Engineer Quincy Allen and staff have been available and accessible at every step of the process.	Comment noted.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	While some issues have been addressed, there are still some areas that we feel that have not been given adequate solutions or that need improvement in how they are moved forward. While we understand the constraints of certain areas, we feel that if modifications are not possible, additional strategies should be sought to minimize the impact. We continue to have concerns about the economic impact caused during the construction phase of the project and as a direct result of the final alignment chosen. The final alignment affects many businesses in our District and impacts the access of our neighborhoods in particular sections. The economic health of our area is based on the connectivity of the area and maintaining, if not enhancing, the current level of access. Our stakeholders have commented in various meetings that regardless of the selected alignment, the preferred alternative should offer a cost-effective mobility solution that increases the capacity of the freeway and takes into consideration the mobility of public transportation, pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.	Construction phasing and traffic control plans will be developed during detailed design, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing traffic congestion and other potential adverse impacts during construction. TxDOT will maintain access to adjacent properties. TxDOT will have a project-specific public involvement office throughout the construction period to provide advance information to the public, local businesses, and others about construction schedules, and temporary roadway detours and closures. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles). TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted..
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	Information such as actual economic impact on segments, noise mitigation and environmental assessments, including the visual environment, are still not complete to make a fully informed judgment. We hope that all comments and concerns will be addressed and that we will see our comments given attention in the Final Environmental Impact Study (FEIS).	The Final EIS includes updated economic, noise, visual, and other impact assessments. The updated community impacts analysis includes additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. Proposed mitigation commitments are more specifically defined, as a result of continuing coordination and the further evaluation of the Preferred Alternative. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1** In regards to Culinary Institute LeNôrte, we disagree that there is minimal impact due to the students being able to attend two other schools that offer the same services. The Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) fails to mention the uniqueness of this school, which also offers classes to the community. LeNôrte is the only facility in the near vicinity that offers classes in cuisine and wine education. LeNôrte also offers a culinary experience that you cannot find anywhere else in the immediate area. Le Bistro is French-gourmet restaurant that offers affordable, high-quality meals that cannot be found anywhere else in the Northside. Businesses, employees and residents can experience French cuisine at Le Bistro -- something that many of us would not be able to do otherwise	The description of and impacts to the Culinary Institute have been revised in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report, an appendix to the Final EIS, based on the comments from the owners. To reduce the impact to the operation of Culinary Institute LeNôtre, TxDOT is proceeding with advance acquisition of right-of-way, per the property owner's request. During the relocation process, the school will be able to remain in the existing facility for an amount of time negotiated with TxDOT. TxDOT will assign a relocation assistance counselor who will provide current listings of other available properties (if requested).
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 1** The overall loss of economic opportunities in Segment 1 is of concern and places an already financially at-risk community at further jeopardy for loss of jobs and revenue. There is concern that the DEIS creates losses in Segment 1 that far outweigh any other segment, such as a loss of over 23,000 employees and 242 businesses with a $6 million loss of business property tax and $118.1 million in potential sales tax due to the displacement of businesses. Developable land is limited in some sections of Segment 1 due to the proximity to the Little White Oak Bayou. Per the DEIS, there are concerns about the ability for this area to create new opportunities to balance these losses. This places an unfair hardship in areas that have the lowest median average income and highest unemployment rates of any of the segments.	The additional project ROW required in Segment 1 is greater than for other segments because the project design additional lanes will be at-grade for most of project length, and nearly all land adjacent to the existing ROW is developed. The Final EIS, including the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report, includes an updated analysis of project impacts and proposed mitigation measures and other commitments to minimize adverse impacts to businesses and communities, including low-income persons and the businesses and organizations that provide products and services to them. TxDOT will purchase property needed for new right-of-way. Owners and tenants may also be reimbursed for relocation costs, which may include moving expenses, personal property losses, expenses in finding a replacement site, and expenses incurred in the reestablishment of the business.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2** In Segment 2, there will be losses of $263,000 in business property tax and $550,000 in business sales tax. Strategies were not recommended in the DEIS on how this revenue will be recaptured in an area that is stated to have an adverse impact by this project.	Conversion of land to roadway right of way and the resulting displacement of businesses that provide property and sales tax revenue could have a negative impact on the local economy. It is likely that many of the displaced businesses would choose to relocate in the area, and tax revenue impacts would be temporary if they reestablish within the same taxing jurisdiction. If new businesses are constructed or re established within the city, the sales tax impacts could be offset. The proposed project would result in beneficial impacts such as an increase of jobs and sales revenue in the local and state economy in the short term, due to construction spending. The proposed project may also promote redevelopment and economic growth. TxDOT will provide relocation assistance to business that would be displaced, including assigning a relocation assistance counselor to help with relocation planning and other assistance.

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492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2** The DEIS also takes into account the loss of developable land in many sections, such as Little White Oak Bayou. The District will lose existing open green space (e.g., the existing Heritage Trail will become covered by seven lanes of traffic, which does not create a desirable bike/pedestrian pathway). This project must take into consideration that loss and opportunities to create more open green space, especially along Little White Oak, which reaches through Segments 1 and 2. Green space would benefit this project and compensate communities that are losing homes, businesses and access.	TxDOT will coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for open space along Little White Oak Bayou. For example, the proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT also proposes an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The existing trail along White Oak Bayou would remain. -Between Houston Ave. and Hogan St., the highway footprint would be reduced as compared to the current I-45 footprint, with increased areas of open space above the trail. -Between Hogan St. and approximately 800 ft. north of existing I-10, there would be openings between the new bridges that would allow for natural light to the green space below and there are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways. -From 800 ft. north of existing I-10 to the point where the trail connects to UH Downtown, the existing I-10 would be removed, creating additional open space that does not exist today. TxDOT will design bridges in consideration of visual aesthetics, including views from the Near Northside super neighborhood, greenways, and surrounding areas.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2** There is no mention of the loss of Urbana Recording Studio at 3232 Mainford, which is owned and operated by La Mafia. La Mafia is a Grammy-winning, Tejano musical group that has been a mainstay in the Northside for over 30 years. This is a state-of-the-art music studio in the Northside where notable artists record their hits, including Jennifer Lopez, Mark Anthony, Lady GaGa, Enrique Iglesias and other international artists. The presence of La Mafia in the Northside is a badge of honor and pride, and the loss of this iconic studio cannot be measured monetarily.	The commercial building at 3232 Mainford was counted as a displacement in the project impact analysis included in the Draft EIS. Notation of this facility's use as a recording studio in the Northside has been added to the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report (appendix to the Final EIS). When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2** There are concerns about the loss and movement of access points that can have a substantial impact on patterns of development. An example of this is the elimination of the eastbound Irvington exit. While this intersection is a chronic problem, eliminating this access point will change development patterns and possibly risk the economic health of long-established businesses along this corridor. This is not included in the DEIS as a potential impact.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood. The proposed project would combine and/or relocate some ramps in Segment 2 to meet current design standards and improve safety, but would not eliminate access to and from the freeway.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2** The DEIS does not address the impact to existing businesses by the elimination of access points in Segment 2.	One entrance ramp and one exit ramp would be eliminated in Segment 2 to meet roadway design standards. Access to the businesses in the area would not be eliminated. Although traffic flow would change, there would also be improved access in some areas. See Section 5.5.2 in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report for the detailed evaluation of impacts to vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists in the Segment 2 area.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2** With loss of access in Segment 2, pedestrians and bike paths become even more important. We respectfully request that a separated pedestrian/bike path be developed for Hogan Bridge. We also request that a connector be built for a Hike-and-Bike path along Little White Oak that connects an existing path at Woodland Park to the Near Northside area.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.

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492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 2** We are very pleased that boxed beams will placed at the "Deck Park," which is one of the few positive highlights for this area. We have hopes that a Deck Park in this area will reconnect two neighborhoods that were originally separated by I-45. Yet, there is concern that the feeder roads will not be friendly places for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. We request that a traffic calming measure be taken into consideration to allow for safe access to the Deck Park, whether using onstreet parking, bulb-outs, hawk crossings or some other strategy	TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** A major concern is how the realignment of I-10 near downtown could affect the economic development of the Hardy Yards, a 40-acre development that only recently has seen movement. As mentioned in our 2015 public comments, the realignment will have potential aesthetic and noise impact to adjacent, existing and future development and could be detrimental to the revitalization of the Near Northside. In reviewing the DEIS, there does not seem to be an adequate response to this concern.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report demonstrates no predicted traffic noise impacts at the existing residential development in the Hardy Yards area as a result of the proposed project. Per FHWA and TxDOT noise policy, impacts are not evaluated and noise mitigation is not proposed for currently undeveloped areas. TxDOT will design bridges in consideration of visual aesthetics, including views from the Near Northside super neighborhood and surrounding areas, including Hardy Yards.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** There is no mention of Wilson Industries, which has nine acres of land that will be eliminated by the realignment and expansion of I-10. Wilson Industries -- prior to the current chosen alternative -- worked with the Rice School of Architecture to create a vision for a nine-acre, mixed-use development at this site. This would be a much-needed development in the southern end of our District. They are unable to move forward with their plans, creating a potential loss of millions of dollars and economic development for this area with the current alignment. We request that this planned development be mentioned and studied in the FEIS and included in impacts that this project will have on existing conditions.	The Wilson Industries property located at 1702 Nance Street is not within the proposed right-of-way of the Preferred Alternative and would not be eliminated by the realignment and expansion of I-10.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** There is concern that the realignment and increase in lane heights will have an impact on possible development, especially in the Hardy Yards area. The DEIS mentions this increase of a visual and physical barrier, but the true economic impacts are not studied. We would like to see some mitigation addressed in the FEIS to compensate for the placement of a possible 50-foot barrier between Northside and the Central Business District.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. TxDOT will design bridges in consideration of visual aesthetics, including views from the Near Northside super neighborhood and surrounding areas, including Hardy Yards.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** While the DEIS mentions this will remove a barrier and open up vistas for the area west of downtown, it places additional hardships on the City's Northside. For us, it disrupts our existing views and increases noise while creating less opportunity for access in and out of the Central Business District. This is especially important in our lower, socioeconomic neighborhoods. We respectfully request that the potential harm to development along with noise and the loss of potential growth opportunities is studied and reviewed in the FEIS.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design will minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto St. All areas, including low-income communities, are evaluated equally, in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011). Because the project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, most noise impacts will effect minority and/or low-income populations. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, including for many areas of the neighborhoods noted in the comment, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. In addition to noise barriers, TxDOT is providing the opportunity for adjacent property owners in environmental justice areas to receive noise mitigation that did not otherwise qualify under TxDOT's noise guidelines or FHWA criteria. These walls could also serve as visual barriers should the adjacent property owners want a visual screen between the property and the highway. These walls are described as "aesthetic walls". TxDOT is proposing this mitigation to further offset adverse effects in environmental areas. These walls are proposed where they would be effective for noise mitigation (reduce traffic noise levels by at least 3 dB(A) and provided in locations in the TxDOT right-of-way where they would not restrict access to the property, not impede drainage, and otherwise be constructible. Tentative locations are being proposed as shown in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. These locations may change during final design of the facility. Ultimately, the decision whether to construct the walls will be decided by a vote of the adjacent property owners, as required by federal noise impact regulations.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** We also request a creative review of how to positively impact the movement of all modes of transportation including cyclists and pedestrians in the northeast area of the District. This area is already confusing for those not familiar with the area; with the new design, access in this area will be impacted even more.	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.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** The 5th Ward Lyons/Jensen area is growing and also has numerous transportation projects that will touch this area in the future. Besides the North Houston Highway Project, there will be a high increase of concrete structures in this area, including the Harris County Toll Road Expansion Project and the Elysian Viaduct Project. We request that the FEIS consider ways to mitigate the increase of concrete structures and large amounts of detention that will be in this area. The FEIS at a minimum should review and mention the possible economic impacts.	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increases in impervious surface as a result of the proposed NHHIP. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. Economic conditions and impacts of the proposed project were evaluated and are discussed in the Final EIS, Section 3.3 Economic Conditions. TxDOT has coordinated with local stakeholders including Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority, East Bayou Civic Club, Greater Northside Management District, and others regarding local access for the area.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** We also request that San Jacinto be extended at grade or below grade to connect to Fulton. Without the future expansion of San Jacinto, which has been planned for years as a connector to Hardy Yards and the Near Northside area, our community will be further isolated forever and placed at a disadvantage as we strive to develop this area. We also request that the FEIS review the potential harm that the elimination of alternatives for a San Jacinto extension could have on the area.	TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street.

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492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** In our final review of the design, we are concerned that the loss of economic vitality and vibrancy -- seen in the Near Northside and the 5th Ward many decades ago with the original placement of I-45 and US-59 -- will once again occur. Both areas are experiencing a resurgence of activity. There is an opportunity for this project to help stitch the fabric of this urban area in positive ways, which is why we believe strongly that the treatment along the I-10 corridor bordering the Northside must be given further consideration	TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto St. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design will minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** Currently, there is one exit point (Providence) with limited accessibility. Vehicles on Providence will not be allowed to turn north onto North Main or gain access to the south for the University of Houston–Downtown (UHD). Vehicles will be forced to U-turn and seek ways through downtown streets to regain access to the Near Northside or UHD. With such limited access, it is imperative that San Jacinto be developed as an access point to Fulton Street. Without one or both of these points into and out of downtown, the economic health of the Hardy Yards and the rest of the North Main corridor is at risk.	This area is already separated by the freight rail and the proposed Hardy Yards. TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. Bridge design will be determined during detailed design.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Segment 3** The DEIS mentions that Alternative 11 received favorable public support and community consensus as extensive outreach was conducted to refine the design to benefit surrounding communities. We believe in the meetings held in Northside, concerns were presented verbally and in writing about the increased barriers placed between the Central Business District and the Northside.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design will minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto St. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Overall Comments** In our opinion, there are areas where there is room for improvements for cyclists, pedestrians and/or public transit users. There is also concern that the design alternative chosen should allow for greater connectivity within the area and to the North Corridor Light Rail System. The alternative chosen seems to be one with significant impacts to residents and businesses in the area.	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Overall Comments** In looking for ways to make this project more equitable, we request that aesthetic treatment be given in the areas that impact the District. This includes artistic design of all bridges and connectors.	TxDOT will consider options for "signature" bridges to distinguish the Near Northside neighborhood and improve the visual quality of the proposed project area. The design of the bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the Greater Northside Management District and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Overall Comments** We appreciate how TxDOT has listened to our constituents and is willing to work with our community. While we feel that TxDOT has created the most modern highway system to move vehicles faster and safer, our urban District is also looking at the movement within our inner neighborhoods.	Comment noted.
492	Greater Northside Management District	7/27/2017	Email	**Overall Comments** We respectfully ask that the agency review the impact this project will have on our District's present-and-future inner city neighborhoods and economic growth. Our vision for the Northside is to improve its economic development while retaining its historical features.We recommend that you find innovative opportunities to improve the quality of life of the Greater Northside.	A very small portion of ROW would be acquired from Near Northside district, and would impact a non-contributing outbuilding.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART I: DEMOGRAPHICS, HISTORY AND INJUSTICE <u>Demographics:</u> Super Neighborhood #51 represents Houston's Near Northside, which is immediately north of downtown and south of Crosstimbers St., east of I-45 up to and including Elysian St. The Near Northside includes lower income residents of diverse ethnicity, the overwhelming majority (80%+) of which are Hispanic. Median household income (as of 2012) was $30,258 with 40% of residents earning less than $25,000 per year. Also, at that time, 45% of Near Northside Residents did not have a high school diploma. Housing was 54% renter occupied with 7% of the residents being unemployed and 40% not in the labor force. Spanish is the predominate language. The demographics of the Near Northside contrast greatly with those of the Greater Heights Super Neighborhood 15, directly across I-45 from the Near Northside. In 2012, the median income in the Greater Heights was $70,102; 50% of the residents had a bachelor's degree or higher; and 72% were employed. <u>History:</u> Before the construction of I-45, these two neighborhoods (Near Northside & Greater Heights) were one with similar socio-economic demographics. After the construction if I-45, however, these two neighborhoods developed in drastically different ways with obvious wealth and development going to the Greater Heights neighborhood. Since the bifurcation, the Greater Heights has recently become one of the most sought after neighborhoods in the City of Houston, while the Near Northside has languished and often been "forgotten".	Early in the planning process for the I-45 North project, TxDOT committed to minimizing ROW acquisition along I-45 between Near Northside and Greater Heights. The proposed NHHIP has been designed to minimize adverse project impacts. During this phase of project development, TxDOT held public meetings in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2015 at Jefferson Davis High School in Near Northside to facilitate access for residents. Information has been provided in Spanish throughout the study process and as a result of input from these meetings, TxDOT expanded Spanish-language project information and provided simultaneous Spanish translation at the public hearings in May 2017. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.

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494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART I: DEMOGRAPHICS, HISTORY AND INJUSTICE Injustice: Many of our concerns about the proposed I-45 construction relate to the economic and environmental injustice that the project will exacerbate in the Near Northside. As stated by the NHHIP's Draft Environmental Impact Statement, ES-4, "All alternatives [of the construction project] would cause disproportionate high and adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations. While minority and low-income individuals and community facilities in the project area would be adversely impacted by the proposed project, no reasonable alternatives would avoid adverse impacts or have substantially less overall adverse impacts than other alternatives." This is unacceptable. Alternative plans and solutions for the project's isolation of the Near Northside must be made. The Texas Department of Transportation ("TxDOT") recognizes that it is charged with developing strategies for environmental justice. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement states: "Executive Order (EO) 12898-Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations requires federal agencies to "make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations" (Office of the President 1994). EO 12898 also directs agencies to develop a strategy for implementing environmental justice." To say there are "no reasonable alternatives" leaves disadvantaged neighborhoods such as the Near Northside in an untenable position. We strongly suggest that TxDOT reassess its position regarding environmental and economic injustice.	Early in the planning process for the I-45 North project, TxDOT committed to minimizing ROW acquisition along I-45 between Near Northside and Greater Heights. The proposed NHHIP has been designed to minimize adverse project impacts. During this phase of project development, TxDOT held public meetings in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2015 at Jefferson Davis High School in Near Northside to facilitate access for residents. Information has been provided in Spanish throughout the study process and as a result of input from these meetings, TxDOT expanded Spanish-language project information and provided simultaneous Spanish translation at the public hearings in May 2017. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART II -ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE CAUSED BY ISOLATION OF THE NEAR NORTHSIDE Our major concern is the isolation of the Near Northside due to NHHIP's plans to remove much of the current access into and out of the neighborhood. One of the most advantageous aspects of the Near Northside is its easy access to I-45, I-610 and I-69 as well as to downtown and the Greater Heights. The isolation caused by the NHHIP will result in the disadvantaged population of the Near Northside disproportionately bearing the burden of the project and will create greater economic and environmental injustice. Among these disproportionate burdens are significantly increased travel times, increased traffic on residential streets, increased noise and air pollution, decreased desirability of the area and decreased opportunity for economic development.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design will minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. The proposed project would combine and/or relocate some ramps in Segment 2 to meet current design standards and improve safety, but proposed improvements would not eliminate access to I-45. The proposed project would also provide continuous frontage roads at the I-610 interchange to improve connectivity and access.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART II A *Isolation of the Near Northside Due to the Removal of the North Street Bridge* The proposed removal of the North Street bridge isolates the Near Northside from the Greater Heights as well as from a connection into downtown, to the First Ward and to the growing shopping areas on Sawyer, Studemont & Yale Streets. The North Street bridge is vital to the surrounding neighborhood just east of I-45 because of the existence of the White Oak Music Hall ("WOMH"), at 2915 N. Main Street, and the traffic/parking issues that result from concerts there. So many patrons attend WOMH concerts that ending North Street at I-45 would significantly increase back-up and congestion in an area that already suffers a tremendous amount of congestion due to concert attendance. WOMH is one of the few new business endeavors in the Near Northside. Removing the North Street bridge would have a debilitating impact on its patrons as well as the nearby residents, resulting in further economic and environmental injustice. The North Street bridge, because of less traffic during non-concert times, is also a vital bike & pedestrian connector into the Greater Heights, to Houston Avenue and subsequently to the First Ward and downtown. The bridge at North Main St. is far too busy to be conducive to bikes or pedestrians. The proposed northbound braided ramp from I-10 and I-45 should be moved south to allow for the North Street Bridge. If that is not feasible, the surrounding neighborhood must have access to the frontage road or other egress to I-45 other than North Main St. since blocking off the end of North St. (as a dead end) at I-45 will cause unmanageable congestion.	To elevate I-45 above the 100-year base flood elevation in the vicinity of the Little White Oak Bayou crossing, the North Street bridge must be removed. N. Main St. will be the nearest street (to existing North St. bridge) to cross I-45 and will have pedestrian-bicycle accommodations. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. Any trail will be constructed by entities other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of a proposed trail. TxDOT will continue to evaluate the design of frontage roads, which will be further refined during detailed design. TxDOT will work with COH to refine the termini of North, Woodland, and Farwood Streets during detailed design to ensure safe connectivity.

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494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART II B *Isolation Due to Loss of Access to and from the Near Northside* The NHHIP will result in a severe decrease in access to and from the Near Northside. The disadvantaged population of the Near Northside disproportionately bears the burden of the project. Among the disproportionate burdens are significantly increased travel times, increased traffic and pollution on residential streets, decreased desirability of the area, decreased opportunities for development, and greater difficulty for both those with and without cars to travel to jobs or other destinations or to take advantage of resources outside the neighborhood. The following points of access to and from the Northside are negatively impacted by the NHHIP. 1. Loss of Access to I-45 N and I-610 E & W from the Cavalcade Frontage Road Currently, vehicles are able to access both I-45 N and I-610 E and W from the frontage road just north of Cavalcade St. It appears from the NHHIP video that both these entrances will be lost by the new construction, which will unduly restrict access from the Near Northside to these thoroughfares. The burdens of loosing this access to both freeways from Cavalcade St. are significant: • To enter I-45 N from anywhere in the Near Northside (north of the Quitman St. entrance/exit), residents will have to travel on the frontage road under the I-610 interchange all the way to the entrance between Airline and Tidwell at Buress St. – a distance of three or more miles. Alternatively, to have to backtrack to Quitman St. to access the Quitman St. entrance would significantly increase travel times and increase residential street traffic and congestion. • To enter I-610 W from the Near Northside, residents will have to either (a) travel on the frontage road up to and under the I-45/I-610 interchange, turn west on the I-610 frontage road and travel to the entrance to I-610 W between North Main St. and Yale St OR (b) travel west on Cavalcade St. into the Greater Heights; turn north on North Main St. and proceed to the frontage road at I-610. • To enter I-610 E from the Cavalcade frontage road, residents will have to travel north on the I-45 N frontage road; turn east on the I-610 E frontage road; cross the Metro Rail at Fulton St. (a lengthy light & congested intersection) as well as the light at Irvington St.; and proceed all the way to the entrance to I-610 E at Chapman St. Clearly, this is a "disproportionately high and adverse… environmental effect … on minority populations and low-income populations." (Executive Order 12898). Entrances from the Cavalcade frontage road to I-45 N and I-610 E & W must either be maintained or reconstructed. 2. Loss of Access to the Near Northside Due to Removal of the Entrance from I-610 E to Irvington St. The only access to the Near Northside while driving east on I-610 is the exit from I-610 E to Irvington St. The NHHIP removes this entrance into the Near Northside further isolating the community. 3. Loss of Access from the Near Northside Due to Proposed Removal of the Entrance to I-45 N and I-610 W from Irvington St. The existing entrance from Irvington St. to I-45 N and I-610 W will be removed by the NHHIP. Residents will thus be forced to travel much further on the frontage roads (a) north to the Buress St. entrance on I-45 N and (b) west to the entrance between North Main St. and Yale for access to I-160 W, which requires crossing the light rail at Fulton - an already congested crossing due to long lights waiting for the Red Line Metro trains.	1. One of the primary benefits of the project is that TxDOT is able to incorporate frontage roads through the I-45/I-610 interchange that do not exist today. This will allow for bike/pedestrian traffic to safely pass through the interchange versus having to use the indirect routes of using the city street grid system (Fulton, Crosstimbers, Airline, and Cavalcade). The proposed project includes a southbound exit to Cavalcade St. that avoids the Link Rd. intersection. There will be a northbound entrance ramp to I-45 north of Cavalcade St. There will be a NB entrance ramp to I-45 north of Link Rd. (south of the I-610 interchange). I-610 E/W will be accessed via the new frontage roads through the interchange. Adding additional entrance ramps in this area was investigated but did not meet current design criteria for ramp spacing. 2. Access to the Near Northside would not be eliminated. The exit ramp was relocated to west of Fulton St. to meet current design standards, and would still provide access to Irvington St. 3. The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART II C *Isolation Due to Loss of Entrances into the Near Northside when Traveling South on I-45.* The NHHIP removes exits into the Near Northside at Patton St. and North Main St. Other than the exit at the other end of the neighborhood at Quitman St., the only exit into the Near Northside left by the project is at Cavalcade. The removal of the Patton and North Main St. exits severely restricts access to the Near Northside, further isolating it.	Access will be available to the Near Northside via the Cavalcade St. exit. The locations of entrance/exit ramps is based on current design criteria. Patton St. and Main St. will still be accessible via the new continuous frontage roads.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART II D *Isolation from Downtown* Access to downtown is critical for the economic development of the Near Northside. Access to downtown for cyclists and pedestrians is extremely limited. Many of the residents who bike and walk in the Near Northside do so out of necessity, rather than from a desire to exercise. Continuing isolation from downtown's jobs and city resources exacerbates environmental/economic injustice. To remediate this isolation, in Segment 3, a bike/pedestrian trail from the Near Northside into downtown should be constructed. Additionally, in conjunction with Metro, a pedestrian walkway should connect the University of Houston Downtown to the Burnett Transit Center.	All current pedestrian connections from Near Northside to Downtown will be maintained or relocated in the vicinity of their existing locations. A pedestrian connection between the Burnett Transit Center and the University of Houston - Downtown would have to be pursued by another group or agency.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART II E and F *E. Isolation Will Cause Decreased Response Time by First Responders* All of the foregoing losses of access to the Near Northside will greatly and adversely impact the ability of first responders to travel to and from the neighborhood. Many of our first responders are headquartered outside the Near Northside. The nearest police station for the Houston Police Department ("HPD") is the Central Division, located downtown. The nearest HPD substation is located in the Heights, across from I-45. The same is true for the Precinct 6 and Precinct 1 Constables who cover the Near Northside. Precinct 6 is headquartered in the East End on Canal St. and the Precinct 1 Constable offices downtown. The Near Northside does have a Houston Fire Department ("HFD") station on Hogan, but any fires requiring more than its capacity, will require travel from outside the neighborhood. We are equally concerned about the ability of any other first or disaster responders to access the Near Northside. Loss of access to the neighborhood by first responders clearly burdens this low-income, Hispanic neighborhood. *F. Evacuation Concerns Due to Isolation of the Near Northside* Restricted egress from the Near Northside through the loss of entrances to I-45 and I-610 will be a further burden on the Near Northside low-income residents in the case of an evacuation (due to a hurricane or other disaster). Traffic will further back up inside the area and more time will be spent getting on the evacuation routes, thus inequitably decreasing the safety of Near Northside residents.	E. All streets that currently connect Near Northside to Downtown will remain. With the proposed NHHIP roadway improvements, the overall operations of the highways will be improved, which will provide better access to communities by emergency vehicles. TxDOT met with emergency responders regarding the fire, life, safety requirements for the planned highway caps, but did not discuss response times. Concerning response times, there will be enhanced intelligent transportation system (ITS) camera coverage and live monitoring of the capped roadway segments from TranStar with connectivity to remotely operate messaging for emergency situations in these areas. There will be an on-site command post for emergency responders at the capped section per coordination with the City of Houston Fire Department. Additionally, with the consistent number of lanes along I-45 and US 59/I-69 as through-lanes and with the use of current design standards for full size shoulders, there will be enhanced ability to respond to on-road incidents and provide for refuge for minor accidents or breakdowns that currently block mainlanes because of reduced or substandard existing shoulders. F. Additional mainlanes, MaX lanes, and other proposed improvements will facilitate evacuation. In addition, drainage improvements will reduce the likelihood of a mainlane closure during heavy rainfall events. The Near Northside will not be isolated. Section 5.5.2.2 in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report includes a detailed evaluation of potential project impacts to vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists in the Near Northside neighborhood. Overall, access to and from I-45 and I-610 from various areas in the Near Northside neighborhood would generally improve as a result the of the proposed improvements.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III-ADDITIONAL CONCERNS ABOUT THE ADVERSE IMPACT OF THE NHHIP ON THE NEAR NORTHSIDE *A. Safety Concern:* Insufficient Distance from Cavalcade Exit (I-45N) to Make a Right Turn Segment 2 The northbound exit from I-45 to Cavalcade St. enters the frontage road only 1/2 block from the corner of the frontage road and Cavalcade St. This is not enough distance for vehicles exiting I-45 N to cross the frontage road and move into the right lane to turn right at Cavalcade St. Either the northbound Cavalcade exit should be moved back closer to Patton or other accommodations should be made to address this safety concern.	The Cavalcade St. exit cannot be moved closer to Patton St. because of design criteria. TxDOT can include lane channelization in the detailed design, for improved safety. Although the proposed ramp has less than the desired minimum ramp distance, it meets current design and safety standards.

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494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III B *Inequitable Displacement (Destruction) of Residences in the Near Northside* NHHIP calls for the destruction of a disproportionate number of residences (both single and multifamily) in the Near Northside. Compared with proposed destruction of residences in the Greater Heights across I-45, there are vastly more residences to be destroyed in the Near Northside. Such destruction results in a loss of affordable housing and low rent residences, both very necessary to a low income neighborhood. We also understand that there will be a significant loss of tax revenue and business income from NHHIP. We do not comment on the latter, since the Greater Northside Management District ("GMND") addresses commercial concerns and is responding to TxDOT with its own comments on the NHHIP.	TxDOT and the study team have developed alternatives in consideration of input from other agencies and the public throughout the study process. Because of the Germantown Historic District, the needed additional right-of-way in this area is on the east side of I-45. The team also analyzed and evaluated the alternatives using engineering, traffic, and environmental criteria to determine which alternative would best meet the project's need and purpose. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with local authorities, planning agencies, neighborhood associations, and stakeholders to ensure the needs and interests of the communities are addressed. TxDOT developed a comprehensive public/stakeholder outreach program and conducted/attended meetings with elected officials, neighborhood associations, management districts, and others during project development. The project design has been developed in consideration of the input received to minimize impacts within the study area.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III C *Inequitable Blocking of the View of Downtown* The beautiful view of downtown from many areas in the Near Northside is one of the advantages of the neighborhood. These beautiful views will be blocked by NHHIP's new placement of I-10 and I-45 coming out of downtown, especially when going over the Red Line Metro Rail. Again, the project unduly burdens the disadvantaged residents of the Near Northside, by making the area less desirable for development and economic growth.	TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the during detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. Additionally, there are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping. TxDOT will design bridges in consideration of visual aesthetics, including views from the Near Northside super neighborhood and surrounding areas.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III D *Design of Bridges at North Main, Quitman & Hogan Streets* The bridges in the Montrose/University area over I-69 are artistically and uniquely designed to draw attention to the area. The new bridges in the Near Northside over I-45 between I-610 and I-10 should have the same attention to artistic detail and design as those in the Montrose/University area. Not to create artistic bridges on this section of I-45 would be to discount a low-income neighborhood. TxDOT needs to work with the community to assure artistic creation and design of the North Main, Quitman and Hogan Street bridges comparable to that in the Montrose/University areas.	Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. This will be further explored during detailed design.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III E and F *E. Loss of Connection between White Oak Bayou Bike Trail and Spring Street Bike Trail* As stated earlier, the bike trails in the Near Northside are critical to its residents because of the number of residents using their bikes out of necessity for transportation. The White Oak Bayou Bike Trail currently connects to the Spring Street Bike Trail and creates the ability for Near Northside cyclists to ride to the First Ward and its shopping areas (including Target) without endangering themselves on busy city streets. The NHHIP shows freeway (I-45) lanes on grade which would cut off the connection between these bike trails. The two trails in some way need to remain connected or be re-connected, possibly by elevating the grade lanes enough for bikers and pedestrians on the trail to pass underneath. *F. Connector to Bike Trails on Both Sides of Hogan St.* Two bike trails currently exist on both sides of Hogan St. As currently constructed, cyclists and pedestrians must leave the trail on one side of Hogan, go up to street level, cross Hogan and then proceed down to the bike trail on the other side. These two trails need to be connected in some fashion by a connector that joins the two trails together and increases cyclist and pedestrian safety.	E. TxDOT is making an effort to maintain existing open space and replace affected open space by creating new open space where feasible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The Spring Street trail (Heights Hike and Bike Trail) and the White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail along White Oak Bayou will be maintained. F. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III G *Increased Semi Traffic on Local/Residential Streets* We understand that TxDOT proposes to purchase the Love's Truck Stop and surrounding area to create a retention pond. We want to underscore that this MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED. If Love's remains, the I-45 frontage road will become even more congested than it will due to the removal of entrances/exits to I-45. This increased congestion on the frontage road will further impair residents' access to I-45 N and S and to I-160 E and W. Moreover, increased frontage road congestion will result in semis seeking quicker routes through residential streets. In addition to the obvious undesirability of semis traveling down residential streets, such streets are not constructed to bear the burden of those heavy vehicles.	Comment noted.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III H *Retention Ponds Should Be Designed as Park Areas* There are a number of retention ponds created by the NHHIP. Because these are in an urban area and subject to urban blight (trash, overgrown plants, places for the homeless to congregate and kids to do drugs, etc.), these areas should be designed as park areas and TxDOT should work with the Houston Parks and Recreation Department to insure city maintenance and oversight of these parks. The last thing the Near Northside needs is more vacant land succumbing to urban blight.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. Wet bottom detention basins will be considered if a partner entity agrees to maintain them

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494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III I *Concerns about Noise and Air Pollution* We understand that TxDOT plans to announce at a later date, plans to measure actual air pollution and to deal with increased noise pollution from the project. We are concerned about both types of pollution. Adding lanes to I-45 N and S will clearly increase traffic and congestion. Any plans or methods of dealing with these two forms of pollution must include the Near Northside as an area for which the increased noise and air pollution must be addressed.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. The Near Northside neighborhood was evaluated for potential noise impacts as a result of the proposed design. A number of noise barriers are being proposed adjacent to I-45 along the east right of way to mitigate for noise impacts. TxDOT will comply with all regulations related to protection of air and water quality. Based on the project level air quality analyses, carbon monoxide traffic air quality analysis (CO TAQA) and mobile source air toxics (MSAT) analysis, as well as historical monitoring trends and future modeling projections, TxDOT does not anticipate an air quality impact for either criteria pollutants or mobile source air toxics because of this project. Please see the CO TAQA and Quantitative MSAT technical reports for more detail. Regarding air quality monitoring during construction, as mentioned in Section 7.2 of the FEIS, TxDOT will have program to conduct air monitoring for a minimum of 5 years during construction at 2 locations. One location will be in Segment 3 and one location will be in Segment 2.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III J *Access to "CAP" Park Area and Nature of Frontage Roads* We understand that the plans for a park over the "CAP" on the depressed I-45 are dependent upon organizations other than TxDOT raising necessary funds to implement and execute plans for such a park. 1. If a "CAP" Park Is Not Created-If funds are not raised and a park is not created, we are concerned about the appearance and effect on quality of life in the neighborhood of a long cement "CAP" over the freeway. That expanse of cement will be ripe to become an urban dumping and graffiti zone. TxDOT should have plans in place for maintenance and clean up of the "CAP" unless and until a park is created. 2. If a "CAP" Park Is Created- If a park is created over the "cap", we have significant concerns about pedestrian access to that area. There are no plans for bridges over the frontage roads or pedestrian crossings. It will be too dangerous for pedestrians (especially with kids and dogs) to cross the frontage roads to get to the park. The frontage roads should be redesigned so that instead of traffic-carrying thoroughfares that encourage high speeds, they are roads akin to residential streets where pedestrian crossings are expected and vehicle speeds are slower. (See next paragraph.) 3. New Design Philosophy for Frontage Roads- The design philosophy for all the frontage roads in urban areas, especially on I-45 between I-610 and I-10, should be to create roads with actual slow car speeds as well as the impression that high speeds (over 30 mph) are not possible/permissible; similar to the impression that one has driving on residential streets. NACTO's Urban Street Design Guide should be used as a reference. Additionally, the frontage road design in this section of I-45 should conform to the City of Houston's Infrastructure Design Manual (including, for example, 11 ft lanes, no right turn slip lanes, small curb radii, and protected bike lanes as called for in the City of Houston bike plan).	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART III K *Addition of "Managed Lanes"* We oppose "managed lanes" (i.e., toll lanes for the purpose of faster travel) because we believe they further exacerbate economic inequality: if you are poor, you sit in traffic; if you are rich, you get to go fast.	The primary goal for MaX lanes is to move the maximum number of people at maximum speed, and also to integrate the use of both high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) lanes. After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing, the decision was made not to toll the MaX lanes.
494	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	7/27/2017	Email	PART IV-SUMMARY This concludes the concerns of the Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team. We understand that we have neither the time nor the expertise of TxDOT. We are, however, committed to and adamant about assuring that the Near Northside does not adversely suffer from the plans for, and ultimate construction of, the NHHIP. We strongly urge TxDOT to take another look at compliance with Executive Order 12898 and to reconsider the unjust economic and environmental impact of the NHHIP project on the Near Northside. We will continue to work with the I-45 Coalition on any issues that the Greater Heights and the Near Northside have in common.	Early in the planning process for the I-45 North project, TxDOT committed to minimizing ROW acquisition along I-45 between Near Northside and Greater Heights. The proposed NHHIP has been designed to minimize adverse project impacts. During this phase of project development, TxDOT held public meetings in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2015 at Jefferson Davis High School in Near Northside to facilitate access for residents. Information has been provided in Spanish throughout the study process and as a result of input from these meetings, TxDOT expanded Spanish-language project information and provided simultaneous Spanish translation at the public hearings in May 2017. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.
495	Rogers, Kyle	7/27/2017	Email	I'd like to agree with my neighbor Ian and add my name to the critique he sent to these parties just the other day, see link: https://www.dropbox.com/s/bem53kdqegzdep3/IH-45%20Comments%20-%20FINAL%20%28Sharing%29.pdf?dl=0	Please see responses to previous comments.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
497	EaDo | East Downtown Management District	7/27/2017	Email	The East Downtown Management District (EaDo) provides services to the area funded through the collection of a special assessment paid by commercial property owners. Takings of private properties by TXDOT for the proposed expanded Right of Way for I-45/I-69 will negatively impact the EaDo budget for these services as described in the Ten Year Service and Improvement Plan and Assessment Plan for fiscal years 2016 – 2026. We request TXDOT's coordination to mitigate negative EaDo budget impacts however possible during the property acquisition process. Additionally, we request that any unused Right of Way be returned to private property following construction wherever possible.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with EaDo. Efforts have been made to minimize ROW impacts. At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: 1. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority 2. Adjacent property owners 3. General public
497	EaDo | East Downtown Management District	7/27/2017	Email	Due to the compromised connection on Polk Street between EaDo and Downtown at I-45/I-69 in the proposed plan, we request that a westbound connection directly into the downtown grid on Leeland Street be restored. This may be achieved by connecting westbound Leeland Street to Bell Street as in the current street configuration, or by operating Leeland as a 2 way traffic corridor from Saint Emanuel Street to Labranch Street.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). The COH is evaluating the overall local street network including possible conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets and is responsible for determining the operation (one-way or two-way) of city streets.
497	EaDo | East Downtown Management District	7/27/2017	Email	Also due to the compromised connection on Polk Street, We request that Infrastructure be added for a safe and intuitive Pedestrian and Bicycle connection on Polk between EaDo and Downtown.	Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
498	Skelly, Michael	7/27/2017	Email	See attachment for comment.	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
499	Spieler, Christof	7/27/2017	Email	1. The West Side Spur: The construction of the Pierce Elevated in the 1960s divided Downtown from the 4th Ward, Montrose, and Midtown. Relocating IH45 offers the opportunity to undo this damage. However, the DEIS plans continue elevated freeway ramps as far south as Jefferson and Pease. This is a missed opportunity. All freeway ramps should end at Allen Parkway, with a true surface parkway extending south from there that would function like other street couplets in Downtown that feed into freeway ramps. This would reconnect the historic street grid, spread traffic across more connections, and provide more connectivity, remove a barrier to pedestrians and bicyclists, and allow the space occupied by the ramps to be used for an extension of Buffalo Bayou Park, dramatically improving access to hike and bike trials and open space. This would still leave three different off ramps from IH45 (Milam, McKinney, and the Parkway) with excellent access to the different parts of Downtown. Experience in places like San Francisco has shown that parkways are effective replacements for freeway spurs and that traffic flows adjust accordingly. Capacity could be increased at the intersection where the ramps meet Allen Parkway by elevating Allen Parkway over the intersection, allowing thorough traffic form Allen Parkway to Downtown to bypass it, and by brining pedestrians underneath the intersection to Buffalo Bayou.	The highway connectors and ramps cannot end at Allen Parkway because of the proximity to Buffalo Bayou and the vertical clearance needed over the bayou.
499	Spieler, Christof	7/27/2017	Email	2. Polk- Polk is an essential connection between the East End and Downtown for pedestrians, cars, bikes, and buses. Major public projects, including the George R. Brown Convention Center, Minute Maid Park, Toyota Center, and BBVA Compass Stadium; have disconnected the majority of east-west streets Downtown; there is currently no through street between Eado/East End between Texas and Polk, a stretch of 7 blocks. As a result, The DEIS drawings show the closure of Polk at the highway, increasing this stretch to 10 blocks. A U-turn lane is shown to allow EB traffic to turn north, then reverse direction at Lamar. This requires cars and buses to merge across three lanes of traffic northbound, then do the same southbound, and it adds a 4 block detour. Eastbound traffic faces a 6 block detour. This is not acceptable. Alternate options might include elevating Polk over the freeway or creating a "U" shaped alignment for Polk above the freeway that avoids the sloping ramps but creates conventional intersections at St. Emanuel and Hamilton. More radically, Dallas could be extended through the ground floor of the convention center, allow Polk to be abandoned to facilitate southwards expansion of the convention center. The solution may have impacts on loading at the George R Brown, but the operations of the convention should not take priority over the connectivity to the neighborhood, especially since the construction of the convention center created these connectivity issues in the first place.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
499	Spieler, Christof	7/27/2017	Email	3. IH69 ramps north of Minute Maid Park- Today, traffic from the Eastex Freeway (IH69) main lanes and HOV lanes in Downtown exits onto Jackson, with a corresponding onramp from Chenevert. Both of these streets run on three blocks before terminating at Minute Maid Park. This results in a high volume of turns to and from Commerce, Franklin, and Congress, and since nearly all downtown destinations are south of these streets, a high volume of turns in the Downtown historic district to the west. The DEIS drawings move the off-ramp from Jackson to Hamilton. This is a significant improvement since it provides easy access to Capitol, which brings cars into the center of Downtown. However, the corresponding on-ramp, and the HOV ramps, remain on Jackson/Chenevert. TxDOT should look at alternate options for the 59 ramps that improve connectivity to Downtown. This could take the form of making Hamilton a two-way street (allowing cars from Texas to turn north to 59) or connecting 59 to the paired access roads along the combined IH45/IH69.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
499	Spieler, Christof	7/27/2017	Email	4. Inner Katy: The connection along IH10 from Downtown to the Northwest Transit Center at I-10 and 610 is one of the most critical transit corridors on Houston. Today, it carries around 10,000 riders a day on local bus and commuter bus. However, today's infrastructure is inadequate; a two-way ramp connects Downtown to I-10 near Sawyer, and another 2-way ramp connects to the Northwest Transit Center, but in a 3.5 mile gap in between buses are caught in often congested traffic on freeway mainlanes. This needs to be improved with a continues HOV, BRT services, or an extension of the Green and Purple light rail lines. Today's ramp is suitable of all of these; it provides a 2-way HOV that could carry BRT as well as commuter buses, and it could be upgraded in place to carry light rail. However, the DEIS plans show the elimination of this facility and its replacement with ramps off of unmanaged express lanes that also carry through traffic on IH10. This is a significant downgrade in transit infrastructure in a corridor that needs an upgrade. TxDOT must find a way to preserved the current ramp or replace it in kind.	I-10 west of I-45 is outside the project limits and would have to be evaluated as a future project. The proposed ramp from Downtown to I-10 will have a dedicated bus lane.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
499	Spieler, Christof	7/27/2017	Email	5. Terminal Subdivision: The Union Pacific's Terminal Subdivision, the main rail route between New Orleans and Los Angeles, divides as it passes Downtown. A pair of single track rail lines, the Freight Main (to the north) and the Passenger Main (to the south) each carries roughly half the trains. Each has significant impacts on neighborhoods and traffic flow. East of IH45, the Passenger Main crosses San Jacinto at grade, causing frequent delays to traffic on a major access route to IH10, disrupting circulation around the county jail complex, and impacting three major bus routes. West of IH45, the Freight Main runs down residential Winter Street in the First Ward, feet away from front porches, and crosses Houston Avenue at grade. The UH45 project offers an opportunity to fix these issues. A new connection between the Passenger Main and Freight Main could combine the west side of the Passenger Main and the eastern end of the Freight Main into a single double track line. This would provide the same railroad capacity as the existing line but eliminate the Winter Street route and a dozen grade crossings including San Jacinto and Houston Avenue grade crossings. A new Amtrak station could be provided at the Burnett Transit Center. This is not an easy project, and it requires extensive railroad coordination, but the IH45 is the only chance to do this.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.
500	U.S. Department of the Interior	7/27/2017	Email	DOI recognizes that the DEIS includes identification of Section 4(f) historic resources and a discussion of the impacts of each recommended alternative for the three segments that make up the scope of the project. In summary, the DEIS does not identify any Section 4(f) historic resources for any of the alternatives under Segments 1 and 2. For Segment 3, Table 3-34 states that for Proposed Recommended Alternative 11, six historic resources would be impacted, for four of which TxDOT is considering making de minimus impact determinations as defined in Section 4(f) regulations, Cheek-Neal Coffee Company Building, San Jacinto Warehouse, Walter's Downtown [former Bottling Works], and the Houston Warehouse Historic District. The two resources for which de minimus impacts are not being considered (i.e., having adverse effects) are Reader's Distributor's Warehouse (demolition) and Carlisle Plastics (partial demolition). Under Alternative 10, TxDOT is considering de minimus determinations for all five of the historic resources identified. Finally, under Alternative 12, nine historic resources are listed, five of which TxDOT is considering determining as de minimus. The draft EIS states in its Abstract, Executive Summary ES 4.1.14, and Section 7.18, that the Section 4(f) Evaluation has not been completed. We understand that TxDOT is working with the Texas Historical Commission to meet NHPA Section 106 requirements. As such, a more detailed explanation of how you intend to resolve adverse effects and complete your Section 106 consultation would be helpful. We look forward to receiving the completed Individual 4(f) Evaluation, so that we may review it in accordance with our responsibilities under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation.
501	Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club	7/27/2017	Project Website	At present the Sierra Club supports the No Action Alternative as being the best solution for this proposal. TxDOT needs to reassess the need for combining the highway corridors for both Interstate 45 and U.S. 59 (Interstate 69) on the east side of Downtown Houston and the direct, indirect, connected, and cumulative environmental impacts. A time out is needed so that a more careful and more significant environmental and social analysis, assessment, and evaluation can be conducted on a proposal that could alter tremendously the face of Downtown Houston for many decades. The cumulative impacts of both freeways need further assessment and mitigation. Some of the additional analysis that is needed includes:	The No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the project. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of impacts of the Preferred Alternative. Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project were evaluated. With the updated analyses, TxDOT has proposed additional mitigation measures to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts.
501	Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club	7/27/2017	Project Website	1) Air Pollution- With a possible 20-25 lanes of traffic, the air pollution levels, even with additional new vehicles with lower air pollution emissions (particulate matter, carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen oxides, and volatile organic compounds including toxic air pollutants), could increase in the area. This will expose more people, within 1,000 feet or more of the NFHIP, to high levels of chronic air pollution for decades, particularly since the East Side of Downtown is growing and developing with more residential and commercial enterprises. Further if a cap is place on the NFHIP or even if it is not (walled or submerged below ground) people will be exposed to more and higher levels of air pollution as they travel through the NFHIP in their vehicles or if they walk, bike, or ride in motor vehicles above the NFHIP. Additional analyses are needed to ensure that air pollution levels are reduced at ground level and near the NFHIP and not increased.	Any increased air pollutant or MSAT emissions resulting from increased capacity, accessibility and development are projected to be more than offset by emissions reductions from EPA's fuel and vehicle standards or addressed by EPA's and TCEQ's regulatory emissions limits programs. The project is included in the regional conformity determination for the area. Transportation conformity is a State Implementation Plan (SIP) requirement. The SIP contains measures for attaining the NAAQS. The project-level carbon monoxide traffic air quality analysis (CO TAQA) demonstrates that the project will not exceed the applicable health-based CO standards. The mobile source air toxics (MSAT) analysis indicates a downward trend in emissions over time. TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix D of the CO TAQA and Appendix C of the MSAT Technical Reports (in the Final EIS), regarding: 1) overall status of air quality in the greater Houston area, 2) mobile source air emission projections for Harris County, 3) ambient air monitoring for NAAQS and air toxics for the greater Houston area, 4) TCEQ toxicology assessment and Trends Report for the greater Houston area, 5) an EPA Study Assessing Outdoor Air Near Schools, and 6) national near-road monitoring data. The Final EIS, CO TAQA and MSAT Technical Reports and associated supplemental information do not identify adverse impacts associated with air quality. The relevant air quality concerns relate to average exposure time measured over time periods of hourly or greater intervals, as persons travelling on the roadway are on the move and not expected to stay in the depressed area on the highway for longer exposure periods. Even so, no emissions are expected to reach dangerous acute instantaneous (15 minutes or less) exposure levels. The capped portions of the NHHIP will be designed to accommodate ventilation to meet air quality requirements. The longer capped section of US 59/I-69/I-45 will include a ventilation plume system that basically pulls air out of the capped section within a plenum type system commonly used in buildings or other types of enclosures. This type of system will pull the air into ducts or air chambers and then extract the air into designated vents that are released away from pedestrians and vehicles. Fans are used in combination with the plenum type system to keep air moving through the capped section. This system is also designed to meet National Fire Protection Association requirements for road tunnel, bridges and other limited access highways. This would include a suppression system for any fires and extraction of smoke through the ventilation system as part of the fire life safety system. Considering the success of the SIP, conformity, and other regulatory controls in reducing historical monitored criteria pollutant (including PM) and MSAT (including diesel PM) concentrations, future modeling projecting continued criteria pollutant and MSAT reductions, and the project analyses not demonstrating any air quality impact; the quality of life with regards to air quality is not expected to worsen.
501	Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club	7/27/2017	Project Website	2) Land Use Changes- The proposal ensures that there will be significant condemnation needed to widen the two freeways to the width of the corridor (20-25 lanes). Large numbers of present properties will be condemned for this relocation and widening project which will result in higher costs since TxDOT could be faced with accelerated levels of lawsuits as occurred with the expansion of Interstate 1 0 West which increased the cost of that project immensely. The properties left after this relocation and widening project will have impacts and levels of impacts that they have not had before due to the very close location of the NHHIP including air pollution impacts, noise impacts, vibration impacts, community blocking (cohesion impacts), flooding impacts climate change impacts etc	TxDOT makes every effort to reach a fair and equitable agreement in the purchase of all right-of-way needed for public transportation purposes. The Final EIS discusses potential project impacts and proposed mitigation commitments for unavoidable adverse impacts.

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501	Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club	7/27/2017	Project Website	3) Noise Pollution- The noise impacts as an entire freeway (Interstate 45) is moved from one area to an area that already has very high noise impacts (U.S. 59/I69) would be significant. It is not clear how far noise pollution would reach beyond both of these freeways and the interaction synergistically with existing nearby high noise level areas. Present noise analysis is incomplete and does not give a good estimate of what the impacts would be for residents and commercial visitors, including tourists to the Downtown area.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. Under the proposed design, the Downtown area is predicted to experience lower noise levels compared to the no build scenario.
501	Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club	7/27/2017	Project Website	4) Flooding- The flooding potential needs better assessment. Where will the flood waters go? What is the specific system that will move these flood waters? Will there be any downstream impacts of flood waters? What occurs in a Tropical Storm, worst-case event? What impacts will detention and barrow areas have due to this proposal? These are just some of the questions that need to be answered with additional analyses.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The COH has designated the I-610 Loop as a hazardous materials route. Hazardous material vehicles transporting hazardous materials product must use the I-610 Loop route and not travel through the city.
501	Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club	7/27/2017	Project Website	5) Climate Change- There is very little analysis with regard to how climate change may affect this area. More concrete in an area that is already over-saturated with concrete leads to more heat island effects and greater air pollution impacts. Greater rainfall or storm events could result in flooding and water quality impacts. Finally, by making Houstonians more dependent on fossil fuels this proposal ensures that additional climate change impacts will occur and hurt public (heat effects) and environmental health.	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increases in impervious surface. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties.
501	Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club	7/27/2017	Project Website	6) Emergencies- This proposal, particularly in the depressed and or capped areas will make a possible worst-case accident or terrorist action have even greater and more significant impacts. For instance, if a large truck or other vehicle carrying flammable fuel overturns and burns, people in the depressed and capped areas could find it more difficult to evacuate safely without being exposed to fire, explosion, or air pollution effects (smoke). A worst-case analysis should be conducted with mitigation measures required to reduce its impacts.	TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The COH has designated the I-610 Loop as a hazardous materials route. Hazardous material vehicles transporting hazardous materials product must use the I-610 Loop route and not travel through the city.
501	Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club	7/27/2017	Project Website	The Sierra Club requests that either TxDOT choose the No Action Alternative or conduct better and more extensive analyses of environmental impacts with more significant mitigation measures required to reduce the impacts of this proposal.	The No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the project. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of impacts of the Preferred Alternative, including the issues noted in the comment (air quality, land use, traffic noise, climate change, and emergency response), as well as other resources and issues. Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project were evaluated. With the updated analyses, TxDOT has proposed mitigation measures to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	Texas Organizing Project (TOP) promotes social and economic equality for low to moderate income Texans through community organizing to ensure that the voices of low income and minority communities are not only heard, but that the issues they raise are addressed. TOP is a membership-based organization, whose members come from working class neighborhoods in Houston, including neighborhoods affected by the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP). The proposed NHHIP is being designed in a way that perpetuates the unequal treatment of our neighborhoods, which for decades have been subject to infrastructure projects that split and isolate our neighborhoods, inadequate flood protection and access to public services, and increased exposure to environmental hazards. Our communities have historically borne the costs of infrastructure that benefits other areas of Houston and the region, and those costs are being imposed on us again.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) does not meet the "hard look" standard of NEPA or sufficiently and meaningfully address these issues. The DEIS states that that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities·. It also makes clear that the affected communities are overwhelmingly communities of color. The majority of these communities are made up of persons in classes protected by the Fair Housing Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The NHHIP as described in the DEIS will destroy dozens of single-family homes and hundreds of unit of multifamily housing (including 368 units of public housing), displacing these families.	The updated Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report documents the analysis of impacts to single-family homes and multi-family units. information about TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program is in Section 5.1.2 Replacements and Relocations of the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. TxDOT has coordinated with Houston Housing Authority (HHA) consistently throughout project development regarding the impacts of the proposed project to Clayton Homes and a portion of Kelly Village. TxDOT is in coordination with the HHA on acquisition of the properties so as to provide for the relocation of over 70 percent of replacement housing for Clayton Homes to be within one mile of the existing location, and relocation of the residents of Kelly Village with the intent of constructing new housing in the vicinity of the existing Kelly Village.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The NHHIP will also eliminate thousands of jobs, as well as houses of worship, schools, and social services, overwhelmingly in lower-income Black and Hispanic/Latino communities.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. Section 5.3.4.2 of the technical report discusses potential impacts to employment and income. Because there are available office, retail, and industrial properties and vacant land for sale or lease in the vicinity of the proposed project, it is expected that businesses could relocate in the area if they desire. The proposed project has the potential to directly and indirectly affect employment and income. TxDOT will facilitate opportunities such as job fairs to promote hiring individuals from the local communities, for general employment and for project construction.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	3) **Parks and Recreation-**The DEIS proposes the elimination of over 30 acres of greenway and open space. The suggestion that some outside entity will develop and pay for open space or "capped" sections of the new highway is in no way a mitigation strategy.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.

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502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The preferred option for Segment 1 results in the highest level of displacement of single-family homes and businesses (although the least impact on multifamily units) and indicates that there will be increased runoff because of the increase in impervious cover. The preferred option for Segment 2 is also the option with the highest level of residential displacement, displaces a church, and eliminates direct access to a school. It also displaced the highest number of businesses and employees, and results in the largest loss of business sales tax and residential property tax revue, and has the largest portion of the project located in the 100 year floodplain . The recommended alternative for Segment 3 is also the alternative with the greatest impact on commercial, industrial, public/institutional, and residential land uses. The project will exacerbate physical barriers between neighborhoods, and between neighborhoods and downtown, again, overwhelmingly in lower-income communities of color with concentrations of persons protected by civil rights laws.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. All property acquisition and relocations will be handled in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to all persons and businesses required to relocate. Displaced persons and businesses will receive relocation benefits as provided by federal and state law. There are multiple examples where the proposed project will remove physical barriers and add new connections to improve connectivity (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) between minority and/or low-income communities. Additional information is included in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The recommended alternative for every segment is one which, in some significant way, has the largest negative impact on the adjacent lower-income Black and Hispanic/Latino neighborhood. There is no sufficient explanation or justification for these choices or explanation of how TxDOT proposes to mitigate these effects on our neighborhoods. Our communities are already bearing the disproportionate health and environmental, economic development, property value, displacement, and isolation effects of existing freeways, the proposed NHHIP would substantially increase these impacts and the ED IS does not sufficiently identify or address those impacts.	Section 2 of the Draft EIS describes the alternatives analysis process in detail. Following publication of the Draft EIS, the study team considered comments received and the project design was revised, as discussed in Section 2 of the Final EIS. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	1) **Historic Neighborhoods-** The project segment between 610 and I-10 impacts several historic neighborhoods. Three designated historic districts are located along I-45 south of North Main Street. The projects' effect on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed Near Northside Historic District on the east side of I-45 must be addressed as part of the review process along with potential impacts on two city-designated historic districts on the west side of I-45: Germantown and Woodland Heights. Both of these city designated districts are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. The Brooke Smith Addition on the west side of I-45 and the north side North Main Street is also potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. The projects potential impact on historic resources in the First Ward, on the west side of I-45 south of I-10, should also be considered, particularly the National Register listed Jefferson Davis Hospital (1925).	*COMMENT 1* 1) **Historic Neighborhoods-** The project segment between 610 and 1-10 impacts several historic neighborhoods. Three designated historic districts are located along 1-45 south of North Main Street. The projects' effect on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed Near Northside Historic District on the east side of 1-45 must be addressed as part of the review process along with potential impacts on two city-designated historic districts on the west side of 1-45: Germantown and Woodland Heights. Both of these city designated districts are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. The Brooke Smith Addition on the west side of I-45 and the north side North Main Street is also potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. The projects potential impact on historic resources in the First Ward, on the west side of 1-45 south of 1-10, should also be considered, particularly the National Register listed Jefferson Davis Hospital (1925).
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	2) **Connectivity and Transit Access-** The City of Houston adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2013 to ensure that streets are constructed for all users of the system and that applies the Context Sensitive Design guidelines as those recommended in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)- Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach and National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)- Urban Street Design Guide and others. Since the project location is within the urban core of the City, the design on the proposed project should meet these guidelines.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. For example, in coordination with COH, TxDOT developed a plan for bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, which includes a 15-17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic. TxDOT will include this bicycle/pedestrian realm on city street crossing in other areas of the project.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The existing freeway infrastructure built in the 1960's split and isolated communities of color, negatively impacted neighborhoods, and had a significant impact on the City of Houston. The impacts on pedestrians or bicyclists were not taken into consideration when the freeways were built in the 1950s and 60s. Fifth Ward residents had to fight to get pedestrian bridges built over I-10 several years after the freeway opened and after pedestrian causalities occurred. Longtime residents recall the need to drive more often even for routine trips within the neighborhood due to the construction of the freeway. We must learn from the past and ensure that transit-dependent populations relying on alternative forms of transportation, such as walking, biking and taking transit, will not be negatively impacted by the current freeway project.	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. TxDOT will coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops would meet ADA and METRO standards.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The NHHIP should address past unequal treatment by improving connectivity between communities in and around Downtown; not reducing it. Where possible, strong connections should be maintained and new ones should be added to the existing street network. Reducing street connectivity in areas in the urban core of Houston should be avoided or mitigated wherever possible. Connectivity should be considered not only for vehicular traffic, but for all modes of transportation and inclusive of people on foot, people on bicycles, transit users, and freight.	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	Erecting more barriers to opportunity for low-income communities of color is unacceptable. While the freeway operations may be critical for regional circulation, local circulation is critical for the City of Houston and the communities most impacted by this project Improving connectivity, by providing multiple routes where people can travel, is critical to avoid relocating congestion from freeways to local streets and forcing disadvantaged communities to bear the costs of the project.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. All property acquisition and relocations will be handled in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to all persons and businesses required to relocate. Displaced persons and businesses will receive relocation benefits as provided by federal and state law. There are multiple examples where the proposed project will remove physical barriers and add new connections to improve connectivity (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) between minority and/or low-income communities. Additional information is included in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.

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502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	For example, there are several one-way streets that connect the East End and Third Ward neighborhoods and downtown that will disappear as part of this project. One of the two way streets is Polk which is the only street out of the East End without any railroad disruption when driving to and from downtown, and is one of the few street with bike lanes into downtown Houston. As such, both bikes and cars rely heavily on Polk Street for access to downtown. It appears that the NHHIP will result in the elimination of the section of Polk Street that connects to downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The freeway expansion into EADO also has the potential to cut off the emerging economic development that we have seen in this area over the past two to five years.	The proposed project requires new right-of-way between Chartres St. and St. Emanuel St. in the EaDo area. Businesses on those parcels would be displaced. The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The U.S. Census Bureau shows that the largest share of people who bike, in large car dependent cities like Houston, are in lower-income brackets. Given the demographics of the immediate surrounding neighborhoods, bicycle connectivity is a serious concern. Providing for high-comfort bikeway connectivity across and along the proposed project is essential to the changing demographics in our region. It is also needed to address the additional barrier between neighborhoods, especially the increased barrier between lower social-economic neighborhoods and the Central Business District. In areas where vehicular connectivity may be removed, options should be evaluated to preserve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. 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, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	Lower-income persons are also disproportionately likely to use public transit. Every single proposed alternative in the DEIS will disrupt access to public transit. Communities rely on light rail lines to access downtown, particularly since the bus lines were redesigned so that bus routes no longer go downtown if there is rail available. Lower income communities without access to cars will not have other options for transport to jobs, school, and other activities if rail service is disrupted due to construction of the NHHIP. There must be plan for supplementing these modes of transport during construction so that people without cars still have access to work, school, health care, and other opportunities.	TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with METRO to minimize impacts to bus and rail operations, and to facilitate notifications to riders in advance of any temporary and permanent changes.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	While the DEIS mentions some form of coordination with a regional transit plan, there is no description of that plan, how NHHIP is coordinated with that plan, and how the transit plan will affect our communities. Transit, including how the NHHIP can be designed to support faster transit trips between major activity centers and destinations, should be much more prominently considered in the plan. This should include rail expansion opportunities as well as the potential for an optimized express bus network. Stops (and access to stops) must be designed to ADA and METRO standards with room for shelters.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The proposed schematic drawing does not identify sidewalks along sections of the proposed project. In general, sidewalks should be identified along all frontage roads and public streets on the schematics in all typical sections. All bridges should have wide sidewalks for safe crossing. Ensuring access to pedestrians and persons with disabilities in accordance with the ADA along all public streets is critical. All lanes on city streets and frontage roads should comply with City of Houston's 11' lane standards and encourage safe and appropriate travel speeds. 12' lanes are freeway lane standards and not local street standards. The increased width encourages excessive speeds through adjoining neighborhoods, reducing the safety of local streets and increasing the risk to local residents. The local street network and the frontage road should be designed with target/design speed not to exceed 30 mph, especially in urban areas.	Sidewalks were shown on the schematics for Segments 1 and 2 and sidewalks are now shown on the updated schematics for Segment 3. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding incorporating the Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets for Segment 3. The schematic was updated to show the sidewalk network agreed upon by TxDOT and the COH.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	**4) Economic Development-** A project of this magnitude has significant impact on potential development, both positively and negatively. It will also impact the City's tax base through acquisition of valuable land in the City's urban core. The design should be optimized to support high quality development opportunities that are beneficial to the City of Houston and the surrounding communities.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	To pretend this is solely a mobility project and to overlook the development impacts would be huge missed opportunity. TxDOT and its partners should work to identify and incorporate development opportunities into the project in the initial design, especially in areas where the project eliminates significant existing tax base.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts.

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502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	Little attempt was made by highway officials to mitigate the significant impacts the highway projects had on major economic thoroughfares in the neighborhoods (Dowling Street in Third Ward and Lyons Avenue in Fiflh Ward). Hundreds of residents were displaced and businesses were disrupted as traffic was funneled along freeways. Exits off of freeways reduced the number of visitors to the communities. TXDOT must ensure that community stakeholders are choosing which exits remain open and the number of exits to their community through a transparent design process for the proposed project.	TxDOT considered input from the public during the alternatives analysis process. One example is the addition of a northbound I-45 entrance ramp south of N. Main St., in response to requests from residents in the Near Northside community. Current design standards prevent entrance and exit ramps from being as close together as previously constructed; however, there will be decreased weaving of traffic, improving traffic flow and safety. Changes in entrance and exit ramps will not impede access to businesses.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The proposed project will take significant amounts of private land currently on Houston's tax rolls and permanently eliminate the possibility of economic activity on that land. The estimated losses in the DEIS do not include the degradation of property values due to visual and noise impacts, and potentially to increased flood risk, lack of access to downtown Houston, and air pollution. The City of Houston has historically made decisions, including the siting of landfills and other environmental hazards and the inadequate provision of infrastructure, that have forced down property values in Black and Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods. There is no proposed mitigation for the continued degradation of property values in our neighborhoods, nor of how the projected loss of property and other taxes will affect resources available for schools, infrastructure, and economic development.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. TxDOT has limited input on activities outside the TxDOT right-of-way. When property acquisition is required, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to residential property owners and tenants that would be required to relocate. The relocation assistance program is conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law); Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Relocation resources will be available, without discrimination, to all affected property owners required to relocate as a result of implementation of a proposed project. No person will be displaced by the proposed project unless and until adequate replacement housing has been provided or is in place. For subsidized and non subsidized housing, as defined Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, displaced residents will receive assistance in finding new residential units that are comparable replacement homes. In general terms, a comparable home is: • Decent, safe, and sanitary • Functionally equivalent to (and equal or better than) present home • Actually available to rent • Affordable • Reasonably accessible to place of employment • Generally the same distance to public and commercial facilities, such as schools and shopping, as present home • Not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions • Available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (HUD 2017b) Relocation assistance and payment for reasonable moving and related expenses would be included for residents required to relocate. TxDOT will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses utilized by environmental justice, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Non-residential property owners, such as businesses, places of worship, and others will be provided information on adequate replacement locations for their current property and may be reimbursed for costs based on TxDOT policies and procedures. Compliance procedures for federal projects under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) include: • Provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects; • Ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement; • Ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary housing is available within the displaced person's financial means; • Help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing; and, • Encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	5) **Noise and Air Pollution and other Environmental Impacts-** In general noise and environmental impacts, which are borne overwhelmingly by lower-income communities of color, should be mitigated proactively as a part of the project.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. In addition to noise barriers, TxDOT is providing the opportunity for adjacent property owners in environmental justice areas to receive noise mitigation that did not otherwise qualify under TxDOT's noise guidelines or FHWA criteria. These walls could also serve as visual barriers should the adjacent property owners want a visual screen between the property and the highway. These walls are described as "aesthetic walls" in the Final EIS and Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS. TxDOT is proposing this mitigation to further offset adverse effects in environmental justice areas. Section 5.7 of the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report discusses transportation-related air quality issues and how they relate to human health and community resources, and the findings of the quantitative air quality studies completed for the proposed project. To mitigate for potential short-term construction dust or noise impacts, TxDOT will provide funding for weatherization and energy efficiency for qualifying low-income single-family residences. TxDOT will also develop and fund an air monitoring program to operation during construction of the proposed project, and the data will be publicly accessible. Additional information is in Section 5.9.3.7 of the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	The plan should designate where noise walls are proposed to mitigate neighborhood impacts, and propose additional mitigation measures like landscape screening. The DEIS does not do this. In past TXDOT projects, these kinds of mitigation measures have been provided to higher-income neighborhoods with majority-White populations.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, including for many areas of the neighborhoods noted in the comment, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping.

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502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	TXDOT must ensure that low income areas and communities of color receive equal treatment. According to the American Lung Association, living near a highway can induce "asthma attacks in children, and may cause a wide range of other effects including: the onset of childhood asthma, impaired lung function, premature death and death from cardiovascular diseases, and cardiovascular morbidity." Long term exposure to traffic pollution may also increase the risk of dementia and poor cognition for elderly persons. Since 2014, TCEQ has had monitors on two sections of Houston highways. The EIS should use this data, and not a regional measure that does not accurately reflect the health and environmental risks to adjoining neighborhoods. This is particularly critical in light of the just released Rice University study of more than 12,000 Houston children with asthma that found asthma was more prevalent in African-American children than white children and occurs most often in African-American children living in low-income neighborhoods. The study also found that "differential exposure to pollution~ contributed to the different prevalence of asthma in low-income neighborhoods.	TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix D of the CO TAQA and Appendix C of the MSAT Technical Reports (in the Final EIS), regarding: 1) overall status of air quality in the greater Houston area, 2) mobile source air emission projections for Harris County, 3) ambient air monitoring for NAAQS and air toxics for the greater Houston area, 4) TCEQ toxicology assessment for the greater Houston area, 5) an EPA Study Assessing Outdoor Air Near Schools, and 6) national near-road monitoring data. Neither of the near-road monitors in Houston showed exceedances of applicable health-based NAAQS for NO2, PM2.5, or CO, which alludes to heavily trafficked highways not contributing to exceedances of health-based standards. The Final EIS, CO TAQA and MSAT Technical Reports and associated supplemental information do not identify adverse impacts associated with air quality, disproportionate or otherwise, for any population including sensitive populations such as children. TxDOT is not disputing the referenced Rice University study, but with air quality (criteria pollutants and MSAT) expected to continue improving, we do not expect this project to contribute to an air quality impact (disproportionate or otherwise). During construction of the project, there may be a temporary increase in construction-related emissions for community members residing near the project site who open their windows for ventilation year-round due to preference or economic reasons. TxDOT will develop and fund a weatherization and energy efficiency program (including items such as new window air conditioning units and weather stripping) for qualifying community members.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	6) **Flooding and wastewater-** Black and Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods in Houston are already disproportionately impacted by inadequate drainage infrastructure. In the City of Houston, 88% of the open ditch drainage is in minority communities and 43% of that drainage is inadequate. The DEIS explains how flooding on I-45 will be addressed by the project, but says nothing about potential flooding impacts on the adjoining neighborhoods, which already flood frequently because of inadequate public infrastructure, imposing additional costs for insurance and repairs, and reducing the property value of local residents.	During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent prope+J45rties. TxDOT is coordinating with Harris County Flood Control District and the COH regarding regional drainage and flooding issues. See Section 3.8.3 of the Final EIS for additional information about studies that will be conducted by TxDOT during project design. Depressed sections of the proposed project will be designed to provide a 500-year level of protection. This will be achieved through a pumped drainage system that will collect rainwater falling inside the depressed sections and discharge it to an adjacent detention basin or receiving channel. In addition, the entrance points to the depressed sections will be constructed above the adjacent 500-year water surface elevation, such that adjacent floodwaters cannot enter and flood the depressed sections.
502	Texas Organizing Project	7/27/2017	Project Website	Waterways affected by the project are already listed as impaired waters. TxDOT should model the runoff and stormwater discharges into Buffalo Bayou, White Oak and, Halls and Little White Oak in order to meet state requirements that prohibit the addition of any pollutant load into impaired waters and focus instead on improving those waters through the additional application of more rigorous best management practices for stormwater and runoff. Similarly, TxDOT should adopt and disclose the best management practices and plans that will be adopted, including source controls, to avoid further discharge of trash into these waterways. The proposed NHHIP will have significant and disproportionate impacts on low and moderate-income communities of color, people with disabilities, and children and the elderly.	Permit compliance with the Construction General Permit requires consistency with TMDLs for impaired water bodies, and discharges of the pollutants of concern to impaired waters are not authorized by the permit unless otherwise allowable under 30 TAC Chapter 305 and applicable state law. TxDOT follows permit requirements for permit coverage under the Construction General Permit. TxDOT minimizes potential pollutants during construction through the project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit, implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. As part of TxDOT's MS4 permit, TxDOT minimizes potential stormwater pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use and maintenance of post-construction best management practices. In consideration of the project's adverse impacts low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, TxDOT will implement mitigation measures and strategies, and other commitments, to minimize and/or compensate for the project impacts. These are discussed in the Final EIS and the associated Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.
504	Tomlinson, William	7/27/2017	Email	We need to preserve the future opportunity to incorporate multi modal high capacity transit like elevated rail into the $7B TxDOT I-45 project. It's the only viable long-term transportation solution. Building more roads is short-sighted. Public transit has all kinds of additional benefits such as improved safety and environmental sustainability.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
505	Tran, Gary	7/27/2017	Email	We should make certain that Houston has the ability to build a viable Public Transit System. We build miles and miles of elevated ramps. Why not Metro tracks? We need to be able to move people without just only cars. Dallas and Austin are moving forward, and so should we. LA, DC, NYC, Chicago, Paris, London invest heavily in public transit.	All modes of transportation were considered in the planning for this corridor. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
506	Walker, Tristan	7/27/2017	Project Website	I am disappointed that so much money is being spent on a transportation project but none of it includes funding for dedicated mass transit. The disruption this construction project will cause provides a great opportunity to begin creating diversity and competition in the transportation market by offering commuters a choice between roads and other forms of mass transit. It also means that commuters who are displaced by the construction project can realign their commutes to the mass transit corridor, thus making the construction and post-construction commute much less harrowing for the drivers who remain on the freeway. In my view, spending $5 billion on freeways inside the 610 Loop but $0 on mass transit is a criminal waste of taxpayer funds. The project itself demonstrates that no more freeway expansions are possible inside the loop, so mass transit projects are an absolute necessity - while this project (which adds no new lanes whatsoever) is entirely elective. Please consider allocating 20% of the funds for this project towards mass transit (specifically to completing the existing light rail system, since it is also inside the loop and would do far more to aide commuters than moving Interstate 45 from one side of downtown to the other. It is truly baffling to see a construction project of this magnitude include no funding of any kind for dedicated mass transit.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

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507	Warhol, Kay	7/27/2017	Project Website	My comments on the NHHIP are focused on Segment 3: Much has been made in the media of the prospect of removing the Pierce Elevated and the potential for having much of the freeway around downtown depressed below street level. It seems that little has been discussed on the destructive aspect of the project on the east side of downtown. That is concerning. Specifically: - The removal of the visual barrier – the Pierce Elevated - between Downtown and Midtown is a positive and it opens up opportunities for the land currently occupied by the freeway structure. - The depression of the freeway on the east side of downtown is also positive for similar reasons, however, because of the vast expansion of freeway footprint along this corridor, there is also the negative of destroying parts of an area that has historical elements and is quickly redeveloping. That calls into question whether the tradeoffs result in a net positive. That's not clear.	TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I-45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass. 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, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project..
507	Warhol, Kay	7/27/2017	Project Website	TxDOT needs to give careful further consideration to the needs and plans related to this portion of the project. For example: Is the planned scale of the IH45 and US59 roadways truly warranted by future need – are the projections being used realistic given how transportation technology and usage is changing even now?	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
507	Warhol, Kay	7/27/2017	Project Website	Are social equity and historic preservation concerns being given adequate attention?	The 2017 Draft Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Technical Report and Section 3.2 of the Draft EIS The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. In regards to historic preservation, TxDOT conducted identification, documentation, and evaluation of historic properties for this project. The Texas State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with TxDOT's determinations of effect on the condition that design prescriptives to avoid or minimize adverse effects are incorporated into the design/build contract. Section 3.15 of the Final EIS summarizes adverse direct effects, indirect effects, and cumulative impacts along with design commitments. The September 2019 Historical Resources Survey Report - Update (Appendix H to the Final EIS) contains a full discussion of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to all identified historic properties in the APE. See Section 7.15 of the Final EIS.
507	Warhol, Kay	7/27/2017	Project Website	Will access between the EADO/East End and Downtown be enhanced or diminished? And if not enhanced, will the tradeoff be to benefit an affluent district (Midtown) to the detriment of one that is historically low-income and in the early stages of economic development?	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.

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507	Warhol, Kay	7/27/2017	Project Website	Improving the flow of IH45 around Downtown and removing confusing interchanges are positives for users of the freeway, but this should not be given greater weight than considerations for travelers into and within Downtown. - Although there appear to be improvements in how the Downtown connectors on the west side will interact with Buffalo Bayou Park, this would be further enhanced if these connectors were brought down to street level rather than elevated.	The NHHIP is being planned to provide benefit to all users of the roadway(s) proposed for improvement. The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is to create additional roadway capacity to manage congestion, enhance safety, and to improve mobility and operational efficiency. TxDOT has revised the design of the Downtown Connectors in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. The connectors cannot be at street level in all areas due to crossing the railroad, Buffalo Bayou, Memorial Dr., and Allen Pkwy.
507	Warhol, Kay	7/27/2017	Project Website	- This project needs to maximize the opportunity for transit, including rail; it isn't completely clear yet how that will be accomplished.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
507	Warhol, Kay	7/27/2017	Project Website	- It's understood that TxDOT does not expect to fund the green spaces presented as potential for developing the freeway "caps." For the overall success of the project, TxDOT should proactively seek partners.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
507	Warhol, Kay	7/27/2017	Project Website	- Finally, I am on the board of the Neartown Super Neighborhood, which is not listed among the Super Neighborhoods shown in the DEIS. Spur 527 and US 59 border our Super Neighborhood and we should be contacted regarding any potential impacts from the planned construction on 59 near Montrose, the Montrose bridge, and the Spur.	The Neartown/Montrose Super Neighborhood was added to the discussions of Super Neighborhoods in the Final EIS and the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. TxDOT attended meetings with neighborhood representatives in August 2017 and September 2017 (Montrose/Midtown Super Neighborhood and First Montrose Commons Neighborhood) to discuss the proposed project. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and other stakeholders during detailed design and construction.
508	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
509	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	I want TxDOT to fully construct, completely, the Deck Park in Segment 2 near N.Main St where the IH-45 roadway is below grade. All engineering, supports, ventilation, etc. should be done by TxDOT at the time of reconstruction the roadway. This addition of green space will partially compensate the community for the loss of approximately 18 acres of new freeway to be added during the project.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements. Safety measures, including ventilation and lighting, will be included in the proposed project.
510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	In addition, I further request that TxDOT: · Allow the City and/or private organizations the opportunity to re-purpose the Pierce Elevated into a public space.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	· Prevent dividing communities especially low-income neighborhoods from opportunities	The NHHIP is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. All property acquisition and relocations will be handled in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to all persons and businesses required to relocate. Displaced persons and businesses will receive relocation benefits as provided by federal and state law. There are multiple examples where the proposed project will remove physical barriers and add new connections to improve connectivity (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) between minority and/or low-income communities. Additional information is included in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.
510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	· All new bridges should have separated bike & pedestrian sidewalks with designs approved by community, with signature bridges for the area, compatible with the historic fabric of the neighborhood · Ensure there is bike continuity and connectivity to existing and planned bikeways.	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.
510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	· Implement green sound walls versus concrete walls where increased traffic noise exists	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. Green sound walls and hardscape materials would have negligible impact on absorption of water.
510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	· Provide infrastructure for future mass transit, high speed rail and other transit modes	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).

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510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	· Eliminate or reduce disproportionate impact to low-income communities	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	· Eliminate or reduce negative impact to parks and recreational areas	The analysis in the DEIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation.
510	Weston, Jim	7/27/2017	Project Website	· Eliminate or reduce negative impacts on walkability and cycling Thank you for working with the community in attempting to make this a collaborative, cooperative project that both TxDOT and the community can be proud of.	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.
511	Williams, James H. F.	7/27/2017	Project Website	I support the No Action Alternative as being the best solution for this proposal. This project needs a more careful environmental and safety analysis. 1) Flooding – The flooding potential needs better assessment. Where will the flood waters go? What is the specific system that will move these flood waters and will it be able to function during storms? What will occur in a worst-case storm event? Will the flood event flood the belowground areas and prevent the evacuation of East Houston and surrounding areas? (This scenario occurred during tropical storm Alison on Hwy 59/69.) How will people be evacuated if this area floods. Why should not this freeway be built above ground like the Pierce Elevated.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation. Adding capacity to I 45, especially lanes that are flexible in operation, such as MaX lanes, would increase the carrying capacity of the roadway, thereby providing more efficient evacuation capabilities. Bringing I 45 up to current design standards would also improve operation and safety during normal and emergency operations. The proposed project is planned to increase safety and facilitate traffic movement during a hurricane evacuation and other emergencies that require emergency response along roadway facilities. TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design. The COH has designated the I-610 Loop as a hazardous materials route. Hazardous material vehicles transporting hazardous materials product must use the I-610 Loop route and not travel through the city. Section 2 of the Draft EIS describes the alternatives analysis process in detail. Following publication of the Draft EIS, the study team considered comments received and the project design was revised, as discussed in Section 2 of the Final EIS. US 59/I-69 was under construction during Tropical Storm Allison and did not have the final drainage system in place. These areas did not flood during Hurricane Harvey. Through the alternatives evaluation process, it was determined that depressing the freeways between Spur 527 and Congress Avenue was needed in order to significantly improve traffic operations while maintaining existing local and freeway-to-freeway access.
511	Williams, James H. F.	7/27/2017	Project Website	2) Climate Change – There is little analysis with regard to how climate change may affect this project. Insurance risk analysis agencies looking at how Climate Change will affect businesses (The Risky Business Project) have predicted that areas around Buffalo Bayou will flood at high tide by 2030. How will this climate produced flooding affect this project?	Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increases in impervious surface. During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties.
511	Williams, James H. F.	7/27/2017	Project Website	3) Emergencies, Accidents and Terrorism – One large accident involving an 18 wheeler could completely block one half or this whole freeway. How would people get home in a situation like this? This proposal, particularly in belowground areas will make a worst case accident or terrorist attack have an even greater impact. For instance, if a large truck or other vehicle carrying flammable fuel overturns and burns, people in the belowground areas would find it more difficult to evacuate safely without being exposed to fire, explosion, or toxic fumes. A worst case risk analysis should be conducted to determine these impacts. I urge you to choose the No Action Alternative	TxDOT conducted preliminary analysis of fire, security, and life safety planning and will do a more detailed analysis during detailed design. Issues that will be examined during detailed design include, but are not limited to, response time requirements, communication requirements, protection of emergency responders, ability to control traffic in the event of an emergency, means of fire and emergency detection, and provision of reliable fire protection. Emergency access gates and specific safety mitigation measures will be incorporated during detailed design.
512	Wixted, James	7/27/2017	Project Website	I-45 Highway Improvement Project - Segment 3 Please consider using the asphalt grooving technique piloted at I-10 West at Beltway 8 for Segment 3 to reduce noise along with consideration of using polymer aggregates in the flyover portions to reduce tire wear and micro-particulate pollution. Thank you.	Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels. TxDOT will comply with all regulations related to protection of air and water quality.
513	Wixted, James	7/27/2017	Email	I am supportive of the North Houston Freeway Improvement project; especially Segment 3.	Comment noted.
513	Wixted, James	7/27/2017	Email	I would advise that pilot projects like the asphalt grooving done on I-10 West at the Beltway 8 be applied to all flyover sections of the new freeway as well as considering polymer aggregates to retard tire degradation and micro-particulate pollution.	TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
514	Wong, Jun	7/27/2017	Email	I support the elevated metro project please expand the Metro in any way possible to improve Houston traffic and transportation!	Comment noted.
515	Zaga, Monica	7/27/2017	Project Website	Please reconsider making Chenevert st, the entrance/exit for the managed lanes. Our neighborhood will be severely affected by the increase traffic. My house faces Chenevert and the increase traffic will only result in noise and safety concerns for my family. Property values will drop as a result. There are already a lot of accident s on the corner of Chenevert and Tuam st. The nervy school uses Baldwin park for PE, I am concern for the safety of the children running after a ball and other prop st the park with rush hour traffic	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.

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516	Benz, Paul	7/28/2017	Project Website	In addition to other comments I have submitted previously. Please consider the following additional comments. A Sound 1. the elevation correction requires a re-run of the sound profiles. 2. Neighborhood input in addition to property owner input concerning sound walls shall be considered. 3. Recreation areas, "parklands" and roof top balconies and decks, shall be considered in sound profiles 4. Elevated road decks shall have sound barrier walls at least as effective as the ones on Mopac in Austin. 5. quieter "improved pavement" / grooved pavement in the direction of travel shall be used 6. Sound profile points maximum sound levels to be the lesser of allowed versus increase of existing.	1. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary noise barrier proposals. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barriers will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. 2. Per TxDOT's FHWA-approved Traffic Noise Policy, only benefited or adjacent property owners and residents associated with each proposed noise barrier (sound wall) would be invited to vote on whether a proposed barrier would be installed. 3. The traffic noise analysis includes evaluation of recreation areas, parks, and residential outdoor (or exterior) spaces, in accordance with FHWA and TxDOT guidance. 4. Elevated structures will have the standard solid concrete traffic barriers along the outer lanes of roadways and ramps, which may reduce traffic noise levels but does not qualify as a noise barrier or a noise abatement measure. 5. Longitudinally-tined pavement is proposed as a best management practice to reduce noise levels. 6. In accordance with TxDOT's FHWA-approved Traffic Noise Policy, noise impacts were identified for adjacent noise-sensitive land uses if predicted traffic noise levels would approach, equal, or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) level set by FHWA for that land use category. Where traffic noise impacts were identified, TxDOT evaluated whether noise abatement measures would be both feasible and reasonable.
516	Benz, Paul	7/28/2017	Project Website	B. Bridges 1. Houston and Crockett Bridges shall be signature bridges despite lateral and vertical obstacles.	A signature bridge is a bridge that's been enhanced with art and symbols to tell a story, create an experience, and draw people to the trail and its surrounding communities. Signature bridges are more than just structures. It defines a city or a place just by its presence. The cost of building signature bridges is much more than the cost of building normal bridges, as such bridges exceed the normal expectation of quality, aesthetics, artwork and functionality. TxDOT recognizes the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. The design of bridges would be conducted as a collaboration between the districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. Funding for "signature" bridges would be determined in a later phase of project development.
516	Benz, Paul	7/28/2017	Project Website	C. Recreation areas 1. recreation areas - along white Oak South of the Spring street bike trail shall be shall be restored to pre-2015 construction footprint. 2. Any land gained from removal of highways be retained for park land 3. Roads South of main lanes as I-45 highway turns South be minimized or elevated to maximize continuous park area with existing neighborhood 4. Preserving existing recreation areas be prioritized over Pierce elevated and "top covers" to highways in other segments. And, "top covers" to be examined for effective use relative to expenditure	1. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. 2. At the end of project construction, if it is determined that there is surplus property, TxDOT is bound by statute to offer surplus property in the following order: a. Other governmental authorities with condemning authority b. Adjacent property owners c. General public 3. Meaning of comment is not clear. 4. The analysis in the DEIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
517	Bramlett, Laurene	7/28/2017	Project Website	Please do not put the 288 toll lane ramps on Chenevert St and into our neighborhood. As currently proposed, the exit and entrance for 288 toll lane traffic to/from Downtown will be at Chenevert & Elgin, dumping high-speed traffic between the school and the park. This will be very dangerous for pedestrians--adults and children in this area.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
519	DuCroz, Diana	7/28/2017	Project Website	I am opposed to the basic concept of this project, which is focused almost entirely on relieving congestion for single-occupancy vehicles. Studies have shown for years that we can't build our way out of traffic congestion, and we have an excellent example of this with the recent Katy Freeway project, which is already jammed with traffic backups only a few years after completion. I support proposed highway improvements that will address legit existing safety hazards (for instance, the northbound on-ramp just north of Cavalcade) but the rest, which is most of the project, is an appalling waste of money and scar on the city.	The proposed project would help manage congestion, improve mobility, enhance safety, and provide travelers with options to reach their destinations. The proposed MaX lanes on I-45 from Beltway 8 to Downtown are for use by HOV traffic, including buses.
519	DuCroz, Diana	7/28/2017	Project Website	Whatever funds not allotted to mitigating existing safety issues should be spent entirely on adding or improving mass transit and to improving connectivity for pedestrians, bicycles, and bayou greenways. None should be spent to expand freeway capacity for its own sake. I am also dismayed that out of the three alternatives considered for each segment in the last go-round, it appears that TxDOT has chosen the most invasive alternative in each segment. Why?? The proposed expansion benefits suburban commuters at the expense of the urban neighborhoods along the I-45 corridor.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles). The alternatives evaluation process includes consideration of many factors, as was detailed in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Updates to the analysis and documentation is included in Section 2 of the Final EIS.

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519	DuCroz, Diana	7/28/2017	Project Website	Connectivity between neighborhoods is being diminished; access on/off I-45 to adjacent neighborhoods is greatly reduced (see the elimination of many existing on/off ramps in Segment 2, as well removal of access from 610 to Irvington Blvd, the major artery through the Northside); and a large swath of EaDo that has developed in the last decade into a thriving, walkable neighborhood of restaurants, bars, and small shops is going to be flat out destroyed in order to let drivers move faster on a freeway.	The proposed I-45/I-610 interchange includes frontage roads through the interchange that don't exist today. The removal of the existing eastbound I-610 exit ramp to Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access Irvington Blvd. Route options include: 1. From eastbound I-610 a. Exit to a collector-distributor (C-D) at the I-45 interchange, then to the I-610 eastbound frontage road west of Fulton St. This allows traffic to go to Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 2. From southbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 southbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd., or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. 3. From northbound I-45 a. Exit to the I-45 northbound frontage road, travel to the I-610 eastbound frontage road, then to Irvington Blvd.; or b. Exit to direct connector to eastbound I-610, then exit eastbound I-610 to Hardy St., then U-turn at Hardy St. to go back to Irvington Blvd. This route avoids Fulton St. and the light rail. The removal of the entrance ramp to westbound I-610 between Fulton St. and Irvington Blvd. would not cause traffic to be routed through neighborhoods to access westbound I-610 or northbound I-45. In response to community comments on the proposed at-grade westbound frontage road at Fulton St. and the light rail, the proposed project design was revised to include: 1. Elevated westbound ramp (over Fulton St. and light rail) to a C-D to access westbound I-610 and the I-610 frontage road west of the I-45 interchange. 2. Added connection from Melbourne St. to the I-45 northbound frontage road, improving access to I-45 North from the North Lindale neighborhood. The proposed project would combine and/or relocate some ramps in Segment 2 to meet current design standards and improve safety, but proposed improvements would not eliminate access to I-45. In the EaDo area, new ROW was minimized as much as possible. The East Downtown Management District is in support of the project and the proposed depressed freeway in the area. TxDOT and the study team evaluated many alternatives for improving mobility on I 45 in the Downtown area, which are documented in Section 2 of the Draft EIS. Alternatives included a no build scenario (do nothing), transportation systems management projects, covering the existing downtown "loop" roadway network to a one-way loop, adding tunnels (various locations), adding elevated managed lanes along Houston Ave. to Allen Pkwy., widening the existing I-45, realigning I-45 to be parallel with I-10 and US 59/I-69 (and with partial realignment of US 59-I-69 and I-10), and realigning only the I-45 northbound lanes. From 2011-2017, the alternatives were evaluated by the study team and public input was solicited and considered prior to selection of the recommended alternative. Evaluation criteria included engineering, traffic, and environmental issues. Although the highway right-of-way on the east side of downtown would be widened and require the displacement of several businesses, apartments, and other adjacent developments, improvements in this area include the proposed depressed (below-grade) highway corridor with provision of a structural cap between Commerce St. and Lamar St. (vs. the existing elevated US 59). The project was designed to avoid the historic Cheek Neal building, and will accommodate the proposed City of Houston Navigation Blvd./Commerce St. underpass.
519	DuCroz, Diana	7/28/2017	Project Website	In exchange, the city will be 'rid' of the Pierce Elevated, which may be an eyesore, but does little to actually interfere with connectivity between Midtown and Downtown, except for the portion west of Smith St which is not even being fixed with this project. Removal of the Pierce Elevated is being touted as a big benefit to the city, but it will return a much smaller area of developable land back to the city than is being condemned along the east side of downtown, and does little to improve connectivity between downtown and Midtown.	Through the alternative analysis process and traffic modeling performed to evaluated alternatives, the study determined that relocating I-45 to north and east of downtown provided a much greater improvement in mobility than along the current Pierce Elevated route. Keeping the Pierce Elevated open to traffic, in addition to the realignment of I-45, was evaluated and it was determined that the connections on either end of the Pierce Elevated would not work in conjunction with the currently proposed improvements. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
519	DuCroz, Diana	7/28/2017	Project Website	I am also concerned with the loss of historic resources in the warehouse district north of downtown where I-10 is being straightened, as well as in the line of blocks that will be condemned east of downtown. Many of these buildings are home to independently owned businesses that contribute to the vibrancy of the city, but will now be displaced.	All historic-age resources in the project's Area of Potential Effects were surveyed, documented, and evaluated for NRHP eligibility. The NRHP eligibility determinations received concurrence from the Texas Historical Commission (Texas SHPO). Section 3.15 of the Final EIS summarizes adverse direct effects, indirect effects, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project to historic resources. The September 2019 Historical Resources Survey Report — Update (appended to the Final EIS) contains a full discussion of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to all identified historic properties in the defined Area of Potential Effects. Adverse effects to historic resources as a result of this project have been minimized with careful planning and will be mitigated. Section 7.15 of the Final EIS discusses design refinements, design-build prescriptives, and mitigation for adverse effects to historic resources.
519	DuCroz, Diana	7/28/2017	Project Website	Even though TxDOT touts the capability to put a 'cap' over the depressed freeway expansions, there is no actual funding or plans to build that cap. I am also skeptical that the city needs that much new 'open space,' if these freeway caps were ultimately funded and built. The investment would be better spent in improving connectivity between Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou Park and between Woodland and Moody Parks, neither of which is being provided in this project.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project also significantly reduces the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT will coordinate with stakeholders during detailed design to identify opportunities to enhance open spaces and amenities along the bayous.
519	DuCroz, Diana	7/28/2017	Project Website	Again, this project represents billions of taxpayer money, but has only negative impacts on the adjacent neighborhoods. Paving over city neighborhoods for highways is an outdated idea whose time has come and gone.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts.

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519	DuCroz, Diana	7/28/2017	Project Website	I can't believe TxDOT is actually proposing a project like this in the year 2017. TxDOT needs to get with the times and learn that 'transportation' is not only about cars, trucks, and freeways. I can only hope and pray that the funding for this project ultimately falls through and it never gets built.	All modes of transportation were considered in the planning for this corridor. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
520	Green, Rev. Kenneth	7/28/2017	Project Website	As the oldest church (152 years) in Houston's historic Fifth Ward community, we are submitting the following comments regarding the TXDOT proposed "IH45 North and More" freeway changes for IH45 north, IH59 /69 and Lyons Avenue. 1) We are strongly in support of Lyons Avenue (west end) becoming an OVERPASS to cross two railroad tracks near downtown Houston. Lyons Avenue is the main thoroughfare that runs east and west through our historic community. It is frequently used to drive into the downtown area by residents and other stakeholders. An underpass is unacceptable in this area that currently experiences some standing water after a regular rain shower. Also, as further proof, there have been times that traffic has had to detour from the feeder road of I-10 West at Jensen due to high water because it is an underpass! The same will happen one block over on Lyons Avenue!	This is a separate project by COH.
520	Green, Rev. Kenneth	7/28/2017	Project Website	2) The parallel converging of IH45 with I-59/69 will bring an overwhelming amount of traffic to the northeast corner of downtown Houston as they somehow connect with I-10 East. There is no way this doesn't have a devastatingly negative environmental, health and safety impact on our large and predominately low income black and brown community. Taking these freeways and sitting them flat on the ground or underground starting near George R. Brown Convention Center, will further exacerbate these issues. Also, Houston has flooding issues.	TxDOT and the NHHIP Study Team have evaluated the potential impacts of the proposed project, including an assessment of impacts to minority and low-income populations. The Final EIS and associated Community Impact Assessment Technical Report document the project impacts and proposed mitigation for adverse effects. TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Preliminary sizes and locations of storm water detention basins were identified after the Draft EIS and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
521	Guinn, Mathew	7/28/2017	Email	Having a major thruway run thru a totally residential neighborhood is irresponsible and unsafe. Along the effected roads is all homes as well as parks and schools. Who are the public officials who are supposed to be protecting residents? What are they doing? Date of Occurrence: 7/25/2017 Location: Chenevert and Elgin- proposed 288 toll lane to run thru midtown	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
522	Lo, Steven	7/28/2017	Project Website	There are HUNDREDS of pedestrians that walk around this area and it's dangerous enough! Please please please do not have the toll constructed next to 288 & chenvert. It will cause more trash and accidents in our neighborhood.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
523	Pulido, Julie	7/28/2017	Project Website	Please stop the Thorofare of the highway through the neighborhood and the park.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
524	Ruggiero, Michael & Peggy	7/28/2017	Project Website	Expansion and enhancements to I-10, I-45, US-59 & SH-288 in the proposed areas has been sorely needed for decades. We realize there will be impacts to displaced residents and businesses along the proposed areas along with inconveniences during construction. Nonetheless we expect that the alternatives selected will have the least impacts in this regard (including capital & operating expense, enhanced safety, improved visual, etc.) Although we reside in Katy (over three decades), we also own a townhouse in Midtown on Crawford near Drew (over one decade.) Thus, we are intimately familiar with the routes and on/off ramps in the affected areas concerning downtown and Midtown.	Comment noted.
524	Ruggiero, Michael & Peggy	7/28/2017	Project Website	We managed to survive the build of Beltway 8 and expansion of I-10, and are grateful these occurred albeit with one key aspect missing: provisions for mass transit akin to train systems in other major metropolitan areas in the U.S. and Europe (we ridden on few of these.) Thus, we all will benefit from including provisions for mass transit (aka trains) along the proposed routes in the affected areas.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
525	Harris County Engineering Department	7/28/2017	Project Website	Please see Harris County Engineering Department comments I have provided in a July 27 letter addressed to the Director of Project Development.	Comment noted. Please see responses to Comment 551 for the mentioned letter.
526	Perez, Santana	8/1/2017	Email	I'd like to submit my support for the proposed $7BN TX DOT I-45 project in houston. the project is much needed to alleviate the congestion on HWY 45. We also need more public transportation options like a metro rail that extends along the major thoroughfares like every other major city has in the U.S. and Canada. Date of Occurrence: 8/1/1504242000795 Location: I-45 Hwy	Comment noted. High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Hous

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
528	BNSF Railway Company	7/28/2017	Written	As a preliminary matter, BNSF incorporates by reference comments on the project DEIS submitted to TxDOT by the Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Company and the Union Pacific Railroad Company. Like BNSF, these companies also have rail infrastructure and operations in the project area that will be impacted by construction and/or operation of the planned highway facilities. BNSF encourages TxDOT to engage in additional consultation with all potentially impacted railroad entities between now and preparation of a Final EIS and a Record of Decision. These discussions will assist TxDOT to more accurately and fairly assess how the project could affect railroad facilities and to identify mitigation measures to address those potential impacts. CONCERNS WITH THE PROJECT DEIS The pressing need for further consultation stems from fundamental problems with the DEIS- it fails to acknowledge, assess, and compare potential project impacts to existing and planned railroad services between proposed project alternatives.	TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with UPRR and other freight railroad companies during detailed design to minimize impacts to rail operations and to develop the Railroad Agreements. The proposed project would not permanently encroach on railroad right-of-way and/or relocate or acquire UPRR rail lines. The proposed plan will convert three at-grade railroad crossings to grade separations. To maintain rail operations during construction, temporary shooflys will be required at the grade separation conversions. The details of these shooflys are being coordinated with UPRR and other freight railroad companies. The Final EIS includes updated information about existing railroads and temporary impacts to railroads. TxDOT has coordinated with UPRR, HB&T and BNSF and TxDOT does not anticipated permanently affecting current railroad operations and rail locations.
528	BNSF Railway Company	7/28/2017	Written	As a general matter, the DEIS lacks sufficient detail that would permit us or other third parties to draw any conclusions concerning potential interference with rail operations and infrastructure. While the DEIS briefly identifies existing freight rail lines in the proposed project area, see DEIS at pg. 3-37, the document fails to describe any impacts to those rail lines, ancillary railroad facilities, and property owned and maintained by the railroads. It seems fair to conclude from even the somewhat vague information presented in the DEIS that the project will adversely impact certain rail operations over one or more of those rail lines.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. TxDOT does not anticipate acquiring any railroad ROW and efforts will be made to avoid impacts to rail ROW.
528	BNSF Railway Company	7/28/2017	Written	Similarly, the DEIS explains in the broadest terms how private property owners would be made whole through requirements of the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance Act resulting from planned right-of-way acquisitions required for project development. DEIS at pg. 6-37-38. The DEIS summary of mitigation contains no reference to rail lines and property that could be impacted by the project More important, the DEIS makes no effort to describe how likely interference with rail operations during project construction will be addressed. These omissions in the agency's current administrative record should be remedied before publication of a Final EIS. BNSF concurs with other comments that urge TxDOT to include in any future analysis a summary of the project's potential adverse impacts from the possible conversion, relocation or redirection of existing rail lines and infrastructure.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. TxDOT does not anticipate acquiring any railroad ROW and efforts will be made to avoid impacts to rail ROW.
528	BNSF Railway Company	7/28/2017	Written	BNSF also respectfully requests that the agency identify and consider the best means to mitigate for any disruptions (temporary or otherwise) to the movement of goods through the project area. BNSF is pleased that selection of the final preferred Build Alternative for this major project will not be made until after comments on the DEIS have been considered and after the agency has had the opportunity to fully evaluate all potential environmental impacts. Incorporating analysis of project impacts to railroad transportation services should be an essential element in the selection of the preferred Build Alternative. CONCLUSION AND REQUEST FOR FURTHER COORDINATION BNSF supports TxDOT's planned improvements to highway infrastructure in the project area and is prepared to work with the agency to ensure that the NEPA process for the NHHIP accurately analyses all project impacts and incorporates appropriate planning and mitigation to address likely impacts to railroad lines and infrastructure.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. TxDOT does not anticipate acquiring any railroad ROW and efforts will be made to avoid impacts to rail ROW.
529	Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team	8/2/2017	Email	For your information and consideration, we are forwarding the attached letter from Congressman Gene Green regarding the Super Neighborhood 51 Leadership Team's letter about the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project. It appears that Congressman Green agrees with some major points of our analysis.	Comment noted.
539	Boykins, Dwight	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.
539	Boykins, Dwight	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
539	Boykins, Dwight	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region.	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
539	Boykins, Dwight	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
539	Boykins, Dwight	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.

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540	Christie, Jack	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.
540	Christie, Jack	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
540	Christie, Jack	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region.	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
540	Christie, Jack	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
540	Christie, Jack	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
541	Cohen, Ellen	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.
541	Cohen, Ellen	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
541	Cohen, Ellen	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region.	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
541	Cohen, Ellen	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
541	Cohen, Ellen	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
542	Dutton, Harold	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.

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542	Dutton, Harold	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
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542	Dutton, Harold	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
542	Dutton, Harold	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
543	Ellis, Rodney	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.
543	Ellis, Rodney	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
543	Ellis, Rodney	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region.	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
543	Ellis, Rodney	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
543	Ellis, Rodney	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
544	Farrar, Jessica	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.

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544	Farrar, Jessica	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
544	Farrar, Jessica	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region.	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
544	Farrar, Jessica	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
544	Farrar, Jessica	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
545	Garcia, Sylvia	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.
545	Garcia, Sylvia	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
545	Garcia, Sylvia	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region.	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
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545	Garcia, Sylvia	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
546	Jackson-Lee, Sheila	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.

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546	Jackson-Lee, Sheila	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
546	Jackson-Lee, Sheila	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region.	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
546	Jackson-Lee, Sheila	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
546	Jackson-Lee, Sheila	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
547	Johnson, Jarvis	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.
547	Johnson, Jarvis	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
547	Johnson, Jarvis	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region.	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
547	Johnson, Jarvis	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
547	Johnson, Jarvis	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
548	Miles, Boris	8/11/2017	Written	Thank you for extending the public comments deadline on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project, Houston District (NHHIP). As you are aware, the proposed project is located in our districts and we have heard from a number of concerned organizations and residents in our district about this project.	Comment noted.

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548	Miles, Boris	8/11/2017	Written	The proposed NHHIP project is of significant importance to this region and will have an impact on the economic vitality of this region. It will also have a significant impact on the adjacent communities, especially those that are abutting the subject project. The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities". TxDOT should identify solutions to reduce such impacts on adjoining communities and also mitigate them.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
548	Miles, Boris	8/11/2017	Written	It is our understanding that TxDOT had held multiple community meetings as requested and has made some changes based on previous comments. However, there are still some major concerns that have not been addressed, which are outlined in the attached letter from a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation and historic preservation groups. Addressing the comments outlined in the letter is important to ensure the project improves the quality of life of the residents of this region	Section 2 of the Final EIS details design changes during development of the project, including reasons for the design changes. TxDOT met with the Coalition representatives several times to discuss their comments. TxDOT has incorporated several design changes and mitigation and other commitments in the proposed project. Written responses to the Coalition's comments are included in the Final EIS.
548	Miles, Boris	8/11/2017	Written	We strongly encourage you to engage the community and these organizations to address their comments and concerns prior to the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We would appreciate receiving a copy of TxDOT's response to the attached letter as well as its community engagement plan after the public comment period.	Since the time of the public hearings (May 2017), TxDOT has held or attended dozens of additional meetings with community members, neighborhood groups, organizations, and elected officials. TxDOT has continued to invite the public and other stakeholders to provide input to the project. Responses to all comments on the Draft EIS, including comments from the Coalition, can be viewed in the Final EIS.
548	Miles, Boris	8/11/2017	Written	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
550	Clark, Florence	7/24/2017	Email	*See attachment for comment.*	The comments from the coalition of organizations and responses to the comments can be found in this matrix at Comment Number 554.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	1. Impacts to Harris County Roads In Segment One, Harris County maintains the following roadways on the west side of I-45 intersecting the southbound I-45 frontage road: West Gillespie Road Winding Bayou Trace Greens Landing Drive West Road Blue Bell Road	Comment noted.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	1. Impacts to Harris County Roads At West Gillespie Road, we request that the concrete pavement turnout be designed to accommodate the greater of either the existing roadway width or the ultimate street width of 41 feet.	Concur. The pavement widths are adjusted on the final schematic
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	1. Impacts to Harris County Roads The turnouts at Winding Bayou, Greens Landing and West should match the existing roadway widths.	Concur. The pavement widths will be adjusted on the final schematic.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	1. Impacts to Harris County Roads In coordination with the City of Houston, in 2016 Blue Bell Road was designated as a collector street on the Houston Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan. We are pleased to see a proposed I-45 overpass with a diamond intersection and U-turns. These improvements will reduce congestion at adjacent major thoroughfare intersections with I-45 and will provide valuable cross-access to the neighborhoods east and west of I-45. However, the schematic at Blue Bell Road shows only one eastbound lane and one westbound lane passing under the I-45 bridge, without a dedicated left turn lane in either direction. This design is typical at rural underpasses with low volumes. To accommodate expected traffic demand and to reduce signal delays, we request that the Blue Bell Road cross-section be revised to at least four lanes under I-45. The turnouts and the connecting roadways to the east and the west should also be widened to match, with multiple lanes approaching the intersection from the east and west.	The addition of a dedicated left-turn lane would require acquisition of additional ROW along Blue Bell Rd. approaching I-45. Knowing Harris County will be expanding Blue Bell Rd. in the future, we have updated the schematics to four lanes under I-45.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	2. Direct Impacts to Harris County-Owned Property We have identified two Harris County tracts that are immediately adjacent to the proposed improvements, both located in Segment Three. **American Statesmanship Park** is located along the western ROW line of the I-10 / I-45 interchange. The schematic drawings show a relatively small ROW acquisition that certainly affects Bingham Street, the public street providing access to the site. It is not clear whether ROW acquisition will also include a portion of the adjacent Harris County park tract. In either case, we request that TxDOT take additional steps to coordinate with Harris County Precinct Two during the environmental clearance process and during the design and construction phases. Steps to mitigate impacts to the park site may be required.	The Preferred Alternative would not impact the American Statesmanship Park tract.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	2 .Direct Impacts to Harris County-Owned Property We have identified two Harris County tracts that are immediately adjacent to the proposed improvements, both located in Segment Three. **Nance Street Parking Lot** - The other directly impacted Harris County property is located at 2202 Nance Street (HCAD # 027111000001), which is adjacent to the westbound I-10 to southbound I-69 direct connector. Harris County currently operates a satellite parking facility for its employees on this tract. Last month Commissioners' Court authorized funding for expansion of the facility, which will be proceeding through design and construction without delay. The plans accommodate piers for HCTRA's proposed Hardy Toll Road bridge, which is currently designed to be constructed overhead. The northwest corner of the Nance property is shown on the project schematic drawings as a proposed ROW acquisition serving a relocated I-10/I-69 direct connector to be built as an overhead bridge. Nance Street is proposed to be terminated with a cul-de-sac requiring a small secondary ROW acquisition along our tract's northern border. To minimize damages to the County facilities, we request that TxDOT adjust the design of the proposed detention pond to be constructed under the adjacent structures in the I-10 / I-69 interchange. Creating level areas under the ramp instead of a sunken detention pond opens up options for TxDOT and the County to work together toward an equitable solution that will minimize the loss of parking spaces. Similarly, exploring an alternative layout for the Nance Street cul-de-sac could lessen impacts to our access and circulation driveways within the site.	In the updated drainage study completed in 2019, the detention ponds under the connectors have been removed. However, now a pump station is planned under the connectors. TxDOT will coordinate with Harris County during the design phase as the drainage is finalized to minimize the impact to the planned offsite parking site.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	3. Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown In Segment Three, we have a number of concerns regarding access and connectivity between the proposed freeways and the north side of downtown. Harris County government owns multiple facilities on the north side of downtown, providing vital public services and serving as a workplace for several thousand employees. Currently, the existing North San Jacinto Street connection to I-10 provides a primary point of access to some 15,000 vehicles per day accessing the County complex and other destinations in downtown. It is evident that this access - as well as the connectivity to the larger freeway network from the north side of downtown - will be negatively impacted by the proposed project.	TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express la
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	3. Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown Additional local street improvements - as well as modified or additional freeway access ramps - should be added to the TxDOT project, not left to local agencies and impacted landowners to sort out on their own.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	3. Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown A. **Freeway and local street access to North San Jacinto Street, North Main Street, McKee Street and Hardy Street is either eliminated or left to other agencies to complete.** The schematic is not sufficiently developed to fully understand the negative impacts of changes to the local street in the "warehouse district" near the I-10 / North San Jacinto intersection. A set of one-way frontage roads are shown adjacent to the proposed freeway between Main Street and the McKee Street/Hardy Street one-way pair, but there is incomplete definition of local street network restoration that must be included in TxDOT's construction in order to maintain connectivity to downtown via Main Street and North San Jacinto Street. The schematic drawings merely show existing TxDOT roadways at the north end of North San Jacinto Street being designated as "surplus ROW". Thus only the removal of vital connecting roadways is indicated, with the result that existing Main Street, North San Jacinto, Vine Street, Walnut Street, Nance Street and other roadways in that area are shown as unconnected street segments. This is not a sufficient level of project definition to ensure all impacts are evaluated and mitigated.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown B. **The I-10 ramp configuration near North San Jacinto Street has negative impacts to drivers accessing the regional freeway system.** Currently, the North San Jacinto route into downtown easily connects to multiple freeways via the Main Street/ North San Jacinto/ Nance Street ramps on I-10. The ramps being proposed to serve this area do not provide equivalent access. A few examples (an incomplete list): • The I-10 westbound exit ramp to the surface street network has been relocated to east of the Hardy Street / McKee Street one-way pair, which will require all exiting vehicle to immediately pass through a traffic signal or all-way stop sign control at each of the two intersections. • From there, a surface street / frontage road extends westbound to a turn~round near Main Street, then continues back to the east on the south side of the proposed freeway. This could be intended to maintain access to southbound North San Jacinto Street, except that no connection to North San Jacinto Street is shown as being part of the project. • Similarly, there is no apparent westbound connection route between the I-10 westbound exit ramp and Main Street. • A proposed entrance ramp to I-10 westbound is located just west of McKee Street, similar to the existing layout. However, this ramp no longer provides access t@ I-45 northbound. • In the other direction, traveling from downtown to the East Freeway, there is currently an eastbound entry ramp onto I-10 located just a few feet from the north end of North San Jacinto Street. The apparent new route to the East Freeway entry ramp at Waco will be two miles in length via the proposed Rothwell extension under I-69, with traffic signals at multiple locations along the way. (Assuming surface street connectivity near North San Jacinto is restored as recommended above.) Alternatively, a proposed eastbound I-10 ramp located between Main Street and North San Jacinto Street could be accessed via a nearly one mile counterclockwise loop on the proposed frontage roads.	TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. Proposed access improvements include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown B. **The I-10 ramp configuration near North San Jacinto Street has negative impacts to drivers accessing the regional freeway system.** Additional evaluation should be conducted to ensure TxDOT has fully mitigated traffic and travel time impacts to the 15,000 drivers using North San Jacinto Street every day. We believe such an analysis will show the need for improvements to the proposed freeway design to mitigate the impact of the apparent removal of the many connecting roadways and the freeway ramps serving northern downtown and the North San Jacinto Street/ North Main Street/ McKee Street portals into downtown Houston.	TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown C. **The surface street configuration at the northeast corner of downtown near I-69 has negative impacts to drivers arriving or departing the eastern corner of the north end of downtown.** Congress, Franklin and Commerce Streets are vital access routes to the County Courthouse Complex. Ruiz Street is also a significant collector street route to several facilities. There are significant issues with lane balance, roadway capacity and incomplete design development where these streets intersect north-south streets at I-69, including existing Hamilton Street, the proposed southbound frontage road and the proposed St. Emanuel northbound connections to I-69 and I-10.	TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston regarding local street connections.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown C. T**he surface street configuration at the northeast corner of downtown near I-69 has negative impacts to drivers arriving or departing the eastern corner of the north end of downtown.** The most significant of these is an apparent reduction of the capacity of Franklin Street, the sole eastbound roadway providing direct egress from the eastern part of the Courthouse area across I-69 to the East End (via Navigation) and to ramps leading to the freeway network to the north. The negative effect is compounded by a missing design for the reconfigured Franklin Street intersection with St. Emanuel Street. Currently there are three eastbound lanes of Franklin Street passing under I-69, two through lanes and a dedicated left turn lane. It appears that only two eastbound through lanes are provided in the schematic design prepared by TxDOT, creating the appearance that Franklin Street will connect only to Navigation Boulevard. This would be a result with excessive negative impacts to all drivers in the area. The schematic shows proposed Franklin Street construction will end short of the St. Emanuel intersection, where eastbound drivers will expect to make a left turn to access the freeway entrance ramps to the north. In its current configuration, however, a raised median serves to prohibit those eastbound left turns. There are clearly fundamental deficiencies in the Franklin street design details. These should be reevaluated and corrected.	TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston regarding local street connections.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown C. **The surface street configuration at the northeast corner of downtown near I-69 has negative impacts to drivers arriving or departing the eastern corner of the north end of downtown.** Similarly, Harris County recommends further analysis of apparent access and circulation deficiencies related to the closure of Runnels Street and the reconfiguration of ramps connecting to the new southbound frontage road, Hamilton Street, Chenevert Street and Jackson Street. We believe there are a number of potential design improvements with significant benefits and a relatively low cost. They include: • Adding a connection between Ruiz and the southbound frontage road • restoring two lanes of southbound McKee Street transitioning to Jackson Street where a ramp is being removed • adding a direct connection between southbound McKee and the southbound i-69 frontage road via existing Runnels pavement • Refining the south end of the freeway / HOV ramps at the north end of Chenevert to ensure access to northbound McKee is maintained or expanded to two lanes to match the McKee roadway cross-section to the north	1. Ruiz St. cannot be extended across I-69 due to the vertical transition of the exit ramp from I-69 that becomes the new Hamilton St. 2. TxDOT is coordinating and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston regarding local street connections. 3. Runnels St. cannot be extended across I-69 due to the vertical transition of the highway from below-grade to elevated, and cannot be extended below I-69 within the proposed ROW of the project. An alternative east-west route is using Navigation Blvd. to Commerce St., then west on Commerce St. to Downtown. 4. Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
551	Harris County Engineering Department	7/27/2017	Email	Significant Indirect Impacts to the County Courthouse / Criminal Justice Complex on the North Side of Downtown C. **The surface street configuration at the northeast corner of downtown near I-69 has negative impacts to drivers arriving or departing the eastern corner of the north end of downtown.** Finally, we note that there is an existing hike-bike trail under I-69 between Commerce and Runnels, providing a connection between the East End, Runnels Street, McKee Street, Bute Park and the Buffalo Bayou trails. (Much of the trail was constructed by Harris County and is maintained by the City of Houston.) The proposed design should include an off-road hike-bike trail with equivalent accessibility and connectivity.	The NHHIP will accommodate the existing trail alignment. There may be temporary detours during construction, but the current trail will be accessible as it is today after construction.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	*Comment 1* The short-term impacts of the construction on transit operations, as well as the long-term impacts of the proposed project need to be addressed more fully in the FEIS. The effects of the NHHIP project on bus stops, bus routes, deadhead trips, layover space, and MaX lane access, as well as HOV/HOT lane access to other corridors should be specified and proposed mitigation measures identified, as appropriate. Operational costs to the agency have not been documented.	**Short- and Long-Term Impacts:** From our ongoing coordination over the years, we understand NHHIP offers many benefits to your overall system. As with any project of this magnitude, there will be short- and long-term impacts that we need to work through together. Based on our meetings in 2019, we understand that you have consultants studying and documenting these connectivity and operational impacts. We will continue to work closely with you and your consultants to incorporate adjustments to the schematic needed to maintain operations during construction of both the Design-Build (DB) and Design-Bid-Build (DBB) sections of Segment 3.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	*Comment 2* The proposed improvements alter access into and out of Downtown for autos, buses, and pedestrians. Changes to downtown access and its effects on METRO operations and access to our facilities should be more fully detailed. METRO has numerous local and commuter routes that are directly and indirectly affected by changes in access. METRO encourages as much connectivity as possible across the reconfigured IH 45 and IH 69/US 59 facility, especially along Polk Street, which is currently the only through street under IH 45 between Rusk Street to the north and the Leelend/Bell Street pair to the south. Deviation impacts created by these changes are not documented. The elimination of the Pierce Street and St. Joseph Parkway connections to/from IH 45 will make access to the Downtown Transit Center more complex and increase operating costs. METRO would like for TxDOT to further explore connections to Pierce/St. Joseph operating pairs and a new connection at Memorial/Rusk/Capitol for future Bus Rapid Transit connections to our Green and Purple lines.	**Access to/from Downtown:** Improving access to/from Downtown was one of the alternatives screening criteria. We appreciate the coordination with you, the City of Houston, and other local entities to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and points to the east. One of the most beneficial improvements included in the project is the restoration of a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four (4) east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. **Polk Street:** We understand that Polk Street is an important access point between Downtown and points east and thus carefully studied how to maintain a direct crossing over the new I-45/I-69 NHHIP improvements. Through a series of workshops (charettes) in 2015, the participants jointly developed and agreed on options to maintain/improve access across NHHIP while maintaining the congestion and safety improvements of the improvements. What was agreed was that Polk Street could not be maintained across NHHIP due to vertical separation requirements between I-45/I-69 and Polk Street. With the proposed NHHIP, drivers using Polk from East Downtown will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which in turn connects to Polk Street. We also coordinated with the City of Houston to reroute the Polk Street dedicated bike lane to be parallel to the restored Hamilton Street and would connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker Street. **Pierce/St. Joseph and Memorial/Rusk/Capital:** As discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings, the connections to/from Pierce and St. Joseph and I-45 could not be maintained in their current configurations. We will continue to work with you, your consultant and the City of Houston to refine the connections between the proposed Downtown Connectors and Pierce/St. Joseph. The proposed Downtown Connectors will pass over Memorial/Rusk/Capital as the Pierce Elevated does today. We are not able to add new ramp connections to these streets from the Downtown Connectors due to vertical separation and so we can maintain the existing ramp connections to Walker/McKinney and the improved connections to/from Allen Parkway.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	*Comment 3* During construction, the proposed improvements may alter access for the Green and Purple light rail lines traveling eastbound along Texas Avenue and the Red line traveling northbound along North Main Street. Though METRO and TxDOT are coordinating heavily on the Red line at Wheeler, very little documentation is available for the Green and Purple operational impacts in both the short and long-term.	**Operational Impacts to Green and Purple Lines:** We have been coordinating with your staff regarding maintaining uninterrupted operations for your Green and Purple Line across I-45/I-69 during construction. We are coordinating closely with your staff to evaluate alternatives to minimize service impacts to all three light rail lines and to incorporate these commitments into the Design-Build procurement documents.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	*Comment 4* The access into and out of the Wheeler Station Transit Center needs to be preserved and enhanced, as appropriate, with the proposed improvements. Depressing IH 69/US 59 adjacent to the facility eliminates the bus lane exit onto Fannin Street and truncates Blodgett Street, which will have a significant effect on METRO's ability to optimize the use of the transit center and could limit future high capacity transit opportunities.	**Wheeler Transit Center:** The NHHIP project provides a unique opportunity for you to expand and enhance the Wheeler Transit Center. We have been coordinating with your staff on how to best integrate the expansion and local bus circulation. We explored options to reconnect Blodgett Street over the reconstructed freeway, but were not able to do so due to limitations on the length of cap we can have due to fire, life, and safety codes. We will continue to work with you, your consultant and the City of Houston on how to best circulate your buses and the planned University Line BRT.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	*Comment 4 [CONT]* METRO is working with the City of Houston, TxDOT and others to examine opportunities that include traffic and bus operation options at the Wheeler Transit Center. METRO looks forward to further coordination with TxDOT at this location via the joint study being led by the City of Houston. METRO agrees that TxDOT should incorporate recommendations to improve overall traffic operations at Main and Wheeler as part of this project.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO throughout this planning process and will continue to do so as the detailed design phase progresses. TxDOT will accommodate future plans by METRO, where feasible. TxDOT is working with METRO and the COH to coordinate Wheeler Transit Center operations.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	*Comment 5* METRO will continue to work with TxDOT and the City of Houston to explore the potential for inclusion of high capacity transit operating the NHHIP footprint. As agreed, METRO is preparing conceptual engineering to support decision making in the segment between Downtown and Beltway 8.	**High Capacity Transit in NHHIP Footprint:** The high-capacity transit per coordination with you and your consultant over the past year, we developed conceptual cost estimates for including a new light rail line (LRT) in the NHHIP footprint. As we have discussed in the 2019 meetings, including LRT in the footprint would require additional right-of-way in Segment 2 to accommodate a new elevated structure between the MaX lanes as well as reconfiguring the I-45/I-610 interchange. However, the 2-way, 2-lanes each direction, 24/7 service MaX lanes will serve as high capacity transit lanes and are included in your METRONext plan. We are excited that the MaX Lanes will compliment your existing Red Line and provide the opportunity for expansion of transit as a modal choice for the region. We will continue to coordinate with you on this during design and construction.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	*Comment 6* The NHHIP has the potential to affect METRO's transit operations and we want to work closely with TxDOT staff to minimize disruptions to our operations, both during and after construction, and to accommodate any future high-capacity transit in the corridor. METRO appreciates the opportunity it has been afforded as a Cooperating Agency to provide comments on the schematic drawings in early project development. We look forward to continuing our partnership in developing the NHHIP project and ask that we be included in the 30 percent, 60 percent, and 90 percent design reviews to ensure that both agencies are fully informed of the project refinements and impacts as the project progresses. In addition, METRO would also like to participate in the development of construction staging plans to better ensure minimized disruption of light rail, bus and HOV service as construction advances.	**Coordination during Design and Construction:** As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS PROVIDED AS ATTACHMENT TO LETTER	Responses to your comments in the Attachment to your letter are below. Please note that many of your specific comments cannot be answered with details at this time. We will continue to work with you and your consultant(s) as you assess the operational modifications needed as we develop the FEIS, the Design-Build procurement documents, and during construction.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: General Text: References regarding impacts to bus routes and facilities METRO comment: DEIS should describe short-term construction and long-term impacts to affected routes and stops in greater detail. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: ES 15 Line/Feature: Table ES 1 Text: Transportation Facilities: Displacement of bus stops but no permanent effect to routes. METRO comment: Revise to state short-term construction and long-term impacts are anticipated and that minimization and mitigation for construction impacts will be committed to in the FEIS. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: ES 15 Line/Feature: Table ES 2 Text: Transportation Facilities: Displacement of bus stops but no permanent effect to routes. METRO comment: Revise to state short-term construction and long-term impacts are anticipated and that minimization and mitigation for construction impacts will be committed to in the FEIS. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: ES 15 Line/Feature: Table ES 3 Text: Transportation Facilities: Displacement of bus stops but no permanent effect to routes. Portion of Wheeler Transit Center in proposed ROW - access not impacted. METRO comment: Revise to state short-term construction and long-term impacts are anticipated and that minimization and mitigation for construction impacts will be committed to in the FEIS. Reconstruction of IH 69/US 59 is anticipated to adversely impact METRO services at the Wheeler Transit Center. Design shown no egress from Wheeler Transit Center onto Fannin Street as currently exists. Frequent coordination with METRO is required throughout the final design process. A joint examination of the Wheeler Transit Center is underway by the City of Houston, TxDOT, and METRO. Detailed comments will be forthcoming regarding the permanent impacts to the Wheeler Transit Center. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public. Provide Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) to address modified circulation at Main and Wheeler and bus access around the Transit Center. To offset temporary construction impacts associated with the Wheeler TC, transit operations must remain open and operational along Main Street, Blodgett Street, Fannin Street, and Wheeler Avenue. The Wheeler TC exit at Fannin Street must remain open and operational during construction.	TxDOT has been and will continue to coordinate with METRO during design and construction to minimize impacts to existing transit operations. Based on our meetings with METRO, we understand you have a consultant preparing a TIA. TxDOT is awaiting the results of your TIA from your consultant to better understand operational impacts. The NHHIP project provides a unique opportunity for you to expand and enhance the Wheeler Transit Center. We have been coordinating with your staff on how to best integrate the expansion and local bus circulation. We explored options to reconnect Blodgett Street over the reconstructed freeway, but were not able to do so due to limitations on the length of cap we can have due to fire, life, and safety codes. We will continue to work with you, your consultant and the City of Houston on how to best circulate your buses and the planned University Line BRT.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 2-13 Text: Potential to be a "Signature Project" METRO comment: METRO requests additional information. What distinguishes a Signature Project between alternatives? Define "signature project." Possible mitigation measures:	In the evaluation of alternatives, TxDOT considered the opportunity to implement "signature" bridges to signify and distinguish various neighborhoods and districts within the study corridor, while improving the visual qualities of the project. This explanation has been added to the Final EIS.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 2-13 Line/Feature: 8 Text: Managed lane utilization METRO comment: METRO requests clarification. What affects utilization? Access? Number of lanes? Not clear in description. Possible mitigation measures: Clarify term.	Utilization of managed lanes can be influenced by access points, origin/destination of user, and demand on general purpose lanes. Analysis was based on H-GAC's 2040 regional travel demand model.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-6 Line/Feature: 10 Text: Use of 2009-2013 ACS data METRO comment: Older data may be obsolete. Possible mitigation measures: FEIS should be revised to use the Census Bureau's 2011 - 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) data. Use the latest available version of the ACS data at the time of FEIS publication. For example, use the 2012- 2016 ACS data if it is available at publication.	More recent ACS data is used in the Final EIS.

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552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-11 Line/Feature: Table 3-2 Text: Displacement of bus stops but no permanent effect to routes. METRO comment: Revise to state short-term permanent effect to routes. construction and long-term impacts are anticipated and that minimization and mitigation for the construction impacts will be committed to in the FEIS Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-13 Line/Feature: Table 3-3 Text: Displacement of bus stops but no permanent effect to routes. METRO comment: Revise to state short-term permanent effect to routes. construction and long-term impacts are anticipated and that minimization and mitigation for the construction impacts will be committed to in the FEIS Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-14 Line/Feature: Table 3-4 Text: Displacement of bus stops but no permanent effect to routes. METRO comment: Revise to state short-term permanent effect to routes. construction and long-term impacts are anticipated and that minimization and mitigation for the construction impacts will be committed to in the FEIS Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-26 Line/Feature: 1 Text: Video enforcement METRO comment: MaX lanes should to maintain a minimum of 45 mph during peak hours. How will the MaX lanes be operated to manage lane volume and speed? What will be the tolling methodology? What enforcement standard will be provided? Will there be locations in the MaX lanes with space for MPD to monitor HOV traffic? Possible mitigation measures: Clarify method of traffic management, monitoring and enforcement.	MaX lane operations, including methods to control minimum speeds, will be determined during detailed design and will be coordinated with METRO. After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing process, the decision was made not to toll the MaX Lanes. There will a full width shoulder adjacent to the Max lanes throughout the project area to allow for incident management and enforcement.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-26 Line/Feature: 24 Text: Text should read - METRO comment: "during designated peak travel periods" What will be the tolling methodology? What enforcement standard will be provided? Will there be locations in the MaX lanes with space for MPD to monitor HOV traffic? Possible mitigation measures: Revise text	Comment noted. After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing process, the decision was made not to toll the MaX Lanes.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-36 Line/Feature: 34/35 Text: 73 miles of LRT by 2015 METRO comment: May want to eliminate this statement altogether. Possible mitigation measures: Remove text	This statement has been removed in the Final EIS.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-37 Line/Feature: 3-13 Text: Discussion on railroads METRO comment: Update the narrative with the correct railroad company names (see TxDOT Rail Map for details). Southern Pacific RR and Chicago Rock Island, do not exist anymore. BNSF was inadvertently omitted from the DEIS. Possible mitigation measures: Revise text	The railroad company names are updated in the Final EIS.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-37 - 3-38 Line/Feature: Sec. 3.4.2 Text: Impacts of the Build Alternatives METRO comment: Describe proposed modifications to transit access and operations on the Max lanes and differences between the existing HOV/HOT network. See comments on schematic drawings included in the DEIS. BNSF was inadvertently omitted from the DEIS. Possible mitigation measures: Specify which access points are anticipated to be removed and both the new and revised access points.	TxDOT has tried to design the proposed MaX lanes with the same access as the existing HOV/HOT lanes; however, there are three locations where access was revised: 1.Airline/Crosstimbers T-ramp- TxDOT notes METRO's support for a wishbone ramp design at Crosstimbers Street. TxDOT evaluated whether the existing T-ramp could be maintained in conjunction with the wishbone design, but found that the T-ramp could not be accommodated. 2. Downtown connector to Heiner (from I-10)- As noted in our response to your comment letter (dated June 2, 2015) about removing the Downtown HOV Connector, a dedicated bus/HOV lane has been added to the I-10 express lanes with direct access to Smith St. and Louisiana St. to replace the existing connector. 3. Louisiana - The existing HOV/HOT access points from Louisiana and Travis St. have been combined into a two-lane access point from Travis St. The reconfiguration of I-10 would not allow for the existing HOV ramp off of Louisiana St. to be maintained. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. BNSF was added to list of railroads
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-37 Line/Feature: 17 Text: Two METRO express bus routes connect Bush IAH... METRO comment: BNSF was inadvertently omitted from the DEIS. The 102 is the only express route to Bush IAH. Possible mitigation measures: Revise text	This was corrected in the Final EIS.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-37 Line/Feature: 22 Text: Segment 1 Thirteen bus routes cross or parallel IH 45 within one mile METRO comment: Based on METRO's New Bus Network (NBN), at least 37 bus routes that cross or parallel IH 45 in Segment 1 are anticipated to be directly impacted by the proposed project in the downtown area. The bus routes include 5, 25, 40, 41, 65, 102, 108, 152, 153, 160, 161, 162, 202, 204, 209, 212, 214, 216, 217, 219, 221, 222, 228, 229, 236, 244, 246, 247, 249, 255, 256, 257, 259, 283, 292, 297, and 700. These routes serve mostly low income/minority neighborhoods. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-37 Line/Feature: 23-27 Text: Bus stops in ROW would be displaced and may affect populations without automobiles or are dependent on public transportation. TxDOT will work with METRO to relocate stops, temporary and permanent. METRO comment: Short- and long-term impacts to operating costs should be included in analysis. Displacement and relocation of bus stops could increase walk distances and discourage ridership. METRO has an agreement with the City of Houston that defines on which streets METRO buses can operate. That agreement may be impacted by TxDOT's plan. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO should occur throughout design process to ensure impacts are minimized or mitigated. Provide Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) to address bus circulation and travel time impacts from proposed improvements.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-37 Line/Feature: 32 Text: Segment 2 Eleven bus routes cross or parallel IH 45 within one mile METRO comment: Based on METRO's NBN, at least 37 bus routes that cross or parallel IH 45 are anticipated to be directly impacted by the proposed project in Segment 2. The bus routes include 5, 25, 40, 41, 65, 102, 108, 152, 153, 160, 161, 162, 202, 204, 209, 212, 214, 216, 217, 219, 221, 222, 228, 229, 236, 244, 246, 247, 249, 255, 256, 257, 259, 283, 292, 297, and 700. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-37 Line/Feature: 33-36 Text: Bus stops in ROW would be displaced and may affect populations without automobiles or are dependent on public transportation. TxDOT will work with METRO to relocate stops, temporary and permanent. METRO comment: Short- and long-term impacts to operating costs should be included in analysis. Displacement and relocation of bus stops could increase walk distances and discourage ridership. METRO has an agreement with the City of Houston that defines on which streets METRO buses can operate. That agreement may be impacted by TxDOT's plan. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO is requested throughout design and construction process. How and when METRO will be included should be a mitigation commitment in the FEIS/ROD.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-38 Line/Feature: 32 Text: Segment 3 Eighty-five bus route...cross or parallel IH 45 within one mile METRO comment: Based on METRO's NBN there are 60 bus routes and three light rail lines within a mile buffer of IH 45 Segment 3. The routes within this area include 3, 6, 9, 11, 20, 30, 32, 40, 41, 44, 48, 51, 52, 54, 56, 66, 79, 82, 85, 99, 102, 108, 137, 151, 152, 153, 160, 161, 162, 202, 204, 209, 212, 214, 216, 217, 219, 221, 222, 228, 229, 236, 244, 46, 247, 248, 249,255, 256, 257, 259, 261, 262, 265, 269, 283, 297, 298, 412, 413, METRORail Red Line, METRORail Green Line, and the METRORail Purple Line. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between TxDOT and METRO to advertise route detours in-advance of construction and provide signage for the public.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-38 Line/Feature: 11,12 Text: Bus stops in ROW would be displaced and may affect populations without automobiles or are dependent on public transportation TxDOT will work with METRO to relocate stops, temporary and permanent. METRO comment: Short- and long-term impacts to operating costs should be included in analysis. Displacement and relocation of bus stops could increase walk distances and discourage ridership. METRO has an agreement with the City of Houston that defines on which streets METRO buses can operate. That agreement may be impacted by TxDOT's plan. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between METRO and TxDOT during the design process is imperative to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts. How and when METRO will be included should be a mitigation commitment in the FEIS/ROD.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-38 Line/Feature: 12-17 Text: Wheeler TC in ROW of all 3 alternatives. No impacts to operations and access METRO comment: IH 69/US 59 will be depressed and transit operations will be at-grade. Five routes are directly affected: 5 Southmore 25 Richmond 65 Bissonnet 152 Harwin Express 153 Harwin Express Main, Fannin, Blodgett, and Wheeler Streets need to be preserved and kept open for the Wheeler Transit Center to function. METRO, the City of Houston, and TxDOT are jointly evaluating options for the design of IH 69/US 59 in the vicinity of the Red Line and the Wheeler Transit Center. Possible mitigation measures: Light Rail Transit (LRT) must be operational throughout construction. Frequent coordination with METRO must occur during the design process to ensure METRO operations are not adversely impacted. Details discussing how LRT operations are to be maintained during construction should be discussed in the EIS and a mitigation commitment in the FEIS/ROD. Traffic and transit impact analysis around Wheeler Transit Center should be conducted. Incorporate the design concepts that are proposed by the joint Wheeler Transit Center design exercise.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-38 Line/Feature: 30-36 Text: Impacts to transportation facilities are not anticipated .... Multi-modal connection is a focus ... alteration effects could be beneficial ... METRO comment: METRO's estimated long-term impacts to operations are anticipated to exceed $24 million annually based on route deviations, anticipated delays local and commuter buses, as well as the impact to Wheeler Transit Center operations. Provide substantive details that showcase how the proposed alterations could be beneficial to transit as stated in the DEIS. Based upon the information provided in the DEIS, there are no travel savings expected from the IH 45 project for transit. Based on METRO's NBN there are 60 bus routes and three light rail lines within a mile buffer of IH 45 Segment 3. The routes within this area include: 3, 6, 9, 11, 20, 30, 32, 40, 41, 44, 48, 51, 52, 54, 56, 66, 79, 82, 85, 99, 102, 108, 137, 151, 152, 153, 160, 161, 162, 202, 204, 209, 212, 214, 216, 217, 219, 221, 222, 228, 229, 236, 244, 246, 247, 248, 249, 255, 256, 257, 259, 261, 262, 265, 269, 283, 297, 298, 412, 413, METRORail Red Line, METRORail Green Line, and the METRORail Purple Line Possible mitigation measures: METRO is concerned with focusing all the IH 10 MaX lane traffic on Smith/Louisiana will increase congestion or increase operating cost from route deviations, especially with the removal of the Katy Fwy-Downtown HOV Connector. Likewise, focusing all the IH 45 MaX lane traffic on Milam/Travis will increase congestion or increase operating cost from route deviations. The elimination of the St. Joseph Parkway and Pierce Street connections to IH 45 isolates the Downtown Transit Center and increases operating costs. TxDOT should re-examine access into south Downtown and the Downtown Transit Center. Similarly, the IH 45 connection to Memorial Drive and Capitol/Rusk streets needs to be maintained. A part of the proposed reconstruction will remove major METRO staging locations on Heiner and Jefferson. It's important that TxDOT identify / establish suitable staging / layover locations for METRO vehicles in downtown. Provide Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) to address bus circulation and travel time impacts from proposed improvements.	As discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings, the connections to/from Pierce and St. Joseph and I-45 could not be maintained in their current configurations. We will continue to work with you, your consultant and the City of Houston to refine the connections between the proposed Downtown Connectors and Pierce/St. Joseph. The proposed Downtown Connectors will pass over Memorial/Rusk/Capital as the Pierce Elevated does today. We are not able to add new ramp connections to these streets from the Downtown Connectors due to vertical separation and so we can maintain the existing ramp connections to Walker/McKinney and the improved connections to/from Allen Parkway. Since these comments were provided, TxDOT has coordinated with METRO regarding the access into south Downtown and the Downtown Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-62 Line/Feature: 5-16 Text: Impacts of the Build Alternatives on Floodplains METRO comment: Carry the commitments made in the narrative over to the commitment section of the FEIS/ROD.	The commitments regarding floodplains are included in the Final EIS, and will be included in the ROD.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-94 Line/Feature: Table 3-18 Text: States de minimus impacts likely. METRO comment: The "de minimus" note should not have been added to this table or have a better description of the context of the anticipated "de minimus" since the determination of adverse effects on historic resources has not been made. Possible mitigation measures: Identify potential 4(f) implications and determinations and that a "de minimus" impact is anticipated.	The final determination of adverse effects of the Preferred Alternative was made during preparation of the Final EIS. The analysis conducted for the Draft EIS allowed for comparison of the potential impacts of the three reasonable Build alternatives per study segment. Final determinations of impacts to historic resources and mitigation for adverse impacts are reported in the Final EIS and individual Section 4(f) Evaluation.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 3-118 Line/Feature: 8, -17, 24, Table 3-34 Text: States de minimis impacts likely. METRO comment: The "de minimus" note should not have been in the narrative and table since the determination of adverse effects on historic resources has not been made. Another option is to discuss the context that a "de minimus" determination is anticipated. Possible mitigation measures: Identify and discuss potential 4(f) implications, determinations, and why a "de minimus" impact is anticipated.	The final determination of adverse effects of the Preferred Alternative was made during preparation of the Final EIS. The analysis conducted for the Draft EIS allowed for comparison of the potential impacts of the three reasonable Build alternatives per study segment. Final determinations of impacts to historic resources and mitigation for adverse impacts are reported in the Final EIS and individual Section 4(f) Evaluation.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 6-8 Line/Feature: Table 6-1 Text: Indirect Impacts: Transportation Facilities Impacts to transportation facilities are not anticipated .... Multi-modal connection is a focus ... alteration effects could be beneficial ... METRO comment: Indirect effects may include increased operating costs from deviations due to loss of existing layover and staging areas in downtown. METRO's estimated impacts to operations are anticipated to exceed $24 million annually (attached). Relocated stops as a result of route adjustments to modify access to the IH 10 and IH 45 MaX lanes could increase walk distances and discourage riders. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO is required during the design phase to ensure adverse impacts are minimized or mitigated. Provide substantive details that showcase how the proposed alterations could be beneficial to transit as stated in the DEIS.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.

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552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 6-8 Line/Feature: Table 6-1 Text: Cumulative Impacts: H-GAC's RTP multi-modal transportation facilities. This resource will not be examined in detailed cumulative impact analysis. METRO comment: Proposed improvements may have cumulative impacts to long- term METRO services. Clarify the processes referenced in this section and why the Regional Transportation Planning process will be excluded from the cumulative impact analysis. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO to discuss, minimize, and mitigate adverse transit impacts need to occur throughout the design process. The cumulative impact analysis must include transit and multimodal related impacts in order to capture the range of both adverse and beneficial impacts.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 7-6 Line/Feature: 14 Text: TxDOT will coordinate with METRO on bus stop relocation METRO comment: Frequent coordination and collaboration with METRO as a cooperating agency must occur throughout the design process to ensure impacts are minimized or mitigated prior to the design being approved. Possible mitigation measures: Describe how and when METRO will be included in the process. Carry this commitment over to the mitigation section of the FEIS/ROD.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Page: 7-9 Line/Feature: 6-18 Text: Permits and issues in Floodplains METRO comment: What about Executive Order(EO) 13690 establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input? Possible mitigation measures: Update narrative as necessary to include EO 13690.	Executive Order (EO) 13690, which established the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, was revoked on August 15, 2017 by Section 6 of EO 13807, Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure. EO 13807 did not revoke or otherwise alter EO 11988.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: Segment 1 T-Ramp at N. Shepherd P&R Proposed design: A T-Ramp direct connection between the North Shepherd Park and Ride and North Fwy HOV lane is proposed. METRO comment: Only one route, 212 Seton Lake, would use this ramp. Access to MaX lanes are restricted to a T-ramp in N. Shepherd P&R, which creates a circuitous route for autos and conflicts with bus traffic in the platform area. Bus maneuverability in P&R to access ramp could be a problem Possible mitigation measures: TxDOT and METRO to coordinate in the design of the T-ramp for safety and efficiency.	TxDOT will coordinate with METRO during detailed design regarding the design of the N. Shepherd T-ramp.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: Segment 1 T-Ramp at Crosstimbers Proposed design: TxDOT has requested that METRO consider eliminating this ramp. METRO comment: Access should be preserved to accommodate the anticipated growth at the Northline Transit Center. Possible mitigation measures: METRO satisfied with wishbone ramp added to MaX lanes at Crosstimbers for access to IH 610.	Based on coordination with METRO, TxDOT removed the Crosstimbers T-ramp and added slip ramps north of Crosstimbers to allow access to and from I-610.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: General Downtown Proposed design: Ramp modifications and street closures METRO comment: METRO has numerous local and commuter routes that are directly and indirectly affected by the access changes into and out of Downtown. METRO encourages as much connectivity as possible especially along Polk Street, which is currently the only through street under IH 45 between Rusk Street to the north and the Leeland/Bell Street pair to the south. Also, the elimination of the Pierce Street and St. Joseph Parkway connections to IH 45 isolate the Downtown Transit Center and create route deviations and delays driving up operating costs. METRO would like to see these connections preserved, as well. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination between METRO and TxDOT during the design process is imperative to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities. **Access to/from Downtown:** Improving access to/from Downtown was one of the alternatives screening criteria. We appreciate the coordination with you, the City of Houston, and other local entities to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and points to the east. One of the most beneficial improvements included in the project is the restoration of a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four (4) east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. **Polk Street:** We understand that Polk Street is an important access point between Downtown and points east and thus carefully studied how to maintain a direct crossing over the new I-45/I-69 NHHIP improvements. Through a series of workshops (charettes) in 2015, the participants jointly developed and agreed on options to maintain/improve access across NHHIP while maintaining the congestion and safety improvements of the improvements. What was agreed was that Polk Street could not be maintained across NHHIP due to vertical separation requirements between I-45/I-69 and Polk Street. With the proposed NHHIP, drivers using Polk from East Downtown will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which in turn connects to Polk Street. We also coordinated with the City of Houston to reroute the Polk Street dedicated bike lane to be parallel to the restored Hamilton Street and would connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker Street. **Pierce/St. Joseph and Memorial/Rusk/Capital:** As discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings, the connections to/from Pierce and St. Joseph and I-45 could not be maintained in their current configurations. We will continue to work with you, your consultant and the City of Houston to refine the connections between the proposed Downtown Connectors and Pierce/St. Joseph. The proposed Downtown Connectors will pass over Memorial/Rusk/Capital as the Pierce Elevated does today. We are not able to add new ramp connections to these streets from the Downtown Connectors due to vertical separation and so we can maintain the existing ramp connections to Walker/McKinney and the improved connections to/from Allen Parkway.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: Inner Katy - Downtown HOV connector Proposed design: The Inner Katy-Downtown HOV connector is to be removed. METRO comment: METRO currently has direct HOV access from the Katy Freeway to Downtown via the HOV ramp. Elimination of the Inner Katy-Downtown HOV connector will result in more mixed flow operation increased operating time. METRO estimates the operational impacts could result in $2.5 million/year attributable to the loss of the connector ramp. No comparable replacement for the loss of the connector ramp is included in the improvements and could result in the depreciated cost of FTA funded ramp repaid to FTA Possible mitigation measures: At a minimum, improvements should provide a dedicated bus lane connection to Memorial Drive and Capitol and Rusk Streets. TxDOT must demonstrate the benefits of the connector removal or advance a more suitable alternative to the current design. Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process in order to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	Since these comments were provided, TxDOT has coordinated with METRO regarding the access into south Downtown and the Downtown Transit Center. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during design and construction to minimize impacts to existing transit operations. As noted in our response to your comment letter (dated June 2, 2015) about removing the Downtown HOV Connector, a dedicated bus/HOV lane has been added to the I-10 express lanes with direct access to Smith St. and Louisiana St. to replace the existing connector.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: Segment 3 IH 10 west of IH 45 Proposed design: WB IH-10 "MAX Lane" reduces to 1 lane from 2 at the connection to IH 10. METRO comment: This reduction in lanes could be congestion point. METRO requests an opportunity to review the traffic study. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	The western project limit on I-10 is Taylor Street. The I-10 express lanes are designed to transition back to the existing I-10, which only accommodates one lane from the I-10 express lanes. TxDOT will coordinate with METRO regarding any future plans to extend the express lanes to the west along I-10.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: Segment 3 Access to IH 45 N MaX lanes Proposed design: The Louisiana and Smith Street access to the IH 45 N HOV/HOT lanes will be eliminated. All access to the proposed I H 45 N MaX lanes will be limited to Milam and Travis Streets. METRO comment: Route deviations for commuter buses currently using the Smith and Louisiana access points to the IH 45 N HOV/HOT lanes will increase operating costs by approximately $250,000/year. The alternative to route deviations is relocating the stops for the affected routes, incurring capital costs and contributing to peak period congestion by concentrating routes on already congested streets. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	The existing HOV/HOT access points from Louisiana and Travis St. have been combined into a two-lane access point from Travis St. (outbound) and Milam St. (inbound) The reconfiguration of I-10 would not allow for the existing HOV ramp off of Louisiana St. to be maintained. TxDOT will coordinate with METRO regarding the I-45 MaX lanes operation.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: Removal of Pierce Elevated Proposed design: TxDOT states that although the travel distance is greater without the northbound exits from IH 45 to Allen Pkwy and Memorial Drive the travel time will be reduced due to systemwide flow improvements. Alterations to St. Joseph Pkwy, Pierce, Jefferson, and Heiner Streets METRO comment: METRO requests an opportunity to review the traffic study. Based upon the information provided in the DEIS, there are no travel savings expected from the IH 45 project for transit. Increased operating costs for route modifications are approximately $2 million/year and can be found on the attached estimate. METRO currently uses space under the Pierce elevated at Pierce and Main for a traction power substation (TPSS) and signal house. Possible mitigation measures: As part of the proposed reconstruction will remove major METRO staging locations on Heiner and Jefferson. TxDOT should identify / establish suitable staging / layover locations for METRO vehicles in downtown. Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts and find space for the TPSS and signal house.	Since these comments were provided, TxDOT has coordinated with METRO regarding the access into south Downtown and the Downtown Transit Center. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during design and construction to minimize impacts to existing transit operations.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: Wheeler TC Proposed design: Depressing IH 69/US 59 from Spur 527 to SH 288 and extending the street network over the depressed section. METRO comment: Wheeler TC currently extends beneath IH 69/US 59. Buses exit onto Fannin St. and use Blodgett St. to circulate around Wheeler Transit Center to resume their routes. The current design eliminates the exit onto Fannin St. and closes Blodgett short of Main Street preventing that movement. METRO, the City of Houston, and TxDOT are jointly evaluating options for the design of IH 69/US 59 in the vicinity of the Red Line and the Wheeler Transit Center. Possible mitigation measures: Incorporate the design concepts that are proposed by the joint Wheeler Transit Center design exercise.	Comment noted.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Drawings. Operational impacts: SH 288 access Proposed design: Access to SH 288 changed in Midtown METRO comment: Deadhead trips could be altered by modified access to SH 288 Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during design and construction regarding access to/from SH 288.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: All segments General Proposed design: Proposed new construction overpasses at IH 610, IH 10, IH 45/US 59 east of Downtown, and US 59 at Wheeler TC cross light rail lines. METRO comment: Need to describe temporary construction impacts, including demolition, where proposed improvements cross Light Rail Transit (LRT) lines and what permanent features will be built. LRT lines need to stay operational during construction of overpasses at these locations. Sufficient clearance for Overhead Catenary System needs to be maintained. Design should not preclude future extension of Green/Purple line on west side of downtown (Inner Katy connection) Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts. METRO is currently working on potential short and long-term design requirements with both TxDOT and City of Houston at this location.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO and their consultants and the COH to facilitate timely planning for operations prior to and during construction, and to accommodate final configuration. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH to coordinate traffic signal operations to try and minimize impacts to bus routes. As we have discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings during the DEIS and FEIS, we will continue to coordinate with METRO during the detailed design and construction phase. We will also have a dedicated space in the design/construction project office for a METRO representative once established. You will have a dedicated position within this team to conduct design reviews as requested as well as participate in developing preliminary staging plans and reviewing/monitoring the selected Developer's plans and activities. Operational Impacts to Green and Purple Lines: We have been coordinating with your staff regarding maintaining uninterrupted operations for your Green and Purple Line across I-45/I-69 during construction. We are coordinating closely with your staff to evaluate alternatives to minimize service impacts to all three light rail lines and to incorporate these commitments into the Design-Build procurement documents.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: Segment 1 Aldine-Bender HOV wishbone ramp Proposed design: The wishbone ramp at Aldine Bender provides two lanes in each direction from downtown to the wishbone ramp and one lane in each direction from there to Beltway 8. METRO comment: Does the anticipated use/volume of the Max lanes support a reduction in capacity? Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	The northern project limit on I-45 is BW 8. The I-45 MaX lanes are designed to transition to future diamond lane projects to the north of BW 8. The wishbone ramps at Aldine-Bender are the last access points to/from the MaX lanes within the project limits and are the logical locations to add/drop the second MaX lane. The MaX lanes north of the Aldine-Bender wishbone are designed for the ultimate two-way 24/7 configuration, but striped as one lane each direction to allow for transition to the existing one-way, reversible HOV to the north of the project limits.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: Segment 1 Beltway 8 Proposed design: There is a note to connect to the "future managed lanes". METRO comment: TxDOT's plan does not show the transition from bi-directional managed lanes to reversible barrier separated HOV/HOT lanes. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	The northern project limit on I-45 is BW 8. The I-45 MaX lanes are designed to transition to future diamond lane projects to the north of BW 8. The transition shown in the proposed project design can be modified if plans north of the project area change. There is an separate TxDOT I-45 North PEL study to evaluate the ultimate configuration of the lanes north of BW 8.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: Segments 1 & 2 North of Downtown Proposed design: Plan shows a "MAX lane" connection to NB IH 45 METRO comment: Provide vertical clearances that will allow for a future LRT in the center of IH 45 Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	High Capacity Transit in NHHIP Footprint: The high-capacity transit per coordination with you and your consultant over the past year, we developed conceptual cost estimates for including a new light rail line (LRT) in the NHHIP footprint. As we have discussed in the 2019 meetings, including LRT in the footprint would require additional right-of-way in Segment 2 to accommodate a new elevated structure between the MaX lanes as well as reconfiguring the I-45/I-610 interchange. However, the 2-way, 2-lanes each direction, 24/7 service MaX lanes will serve as high capacity transit lanes and are included in your METRONext plan. We are excited that the MaX Lanes will compliment your existing Red Line and provide the opportunity for expansion of transit as a modal choice for the region. We will continue to coordinate with you on this during design and construction.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: Segment 3 General Proposed design: Depressed freeway sections METRO comment: Connection is difficult to see where it diverges from the entrance lane at Louisiana. Possible mitigation measures: Provide a better quality of graphic and narrative description.	Since these comments were provided, TxDOT has met with METRO to review and discuss the design at this location.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: Segment 3 Polk St. at IH 69/US 59 east of Downtown Proposed design: Closure of Polk St at IH 69/US 59 METRO comment: Polk Street is a continuous east-west between Downtown and East End / EaDO. This closure will eliminate east to west connections from Leeland to Rusk St. reducing connections to East End. Two bus routes are affected by the closure of Polk Street: 40 Telephone/Heights 41 Kirby/Polk Possible mitigation measures: Modify the IH 45 S general purpose lane structures to descend to below grade farther north, maintaining Polk Street and eliminating the discontinuous Lamar, McKinney, and Walker Streets.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: Segment 3 Removal of Pierce Elevated Proposed design: The Pierce elevated (IH 45) will be removed and IH 45 will pass downtown on the east and north sides. METRO comment: Both St. Joseph Pkwy and Pierce St. are access points to I-45 and they pass on either side of the Downtown Transit Center. The removal of the Pierce elevated on the west side changes access into Downtown. Eliminating the Pierce Street and Saint Joseph Parkway access points to IH 45 N and replacing them with Jefferson and Pease Streets creates a two-block diversion for bus routes traveling between the Downtown Transit Center at the Saint Joseph Parkway and Pierce Street access on the west side of Downtown Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts. Provide a dedicated bus lane connection to Pierce Street and St Joseph Parkway.	Since these comments were provided, TxDOT has coordinated with METRO regarding the access into south Downtown and the Downtown Transit Center. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during design and construction to minimize impacts to existing transit operations. Pierce/St. Joseph and Memorial/Rusk/Capital: As discussed in our ongoing coordination meetings, the connections to/from Pierce and St. Joseph and I-45 could not be maintained in their current configurations. We will continue to work with you, your consultant and the City of Houston to refine the connections between the proposed Downtown Connectors and Pierce/St. Joseph. The proposed Downtown Connectors will pass over Memorial/Rusk/Capital as the Pierce Elevated does today. We are not able to add new ramp connections to these streets from the Downtown Connectors due to vertical separation and so we can maintain the existing ramp connections to Walker/McKinney and the improved connections to/from Allen Parkway.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: Segment 3 Main at Wheeler Proposed design: The proposed improvements show IH 69/US 59 depressed from Spur 527 to SH 288 METRO comment: Consider providing an option for METRO to construct the University LRT on an elevated structure within the median of US 59/69 from Caroline St. to Alabama St. The LRT would need access through La Branch St. and Almeda Rd. We have not seen sufficient design to further explore this option. Bridge requirements may hinder this option. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction. Additional information from METRO regarding future plans for the University LRT would be needed to evaluate whether this proposal could be accommodated.
552	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County	7/25/2017	Email	Design constraints: Segment 3 Alabama St. Proposed design: Alabama St. crosses over depressed section of IH 69/US 59 METRO comment: Alabama St. is the alignment of the proposed University LRT line between Wheeler Station and TSU/UH. Structure should be wide enough and strong enough to support LRT. Possible mitigation measures: Frequent coordination with METRO must be performed throughout the design process to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate anticipated impacts.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction. Additional information from METRO regarding future plans for the University LRT would be needed to evaluate whether this proposal could be accommodated.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Minimize impacts to affordable housing resources. Planning and advanced funding for relocation of affordable homes at their replacement value, as well as relocation assistance to existing residents, should be done in a timely and comprehensive manner. This applies to the 368 units within the Houston Housing Authority Clayton Homes and Kelly Village facilities as well as the Temenos Community Development Corporation facility.	TxDOT has coordinated with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses used by low-income and/or minority populations, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project, potential project impacts, and mitigation. Documentation of the coordination and outcomes is included in the Final EIS. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Minimize traffic impacts on neighborhoods. The project should minimize the negative impact of commuter traffic on primarily residential neighborhoods, such as from the S.H. 288 managed lanes ramps currently proposed to exit onto Chenevert Street in Midtown.	Throughout project development, TxDOT has had numerous meetings with neighborhoods and other stakeholders and has received other input at public hearings and via written correspondence. Based on input received, TxDOT revised the project design in some locations to avoid and minimize impacts to neighborhoods, and has proposed mitigation measures to reduce potential adverse impacts. Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Minimize negative impacts to neighborhoods. The DEIS states that the preferred alternative will displace many single and multi-family homes, commercial sites, and other institutional and community resources. I am especially concerned by the DEIS's statement that all alternatives would cause disproportionate adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations. The NHHIP should provide strong connections between neighborhoods separated by the freeway; minimize right-of-way impacts to adjacent properties, including displacement of homes and businesses; and mitigate noise, air quality, visual, water quality, and environmental impacts. Unavoidable impacts should be mitigated wherever feasible.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Accommodate high capacity transit. The NHHIP should minimize dependency on single occupant vehicles that are congesting the City's street grid. This can only be achieved if multimodal consideration of transit and freight are strongly integrated into the proposed design. TxDOT should coordinate with METRO to ensure the NHHIP accommodates the long-range transit needs of the corridor. The proposed MaX Lanes concept should be designed and operated to ensure that reliable and frequent two-way high capacity transit could be operated to connect many regional activity centers.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Encourage multiple occupancy trips through sensible tolling practices. The "MaX" managed lanes should be operated to encourage shared trips as much as possible. Inappropriate tolling practices on the MaX lanes would limit the ability of such lanes to carry HOV and high-capacity transit traffic, lessening the congestion relief benefits of the project and burdening the City's street grid that distributes NHHIP trips.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing process, the decision was made not to toll the MaX Lanes. TxDOT is not considering toll operations for the proposed project because TxDOT is currently operating under a non-toll directive for new projects.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Maximize greenspace opportunities. The NHHIP creates an exciting opportunity for enhanced greenspace in the heart of Houston by using "caps" placed over a depressed freeway, reimagining the Pierce Elevated Freeway, and in other ways. These proposals present not just enhanced recreational opportunities, but can also improve connections between neighborhoods previously separated by freeways. The City applauds TxDOT for including concrete caps in the NHHIP's base design. Unfortunately, significant portions of existing greenspace, especially along bayous, are impacted by the project, in some cases through additional encroachment of widened elevated freeway. The City would like to explore the development of greenspace opportunities with TxDOT, including the following: – We ask TxDOT to mitigate the impacts on existing greenspace through the proposed park caps; – Creating active greenspace at the Midtown/Museum District cap and enhancing connections in this area, which could support transit oriented development near the Wheeler Transit Station. – Providing active greenspace and connection opportunities at the Downtown/EaDo District and North Main caps; – Connecting Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou Park; – Greenspace opportunities from surplus right-of-way for the Pierce Elevated structure.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to maintain existing open space and replace affected open space by creating new open space where feasible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. Impacts to parks, open spaces along the bayous, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some resources are likely unavoidable. The proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou and the existing hike/bike trail would remain. The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The impact would be primarily aerial (bridges over the open space), with some columns to support the bridges. The primary use of the White Oak Bayou greenway in the area of the NHHIP is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Fully explore optimal connections between downtown and neighborhoods to the east. The City appreciates TxDOT's close coordination with the City and other partners to identify the best possible connections between downtown and areas east of downtown. For example, the proposed re-routing of Polk Street would result in a less direct connection between these areas. TxDOT should continue working closely with the City and other stakeholders to determine the optimal neighborhood connections across the NHHIP.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Maximize a multi-modal approach. The project should improve mobility for all modes of transportation, not just automobiles on freeways, and should provide for improvements to the local street network as well as the regional freeway system. The NHHIP should support implementation of the Houston Bike Plan, including accommodating trails along White Oak and Little White Oak bayous underneath the NHHIP and bike facilities on bridges over the NHHIP, and utilize safe pedestrian-oriented design standards appropriate for an urban context.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles). Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	• Facilitate beneficial redevelopment. The NHHIP should maximize redevelopment opportunities to enhance quality of life and strengthen the City's tax base. This includes coordination on redevelopment of surplus right-of-way and the potential realignment of the UPRR freight rail line that runs east-west through the north side of downtown.	TxDOT has coordinated with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. TxDOT has previously coordinated with UPRR, HB&T, and BNSF representatives and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. General Comments* The project will result in significant impacts for local network connectivity for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users, and freight. A focus on design of safe intersections, sidewalks, bikeways, transit stops, frontage roads, and connections has the potential to greatly enhance mobility options for all users. This means thinking beyond the direct right-of-way of the project to understand opportunities and impacts on street, bikeway, greenway, and transit networks. It also means working to tie communities together, not separating them further with wide freeways serving as barriers. It also requires careful planning and a greater level of detail than has been provided by the current schematics.	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding network connectivity for all modes of transportation. Please see responses to your segment-specific comments.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. General Comments* The City's Planning and Development Department previously submitted comments on this project on May 29, 2015, after public meeting #4. We note TxDOT's response letter posted on the project web site and appreciate TxDOT's acceptance of many City requests.	Comment noted
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. General Comments* In some cases, such as the S.H. 288 managed lanes exit to Chenevert, however, we continue to request that TxDOT explore solutions, and we note these requests in this comment letter. TxDOT should continue to closely coordinate with the City of Houston, METRO and other entities such as Management Districts and TIRZs to ensure that major issues are resolved early in the design phase of the project.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Noise Air Quality, Water Quality, Aesthetics, and Other Environmental Impacts* The project will have a significant noise, air quality, and environmental impacts on neighboring communities, business, and residents. Plans should designate where noise walls are proposed to mitigate neighborhood impacts. Add landscaping along freeway lanes and frontage roads plus noise walls where appropriate to mitigate for the increased noise traffic created by a wider freeway. Develop a landscape plan and plan for public art and coordinate with the City and stakeholders along the corridor to reduce visual and air quality impacts along the corridor, and to improve water quality.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with COH regarding specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects. TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. In addition to proposed noise barriers, aesthetic walls are proposed in certain locations along the project corridor. The walls will provide some noise reduction. Proposed aesthetic walls are shown in the Community Impact Assessment Technical Report. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary aesthetic wall proposals. Proposed aesthetic walls are preliminary and the final decision to build aesthetic walls will not be made until completion of the project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners adjacent to the proposed aesthetic walls.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Noise Air Quality, Water Quality, Aesthetics, and Other Environmental Impacts* The NHHIP creates an exciting opportunity for enhanced greenspace in the heart of Houston by using "caps" placed over a depressed freeway, reimagining the Pierce Elevated Freeway, and in other ways. These proposals present not just enhanced recreational opportunities, but can also improve connections between neighborhoods previously separated by freeways. The City applauds TxDOT for including concrete caps in the NHHIP's base design. Unfortunately, significant portions of existing greenspace, especially along bayous, are impacted by the project, in some cases through additional encroachment of widened elevated freeway. As a result of these impacts, the City asks TxDOT to mitigate the impacts on existing greenspace through development of the proposed park caps.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in this area and support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Economic Development, Displacement. Environmental Justice* The DEIS states that the preferred alternative will require the displacement of many single and multifamily homes, commercial sites, and other institutional and community resources. The DEIS notes that all alternatives would cause disproportionate high and adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations, yet does not adequately address mitigation for these impacts. Much of the project is in or adjacent to Complete Communities, including Third Ward, Second Ward, Near Northside, and Acres Home. The City is making efforts to improve these neighborhoods so that all of Houston's residents and business owners can have access to quality services and amenities. The City recommends further evaluating design solutions to limit the impact on these communities and businesses where possible.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. All property acquisition and relocations will be handled in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to all persons and businesses required to relocate. Displaced persons and businesses will receive relocation benefits as provided by federal and state law. TxDOT has coordinated with the City (including Mayor Turner, city council members, and city departments) during development of the NHHIP. The COH is an EIS Participating Agency and TxDOT held five group meetings for participating agencies at key project milestones. In addition, TxDOT and the NHHIP Study Team have attended dozens of coordination meetings with City representatives to discuss the City's desires and concerns related to the project. TxDOT is coordinating with COH, including consideration of the Mayor's goals as described in the Complete Communities initiative (four of the five identified communities are adjacent to NHHIP). A significant part of the City's initiative is to listen to residents in the identified communities, and know their goals and desires for their community. During the preparation of the EIS for the NHHIP, TxDOT has met and listened to these same communities.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Economic Development, Displacement. Environmental Justice* The project has an excessively wide footprint in Segment 1 in particular, which will cause a significant impact to neighborhoods and businesses. Right of way impacts could be reduced by solutions such as: 1) Grade separating some of the managed lanes in the center of the project; 2) Reducing the number and/or width of frontage road lanes; and 3) In some instances, reducing the separation between main lanes and the frontage roads.	1. TxDOT evaluated this concept as Alternative 7, presented it at Public Meeting 3 in November 2013, and documented the evaluation in the Draft EIS. This alternative would impact residences and would impact more businesses than the Recommended Alternative. In Segment 1, below-grade options were not feasible due to the proximity of Little White Oak Bayou. 2. Segment 1 is an area that has heavy retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and we must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly with crosswalks at all street crossings and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. 3. Minimum separation between mainlanes and frontage roads is required at ramp locations. Narrowing the separation between them would introduce unnecessary curves in the frontage roads, which is undesirable and likely would not reduce the number of parcels impacted.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Economic Development, Displacement. Environmental Justice* The City of Houston is concerned about the potential loss of sales and property tax revenue that might result from the proposed alternative, which potentially might exceed $130 million annually. This is a significant economic impact both on the City of Houston and for the neighborhoods in the vicinity of the project. The design should be optimized to support high quality development opportunities that are beneficial to the City of Houston and the surrounding communities to mitigate these impacts, especially in areas where the project eliminates significant existing tax base. Please consider ways in which the project could offset the potential loss of revenue to the City by coordinating planning for redevelopment adjacent to the project that would generate new tax revenue for the City.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* The DEIS concludes that the project is not expected to induce growth, as most of the area of influence is already developed. It does not acknowledge that much of the surrounding areas are still relatively low density and can accommodate growth. The NHHIP should minimize the encouragement of single occupant vehicle trips. Instead, the NHHIP should encourage shared trips to minimize impacts to the City roadway network, which must distribute these trips. The conclusion in the DEIS that the proposed project is not expected to induce growth should be re-examined.	The analysis of induced growth was updated in the Final EIS. The DEIS ("Background" in the Need and Purpose Statement) explained that high capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT]).
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* The City of Houston provides the following comments for consideration in improving the overall project and to address these significant impacts. 1. Utilize context sensitive design guidelines such as the ITE - Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach and NACTO - Urban Street Design Guide, to comply with the City's Complete Streets policy. While the freeways are designed to FHWA and AASHTO design guidelines, all frontage roads, adjoining local streets and intersections should be designed consistently with the City's Context Sensitive Design Guidelines.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. For example, in coordination with COH, TxDOT developed a plan for bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, which includes a 15-17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic. TxDOT will include this bicycle/pedestrian realm on city street crossing in other areas of the project.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 2. Maintain and improve connections between neighborhoods separated by the NHHIP. Avoid reducing street connectivity. Improve connectivity for all modes of transportation, inclusive of people on foot, people on bicycles, transit users, and for freight.	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that TxDOT will restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 3. The project should optimize the local street network and avoid relocating congestion from freeways to local streets. In some areas, for example, lane configurations on local street crossings of the NHHIP appear excessive, some access roads appear to be designed in excess of necessary capacity, and some local street crossings over the freeway are proposed for elimination, reducing local access and circulation.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 4. Current and future bicycle infrastructure and bicycle connectivity must be preserved and enhanced where feasible. Providing for high-comfort bikeway connectivity across and along the proposed project is essential. Improved bicycle connections are needed to address the impact of barriers between neighborhoods, especially between neighborhoods and the Central Business District. In areas where vehicular connectivity may be removed, options should be evaluated to preserve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects. TxDOT has worked closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 5. The proposed schematic drawing does not identify sidewalks along sections of the proposed project. In general, sidewalks should be provided along all frontage roads and public streets in all typical sections. Ensure bridge widths throughout the project include sufficient space for quality sidewalks and high comfort bikeways as called for in City of Houston standards and guidelines, rather than be designed to match existing cross-sections or old standards. Ensure all bridges across the freeway and street crossings under the freeway provide for minimum 6' unobstructed sidewalks. Where appropriate, wider sidewalks should be provided since there is a limited buffer between the vehicular lanes and the pedestrian.	Sidewalks were shown on the schematics for Segments 1 and 2 and sidewalks are now shown on the updated schematics for Segment 3. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding incorporating the Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets for Segment 3. The schematic was updated to show the sidewalk network agreed upon by TxDOT and the COH.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 6. All lanes on city streets and frontage roads should comply with City of Houston's 11' lane standards and encourage appropriate travel speeds and safe travel. 12' lanes are freeway lane standards and not appropriate for local streets. They encourage excessive speeds through urban area where higher speeds are out of context and unsafe.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 7. Define which intersections are proposed with traffic signals and all-way stop control. It is not possible to fully assess whether the design supports safe walkability, bikeability, and transit use without this information. Traffic control recommendations should be developed with multimodal safety and connections in mind.	Intersection signalizations, multi-modal connections, and traffic control measures will be determined during detailed design.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 8. Design standards for bicyclists and pedestrians need to be set to reflect the Houston Bike Plan's high comfort commitment. Elements like wide outside lanes for bicyclists, which are likely to be eliminated as guidance from the next AASHTO bikeway design guide, should not be included.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	9. Protected bikeways or side paths set behind the curb should be designed for all bike connections. Bike lanes should be 6' wide minimum. Wide outside lanes on frontage roads designed as shared bicycle facilities are unacceptable and should not be included in this project. Intersections should be designed for safe crossing to accommodate bikeways and sidewalks.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	10. The proposed bicycle lanes along the outside of the frontage roads do not provide adequate protection for cyclists and create more opportunity for bicycle/motorist collisions. Along frontage roads, the bikeways constructed in this project need to sustain a high level of comfort for both motorists and cyclists to create a clear and safe space for both parties to travel. It is recommended any bikeway associated with these roadways be completely separated from vehicular traffic, be positioned behind the outermost curb, be at least 6 feet wide, and be separated from pedestrian traffic.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	11. An intersection is the most likely place for a vehicle-bicycle collision. A protected intersection (or Dutch Junction) for bicyclists and pedestrians is recommended and makes travel considerably safer for all parties. This design includes small islands as buffers from right-turning motorists. Green paint is then used to direct the cyclist from one protected lane to the next in a circular fashion moving counter-clockwise. College Station, TX has already completed a similar design and the protected intersection in the Energy Corridor in Houston is planned to be implemented in the fall. Please use these as acceptable examples.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 12. Multiple streets have been shown with sweeping, large radius turns. This design makes it difficult for both the motorist and the cyclist to anticipate a potential collision. This project should take the opportunity to minimize these issues, especially in areas where large numbers of people walking can be expected around Downtown and Buffalo Bayou. Sweeping right turns need to be avoided at all locations.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 13. At time of design, the City will coordinate with TxDOT to verify the optimal lane configurations for all City street connections and bridges affected by the NHHIP.	Comment noted. TxDOT has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City during detailed design.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 14. In general, creating excess unproductive space should be avoided in street design (e.g., small triangles of isolated land) unless there is clear plan to address the use of the space (e.g. public art projects).	Comment noted. TxDOT will continue to engage agencies, entities, and organizations during detailed design and construction.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 15. Coordinate with the City on how to make detention areas attractive and usable spaces.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 16. The City looks forward to coordinating with TxDOT on the proposed deck structures across the freeway. The project should provide safe access to the deck areas across frontage roads.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 18. Transit, including how the NHHIP can be designed to support faster transit trips between major activity centers and destinations, should be much more prominently considered in the plan. This should include rail expansion opportunities as well as the potential for an optimized express bus network. METRO is currently updating their long-range capital plan, and this plan may identify recommendations for transit needs along the NHHIP corridor. Upon completion of this plan, the City requests that the project be re-evaluated to accommodate these transit needs.	TxDOT agrees that this project represents a huge opportunity that will not come around again soon. Therefore, TxDOT took extra care to ensure all interested and potentially affected parties were engaged in this project from the early stages. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT]), and automated and connected vehicles (AV/CV). TxDOT has and will continue to work with METRO regarding accommodating light rail within the Segment 1 footprint.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 19. The entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered. Stops (and access to stops) must be designed to ADA and METRO standards with room for shelters to support a high quality transit experience.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 20. Integrate freight and transit needs into the proposed design. Activity centers are located throughout the region and integrating two-way high capacity transit into the design will benefit both City and regional mobility. The MaX lanes should be operated to incentivize shared trips in multi-occupant vehicles and operated to ensure that reliable and frequent two-way high capacity transit could be operated to connect many regional activity centers. The MaX Lanes should be connected to managed lanes on intersecting facilities such as IH-10 and IH-69 where feasible, enabling a network of transit movement to activity centers through the region. If the potential exists for managed lanes on other facilities, the NHHIP should accommodate a future connection to these lanes as well.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*A. Indirect Impacts* 21. The "MaX" managed lanes should be operated to encourage shared trips as much as possible. Inappropriate tolling practices on the MaX lanes, such as inappropriately low toll fares, would diminish the travel time advantage enjoyed by multi-occupant vehicles, limiting the ability of such lanes to carry HOV and high-capacity transit traffic. A reduction in shared-trip vehicles will lessen the congestion relief benefits of the project and burden the City's street network that must distribute the traffic from the NHHIP. Please engage the City as decisions are made regarding tolling.	After the publication of the Draft EIS and the Public Hearing process, the decision was made not to toll the MaX Lanes. TxDOT is not considering toll operations for the proposed project because TxDOT is currently operating under a non-toll directive for new projects.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 1. Segment 1 has a significant impact, approximately 212 acres, due to the proposed widening of the roadway. Identify other options and engage the surrounding neighborhoods to limit this impact on the community. The project should provide appropriate mitigation and funding for relocation assistance for displaced residents and businesses.	TxDOT developed a comprehensive public/stakeholder outreach program and conducted/attended meetings with elected officials, neighborhood associations, management districts, and others during project development. The project design has been developed in consideration of the input received to minimize impacts within the study area. TxDOT will continue to evaluate opportunities to refine and minimize impacts during detailed design. If eligible, TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance, funding and counseling to both residential and commercial property owners and tenants to assist in the relocation process.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 2. The project has an excessively wide footprint in Segment 1, which will cause a significant impact to neighborhoods and businesses. This is due to a combination of 3 or more lane frontage roads, wide frontage road lanes, wide spacing between the freeway and the frontage roads, and putting the MaX Lanes at grade, rather than elevating them. Consider alternatives which would narrow the footprint of the freeway and reduce the impacts on neighborhoods, including reducing the number of frontage road lanes to two in each direction, reducing the spacing between the freeway and the frontage roads, reducing lane width of the outside lane of the frontage roads, and/or elevating the MaX Lanes.	NHHIP is maintaining existing roadways (excluding proposed realignments) and efforts have been made to minimize impacts to historic neighborhoods and buildings. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	B. Segment 1 3. Consider extension and direct connection from I-45 MaX lanes to Greens Road to serve the Greenspoint area. This would help with redevelopment of the area and support potential METRO limited stop service on the Downtown to Airport Route.	This area is outside the project limits and not a part of the proposed project. TxDOT is currently conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study for I-45 north of Beltway 8 and is evaluating future transportation needs in the Greenspoint area and north to Conroe.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 4. In accordance with the Houston Bike Plan, ensure that the Halls Bayou crossing north of W. Mt. Houston is designed to allow trail crossings under the freeway and frontage roads.	TxDOT will coordinate with COH during detailed design to accommodate an alternate route across I-45 in this area, if the proposed trail crossing proves to be not feasible.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 5. Connections on Crosstimbers, Victoria/Lyerly, Tiddwell Rd., Cortlandt/E Witcher, Rosamond, W. Parker Road, Rittenhouse, etc. need to be designed with features that allow for high comfort and safety at intersections for bicyclists and pedestrians. These are vital connections for pedestrians and bicyclists in Independence Heights, Garden Oaks, Oak Forest and Acres Home areas to reach either Little White Oak Bayou or the METRO Red Line into downtown.	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.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 6. The HOV ramp from Airline Dr. to Independence Heights and the Northside communities is being removed. Provide alternative access for these communities to managed lanes.	TxDOT has coordinated extensively with METRO on the mentioned connections. The proposed design adds two alternative access points that replace the access currently provided by the existing T-ramp south of Crosstimbers and dramatically increases the access to the MaX lanes that does not exist today. From I-610: Drivers wishing to access the northbound MaX lanes enter I-610 at N. Main St. west of I-45 or at Cochran St. east of I-45 and then use the new connectors that access directly to I-45 northbound MaX lanes. From I-45: Drivers now have a direct connection between I-45 and I-610. A new "wishbone" ramp system will allow southbound MaX lane users to exit directly to the ramp connecting I-45 southbound and I-610 westbound and eastbound. Drivers will be able to access the southbound MaX lanes by entering the I-45 southbound mainlanes at Crosstimbers and then entering the MaX lanes off the mainlanes just south of I-610.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 7. Provide a local street connection between Veterans Memorial and IH 45 southbound frontage road along the METRO T-Ramp.	Access to the southbound frontage road is currently at the intersection with Veterans Memorial, and would remain. Any additional local street connection would be a City project.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	B. Segment 1 8. Evaluate how the Airline, Victoria Drive and Northbound I-45 Intersection would operate safely to people traveling through any mode of travel. Existing configuration should be improved to ensure safety for all users of the roadway.	Due to the complexity and severe skew of the intersection, the existing configuration is the optimal configuration for safely maintaining access to all movements. TxDOT evaluated simplifying the intersection in several ways, one of which would be removing the right turn lane on WB Airline Drive that lines vehicles up with Victoria Drive. Removing this lane would force vehicles to turn right at the intersection, and then a quick left onto Victoria. This movement would not be safe or intuitive. TxDOT also evaluated removing the connection from Airline to Victoria, but this change did not provide enough benefit to justify the negative impact to community access of the area. 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.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	B. Segment 1 9. Clarify plan for Werner Street in northeast corner of Tidwell intersection with I-45. Evaluate if a cul-de-sac with access further north could be better than the proposed T shaped design.	Werner St. is proposed to connect to Tidwell St. on the south side to maintain the access that exists today. The existing connection to Tidwell St. on the north side would be removed, but access would still be provided to Tidwell St. via the I-45 southbound frontage road. East of I-45, Werner St. would terminate at a cul-de-sac, but the frontage road would still be able to be accessed from Witcher Ln.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	B. Segment 1 10. The intersections should be designed with special care for safe, comfortable crossings for pedestrians. Most arterials crossing I-45 are on METRO's bus network, have significant nearby boardings, and will require safe crossings to serve stops for people traveling in both directions.	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, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	B. Segment 1 11. The intersection of Shepherd and I-45 is directly adjacent to the N. Shepherd Park & Ride. This intersection should be assessed to ensure that is safely traversable by people walking.	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, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	B. Segment 1 12. N. Shepherd Transit Center would be logical extension for METRO Red Line. We encourage consideration of how that connection could be made and to consider that in design so as to not preclude options. For example, consider making West Little York and Parker crossing spans wide enough as these would be potential points for light rail to cross I-45 to reach N. Shepherd.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO regarding the potential of extending the Red Line north along or within the proposed I-45 footprint.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 13. An intersection design that incorporates a free flow right turn lane with a pedestrian island creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians since many drivers do not yield to pedestrians at such intersections. Additionally, a number of intersections have dedicated right turn lanes. Ensure the traffic counts warrant dedicated right turns. Multi-lane frontage roads are daunting for pedestrians to cross. Please provide traffic modeling and justification for any access roads in excess of two lanes. Coordinate with City of Houston on all intersection designs.	Safety of pedestrians and bicycles is a primary consideration in the design of NHHIP. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP and to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, including evaluation of dedicated and free flow right turns.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 14. Provide traffic modeling and justify the need for a 5-lane frontage road for the portion IH 45 between West Road and Blue Bell Road, a minor collector street.	The southbound I-45 exit ramp provides access to both the new Blue Bell Road overpass and SH 249. The projected volumes using this ramp requires 2-lanes versus the typical 1-lane. The 5-lane frontage road is a combination of the 2-lane exit ramp and the 3-lane frontage road. Two of the frontage road lanes drop at SH 249 and returns to 3-lanes south of SH 249.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 15. Ensure sufficient clearance across Halls Bayou to allow for adequate natural drainage conveyance, and a pedestrian and bicycle trail along the bayou. These recommendations are consistent with the HCFCD's Halls Bayou study.	All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. TxDOT will coordinate with COH during detailed design to accommodate an alternate route across I-45 in this area, if the proposed trail crossing proves to be not feasible.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	B. Segment 1 16. Coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Little White Oak Bayou between I-610 and E. Parker Road and Shepherd. Consider developing the detention basin between I-610 and Crosstimbers as a wet bottom basin and publicly-accessible green space tied the bikeway along the bayou. Consider a trash mitigation system that will collect both heavy debris and floating debris.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. Wet bottom detention basins will be considered if a partner entity agrees to maintain them.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 17. Coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Halls Bayou along I45.	TxDOT will coordinate with the COH and the Houston Parks Board to consider proposed plans for parks and other recreation areas along bayous in the project area, and accommodate such plans, if feasible.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*B. Segment 1* 18. All alternatives would result in traffic noise impacts. The current DEIS does not adequately address noise mitigation in Segment 1.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. The analysis complies with FHWA regulations. The analysis identified potential locations of noise barriers based on predicted noise impacts, and evaluation of feasibility (noise reduction that can be achieved) and cost effectiveness. The final decision to implement proposed noise barriers would be made during detailed design with input from benefitted property owners and residents. Other forms of mitigation were considered and the application of noise barriers was determined to be the most effective. TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 1. Ensure that noise impacts, irrespective of existing conditions, are mitigated appropriately with options such as noise/sound walls including the southeast corner of I-610 and I 45 adjacent to Delaney Street.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. The analysis complies with FHWA regulations. The analysis identified potential locations of noise barriers based on predicted noise impacts, and evaluation of feasibility (noise reduction that can be achieved) and cost effectiveness. The final decision to implement proposed noise barriers would be made during detailed design with input from benefitted property owners and residents. Other forms of mitigation were considered and the application of noise barriers was determined to be the most effective. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*C. Segment 2* 2. Connectivity in and out of Northside neighborhoods needs to be addressed in a way that it becomes improved, not made worse, by the new design in both Segment 2 and in Segment 3. Clarify the termini of streets like North Ave, Woodland and Farwood. Do they cul-de-sac or connect to frontage roads? Connections appear preferable.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. TxDOT will work with COH to refine the termini of North, Woodland, and Farwood Streets during detailed design to ensure safe connectivity.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 3. Consider extending the I-610 segment east to allow the Helmers Street connection across the freeway. Helmers would be a useful north-south connection, as it is continues from Fulton Street on the south to Berry Street on the north, a distance of almost 3 miles. Right now the only north-south connections through this area are Fulton and Irvington, and Fulton has METRO Red Line impacts.	Extending Helmers St. would conflict with the proposed I-45/I-610 interchange ramps.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*C. Segment 2* 4. Assess the option to bring the trail underneath the freight railroad north of Stoke Road. If the trail cannot travel under the freight rail line, integrate the trail into the frontage road design to cross the rail ROW.	TxDOT understands the desire for the construction of a sidewalk on Stokes Street for pedestrians crossing under I-45 (for example, children walking to the nearby elementary school). TxDOT commits to constructing the sidewalk for that portion of the roadway on TxDOT property. The remainder of the roadway is owned by the City of Houston, who must construct any sidewalk on their property.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*C. Segment 2* 5. The entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered and stops (and access to stops) would be designed to ADA and METRO standards to support a high quality transit experience. This is most critical for the Cavalcade St. bridge crossing and the operation of the existing Route 44 METRO bus route which travels on a section of Main St. and Houston Avenue impacted by the NHHIP project.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 6. Justify the need and provide traffic modeling for the proposed multi-lane frontage road along northbound I-45 between Quitman and N. Main. A single existing lane north of Quitman is expanded to 4 lanes at N. Main Street creating impact on adjacent properties. Additionally, this creates a design that encourages high speed adjacent to the proposed park deck.	The proposed multi-lane frontage road between Quitman St. and North St. is a series of ramps handling multiple traffic movements to and from the highway, with no driveway access. This segment is constrained by a historic property. From North St. to N. Main St., it becomes a frontage road with a sidewalk. The four lanes are needed to handle projected traffic volumes from Quitman St. and the northbound I-45 exit to N. Main St. making left, right and through movements at N. Main St.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*C. Segment 2* 7. Add safe pedestrian crossings and bike lanes to cross and continue east on Cavalcade, Patton, and Cottage St-Searle Dr. These streets are to have access to the red line stops at Cavalcade and Moody Park, as well as shops, the MD Anderson YMCA, and the new park.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the 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. The design of the Cottage Street crossing includes accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians and the U-Turns at Cottage Street were removed from the schematic design to promote safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings per coordination with the adjacent neighborhoods.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*C. Segment 2* 8. Ensure the proposed deck park near North Main Street is accessible for pedestrians and bicyclists. The multilane frontage roads and U turn ramps create challenges for pedestrian and bicycle access to the proposed deck park. Consider relocation, removal, or by-pass of these Uturn lanes and design of frontage roads to allow safe access to the park space.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in this area and support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*C. Segment 2* 9. Although below grade near Woodland Park, the freeway creates noise impacts on Woodland Park. Provide sound mitigation with an additional shielding using tall trees and vegetation.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents anticipated noise impacts to Woodland Park as a result of the project. A noise barrier is proposed at Woodland Park. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*C. Segment 2* 10. The proposed removal of the North Street bridge introduces a significant impact on the ability of Near Northside residents to access park and recreation facilities west of IH45. Removal of this important local connection should be reconsidered and/or appropriately mitigated.	To elevate I-45 above the 100-year base flood elevation in the vicinity of the Little White Oak Bayou crossing, the North Street bridge must be removed. N. Main St. will be the nearest street (to existing North St. bridge) to cross I-45, and will have pedestrian-bicycle accommodations. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 11. Improve the pedestrian accessibility to Woodland Park along Little White Oak Bayou east of I-45. This could be accomplished through an improved channel conduit under I-45 that would provide a multi-use path along the bayou connecting Woodland Park on the west of I-45 to the hike and bike path along Little White Oak Bayou on the east side of I-45. Improve the greenspace along Little White Oak Bayou east of I-45, with hike and bike trails connecting to Moody Park.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 12. Little White Oak Bayou represents a prime opportunity to extend open space connectivity north from White Oak Bayou Greenway to Woodlands Park, Moody Park, and beyond up to Halls Bayou. It also connects neighborhoods like Near Northside, Independence Heights, and Acres Home directly impacted by the NHHIP. It is imperative that the project enhance and not degrade the ecological value and open space potential offered by Little White Oak Bayou. Coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Little White Oak Bayou. Create a hike and bike trail along the length of Little White Oak Bayou, east and west of I-45, to provide public access to the channel and to connect the detention ponds, Moody Park, Woodland Park and up to I-610.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 13. Ensure that the design allows trail connectivity along Little White Oak Bayou, connecting neighborhoods to parks and open space, wherever it crosses freeways including at the I-610 to I-45 N interchange. In accordance with the Houston Bike Plan, this bayou section is an important piece of expanding the high comfort bicycle network that provides connectivity from outside the N Loop 610, under I-45, and into downtown. This bayou is a connector for bicyclists, pedestrians, and naturalists and is unaddressed in this design and crossings (Hogan/Crockett, Houston, Quitman/White Oak Dr., Main St, Patton, Cottage etc.). Allowing full access to Little White Oak Bayou needs to be maintained and carefully designed with high comfort bicycle and pedestrian crossings underneath the NHHIP. The project should replace the existing culvert north of Patton Street with a bridge span designed to allow trails on both sides of the bayou. At the I-610 crossing of the Bayou, a safe bicycle route along the bayou should be included, including a safe crossing of the proposed frontage roads. Please also consider a high comfort bike lane at signalized frontage road intersections.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. TxDOT will accommodate existing and future bikeways along city streets as shown on the City of Houston Bike Plan. Finally, in response to this comment and all of the Coalition's comments concerning bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT notes that it will follow law and policy to incorporate safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities into the project. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with COH on its plans for walking and bicycling facilities. TxDOT will accommodate those plans, if feasible, but COH will be responsible for operation and maintenance.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 14. Connect the existing bike trail along Little White Oak Bayou between Enid and Cavalcade, on the west side of I-45, to a new park at the retention pond areas on the east side of I-45 (where Love's Truck stop is currently), and on to the Moody Park/Woodland Park/White Oak Bayou trail. Mitigate for loss of green space along the Bayou in this area and replace the trail with an equivalent trail.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 15. In its current condition, Little White Oak Bayou does not extend across I-610 and I 45 in its natural state. Design the freeway such that Little White Oak Bayou is to be maintained as a natural greenway, with the ability to extend multiuse trails along the bayou to connect the Heights, Northside, Acres Home and Independence Heights neighborhoods.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*C. Segment 2* 16. Little White Oak Bayou suffers from freeway pollution from both run-off and litter. Current TXDOT plans include detention basins on the east side of the freeway along the Little White Oak Bayou channel. Consider creating detention ponds that are open and unfenced, planted with native plants which filter dissolved pollutants from freeway run-off. Install a trash mitigation system that will collect both heavy debris and floating debris. There are several locations along Little White Oak Bayou where this could be installed and maintained. Ideally it would be located upstream of both Moody Park and Woodland Park.	Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan would be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 17. Reconfigure the design of the local network to the new frontage road along I-610 and I-45 on the northeast side of the interchange. Create a two-way T-intersection instead of the proposed one way connection to Reid Road. Evaluate the option to extend Melbourne Street to the I 45 northbound frontage road.	The schematic was revised to reflect two-way operation between Reid Road and Melbourne Street; additionally, Melbourne Street connects to the proposed NB frontage road.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	C. Segment 2 18. The City appreciates the extension of frontage roads under the I-610 at IH-45 interchange. These roadways and intersections should be designed to also allow safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings. The large radius turn lanes are not typically supportive of safe, comfortable crossings at these locations. Ensure the design maintains safe multi-modal accessibility across the IH 45 and I-610 interchange. This is particularly critical for bicycle and pedestrian access.	One of the primary benefits of the project is that TxDOT is able to incorporate frontage roads through the I-45/I-610 interchange that do not exist today. This will allow for bike/pedestrian traffic to safely pass through the interchange versus having to use the indirect routes of using the city street grid system (Fulton, Crosstimbers, Airline, and Cavalcade).
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 1. Ensure proposed design accommodates future two-way high capacity transit on IH- 69/US 59 with particular focus on Spur 527. Direct or expedited connections from the existing HOV /HOT to Wheeler Transit Center should also be explored.	I-69 south of and including Spur 527 is being evaluated by TxDOT in a separate study.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 2. With the proposed reconfiguration of I-69 at Wheeler Transit Center (TC), there is an opportunity to improve multi-modal circulation, increase access to the transit center, create open space, and provide for future transit capacity with the University Corridor and US 90A transit connections. The City has initiated discussions with Metro and the Midtown TIRZ regarding jointly developing a plan for this area. Continue to coordinate with these entities to ensure this area, including the proposed deck park cap, is designed to maximize future transit and development opportunities.	TxDOT has coordinated with the COH and METRO regarding a highway cap in this area.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 3. The current schematic does not show an exit point for the Wheeler TC driveway. Identify how the design of the street network could minimize t rain/roadway conflicts (e.g., train does not cross streets in the middle of intersections) while maximizing transit operations and TOD potential. Design should accommodate future two-way express bus service on IH-69 with focus on Spur 527. Direct or expedited HOV connect ions to Wheeler TC should also be explored.	With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO regarding the planned University Line BRT (included in MetroNext referendum) and two-way express bus service along I-69/US 59 throughout the final design phase and through our ongoing I-69/US 59 Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 4. Ensure the Wheeler bridge is designed to accommodate the proposed University Corridor LRT, 4 vehicular Lanes, and pedestrian accommodations.	The Wheeler Street typical section was revised to include 4 vehicular lanes and a 15-foot wide Pedestrian Realm. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction. Additional information from METRO regarding future plans for the University LRT would be needed to evaluate whether this proposal could be accommodated.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 5. Evaluate options to maintain the Blodgett connection from San Jacinto to Main St. This street provides a useful connection to the bus operations at the Transit Center. With the redesign of the San Jacinto on-ramp to east side of street, this connection should be achievable.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 6. The IH-69 exit to Main Street near the Wheeler Transit Center should be designed to allow improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safe crossings as identified in Houston Bike Plan/METRO Bike & Ride studies.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 7. Ensure all bridges, including Montrose, La Branch, Austin, and Almeda, are wide enough for safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings.	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.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 8. In accordance with the Houston Bike Plan, the project should accommodate a separated pedestrian and bicycle facility along the south side of IH-69 between Graustark and Main Street. Evaluate feasibility and accommodate a grade separated trail extension below Montrose bridge since midblock crossing at the bridge may be challenging.	TxDOT will evaluate and try to accommodate plans provided by others for a pedestrian and bicycle facility in this area. A grade separated facility under Montrose would not be feasible within the currently proposed right-of-way as it would require shifting the retaining wall out and constructing a longer bridge. The relocated transmission towers between Montrose and Main will use up most of the proposed ROW behind the proposed retaining wall. CenterPoint has not confirmed the size and location of these towers within the ROW, but CenterPoint's approval would be required to construct a trail in close proximity to their relocated towers to allow maintenance access for their facilities.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 9. Re-evaluate the loss of the existing downtown connector tied into Franklin to see if it could be better used as part of express bus network or as an alignment for a light rail extension.	The connector cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. The connector would be replaced with a dedicated bus lane along I-10.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 10. As currently proposed, the primary access to and egress from the SH 288 managed lanes woulbe provided on Chenevert Street south of Elgin. This causes negative impacts to the residential area of eastern Midtown. The freeway ramps would disrupt the neighborhood fabric and encourage unsafe vehicle speeds in a residential area. The design should be reconfigured to connect the 288 managed lane entrance and exit ramps to Hamilton and Chartres that serve as the frontage roads. Doing so would provide a more direct route than Midtown surface streets with fewer impacts to residential areas. If Chenevert connection is maintained, there should be design elements in place to slow traffic through the neighborhood to appropriate speeds. Area south of Baldwin Park should be redesigned to reflect a neighborhood context without sweeping high speed curves in streets. Francis Street could be designed as a T-intersection with Chenevert. This would allow the block between Chenevert, Francis, Jackson, and Stewart to be reassembled as a full city block for green space or development opportunities.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St. Connecting Holman St. between Holman St. and Chenevert St. is not possible due to conflicts with the proposed I-69/SH 288 interchange.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 11. The proposed access from Chenevert to the extension of Hamilton Street can be designed as a 2 lane local street. As part of the removal of the ramps from Chenevert, the grid of local streets should be reconnected including Francis, Chenevert, and Holman Streets. Reintroducing the grid of the streets would create surplus land that TxDOT could utilize for the development of affordable housing. Connecting Holman Street through to Hamilton Street would obviate the need for the freeway-style ramps connecting to Chenevert Street south of Holman Street. Removing them would be more consistent with the context of the neighborhood while improving safety, reducing right-of-way acquisition, and creating more surplus right-of-way.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St. Connecting Holman St. between Holman St. and Chenevert St. is not possible due to conflicts with the proposed I-69/SH 288 interchange.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 12. Coordinate with the City to consider widening the Almeda bridge to allow simple buffer buildings {e.g. IH-670 in Columbus, OH}. This would reduce the view of freeway and make a more seamless commercial corridor experience on this important roadway.	TxDOT will evaluate the feasibility of widening Almeda Rd. to add buffer buildings, but any option to widen the bridge and any improvements would need to be paid for by others.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	D. Segment 3 Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69 13. Justify why Caroline Street warrants 4 lanes with a dedicated left turn lane at Wheeler Street. Maintain the current 4 lane configuration with a wide median across I-69 to maintain the existing character of Caroline Street. City supports preserving the existing esplanade and does not support removing esplanade to create a dedicated left turn lane.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 14. Where frontage roads are proposed, such as between Midtown and Museum Park or between Downtown and the East End, please define which intersections would be proposed for signalization or all-way stop control. This will greatly impact people's ability to cross at these locations, especially those walking or biking. Please consider all of these intersections for either a signal or all-way stop control.	This is an important consideration for the project and was closely coordinated with the City and other stakeholders during this phase of development. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and other stakeholders regarding the final design configurations and operations of City streets that intersect with the state system. Traffic signal warrant studies will be conducted during the upcoming final design phase.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 15. Tuam Street is a loca l street and does not warrant a 4 lane cross section. Redesign as 2 lanes with left turn lanes and dedicated bike lanes.	Based on discussions with the COH, the number of lanes on the proposed Tuam Street bridge will match the existing lanes on each side of the bridge. TxDOT has also added a 17-ft Pedestrian Realm on each side to safely accommodate bike/ped traffic across the bridge. This is reflected in the FEIS schematic.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 16. Re-evaluate the need for 5 lanes on McGowen Street. Two lanes with dedicated left turn lane and bike lanes may be adequate based on the existing and projected capacity. Revise the design of Hamilton and McGowen to remove the free flowing right turn lane.	Based on discussions with the COH, the number of lanes on the proposed McGowen Street bridge will match the existing lanes on each side of the bridge. TxDOT has also added a 17-ft Pedestrian Realm on each side to safely accommodate bike/ped traffic across the bridge. This is reflected in the FEIS schematic. TxDOT analyzed this free flow right turn and found the projected turning movements and traffic mix do not warrant including it. The schematic has been revised to remove this free flow right turn.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 17. The proposed Chartres Street at McGowen Street location should be redesigned to limit ROW taking on new residential development.	In response to public comment, TxDOT has revised the schematic to reflect reconstruction of the frontage road cross section to match existing conditions. No additional ROW will be taken from the residential development located south of McGowen Street.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 18. Redesign the Webster Street and Hamilton Street intersection as a T intersection to improve pedestrian accessibility.	TxDOT will work with the COH to optimize pedestrian accessibility at the noted location.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 19. Southbound Hamilton at McGowen and northbound Chartres at Elgin should be designed without sweeping right turn lanes.	TxDOT analyzed these free flow right turns and found the projected turning movements and traffic mix do not warrant including it. The schematic has been revised to remove these free flow right turns.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69* 20. Include bike lanes and wide sidewalks on Elgin, Tuam and McGowen bridges.	17-foot Pedestrian Realms have been added to all three noted bridges. This includes a 7-ft sidewalk, 5-ft bike lane, and a 5-ft buffer behind the back of curb. Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. This will be further explored during detailed design.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	D. Segment 3 Segment 3 South: US 59/IH-69 21. Coordinate with the City and the Midtown Management District to include decorative lighting on new bridges along I-69 in a manner similar to those in Montrose along I-69.	Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. This will be further explored during detailed design.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 1. Planning and advanced funding for relocation of affordable homes at their replacement value, as well as relocation assistance to existing residents, should be done in timely and comprehensive manner. This applies to the 368 units within the Houston Housing Authority Clayton Homes and Kelly Village facilities as well as the Temenos Community Development Corporation facility.	TxDOT coordinated and will continue coordinating with the HHA and representatives of other community facilities, housing, and businesses used by low-income and/or minority populations, and other sensitive populations, to discuss the proposed project and potential impacts and mitigation. Documentation of the coordination and outcomes is included in the Community Impact Assessment Technical Report and Final EIS. All property acquisition and relocations will be handled in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to all persons and businesses required to relocate. Displaced persons and businesses will receive relocation benefits as provided by federal and state law.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 2. The area around the proposed expansion on the east side of Chartres St has multiple historic resources that will be removed. Though not designated, most buildings that are proposed for demolition serve the community economically and as a sense of place and context for the Cheek-Neal Coffee Co. Building. Effects on this area and buildings should be considered.	A comprehensive survey was conducted to document NRHP-eligible buildings and/or districts and this area was not identified as either. The vast majority of buildings in the area that would be acquired were constructed in the 1950s and later; these are not from the same period of significance as Cheek Neal (constructed in 1917) and are not a part of the context for that building.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 3. Connectivity between Downtown and neighborhoods to the east side has historically been limited and the project should maximize these connections to the degree feasible.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 4. The City appreciates TxDOT's previous and extensive attempts to find solutions for the Polk Street connection. Given the limited east-west connectivity in the area, doing everything possible to maintain a direct Polk Street connection is important. Please provide written verification on the feasibility of revising the design to bring freeway lane ramps down below grade further north than currently proposed, so that these ramps enter the trench between Polk and Rusk. This proposal would enable a straight, direct Polk crossing as exists today. The City understands that this change would reduce the size of the proposed park cap by several blocks. A Polk Street pedestrian and bicycle link is a critical connection to Downtown. The Lamar Street bike lane is proposed to be extended along Polk Street to connect East Downtown and other East End neighborhoods to Downtown, Main Street Rail and Buffalo Bayou. In any scenario, maintain this pedestrian-bicycle connection.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 5. The City and partners may envision the downtown/Ea Do park cap as an active greenspace with one to two story buildings. The freeway support structure should be designed with this in mind.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 6. Connect Leeland to a Leeland/Bell one-way pair as it is currently. This will require redesign of the freeway off-ramp connected to Bell. If Polk connection is eliminated, TxDOT should identify a project for grade separation of Leeland at the West Belt so that a major east west connection exists without the barrier between Eastwood and Downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. The Polk St. exit from I-69 southbound is constrained structurally and cannot be revised to allow for the one-way pair. This was evaluated during the design process. The grade separation of Leeland St. at the West Belt Subdivision rail line has been evaluated by Gulf Coast Rail District and would impact many adjacent properties. This option was also evaluated during the NHHIP design process, with the same conclusion; therefore, it is not included in the NHHIP.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 7. Include either a Runnels to McKee or a Canal to Ruiz connection. The loss of Runnels cuts off the area of the East End north of the West Belt Subdivision rail line and limits access to Downtown to just the Franklin/Navigation underpass. One of these connections should be established.	Runnels St. cannot be extended across I-69 due to the vertical transition of the highway from below-grade to elevated, and cannot be extended below I-69 within the proposed ROW of the project. An alternative east-west route is using Navigation Blvd. to Commerce St., then west on Commerce St. to Downtown.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 8. The existing two-way connection of Nance Street to Jensen is being replaced by a one-way frontage road along Rothwell. Identify another two-way connection between Jensen and Nance Street. This is important since the westbound frontage road along IH-10 is not proposed to be extended across IH-69.	The proposed design provides east-west connectivity along I-10 with the proposed Rothwell St. and Providence St. connections. The new east-west connections would be grade-separated at railroads to provide unimpeded flow. The schematic has been updated to retain the two-way traffic between Jensen and Meadows. TxDOT will evaluate adding a west-bound I-10 frontage road connection across I-69 during detail design between Meadow and Jensen.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	D. Segment 3 Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288 9. Identify options for ingress and egress from I-69 near Buffalo Bayou to improve access to and from Downtown, East Downtown, East End, and 5th Ward. This could include, for example, evaluating options for exit and/or entrance ramps to the freeway.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east . TxDOT also coordinated with the Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority and the East Bayou Civic Club regarding access for the Fifth Ward area. TxDOT developed a revised design to grade-separate Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at grade. Other suggested improvements, including an additional northbound exit from I-69 near Buffalo Bayou were evaluated but were determined to not be feasible due to the proximity of I-10 direct connectors and inadequate distance to transition from the below-grade section of I-69.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 10. The proposed design has limited connectivity to the 5th Ward areas north of Buffalo Bayou. The exit ramp for Jensen previously proposed has been removed. Provide alternate access from 5th Ward to mitigate any loss of access. Evaluate options to extend Bringhurst across I 10 to enhance connectivity across I 10. Providing an additional crossing of IH-10 between Gregg St and Hirsch St would be beneficial, given potential nearby redevelopment.	The exit ramp to Jensen St. is not being removed, it would be relocated to the west to coincide with the existing exit to Rothwell St. TxDOT has coordinated with local stakeholders including Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority, East Bayou Civic Club, Greater Northside Management District, and others regarding local access for the area. Proposed access improvement include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. Extending Bringhurst St. would require significant raising of the I-10 mainlane profile, which would impact the proposed entrance and exit ramps between Waco St. and Gregg St.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 11. Maintain Walker Street crossing between St. Emanuel and Hamilton as an extension of Columbia Tap trail to west side of SB frontage road (instead of as a street crossing) then bring trail south to Polk St. along the back of the convention center.	Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 12. Ensure Buffalo Bayou trails can connect to East End/Fifth Ward though detention area and freeway crossings. This is critical connection for the East End.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership during final design regarding accommodating trails to/from Buffalo Bayou.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 13. Consider making more bridges and related traffic control two-way (e.g., Leeland, Commerce). This should be paired with consideration of more two-way streets in the southeast area of downtown, which has been proposed at a concept level in the draft Plan Downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). The COH is evaluating the overall local street network including possible conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets and is responsible for determining the operation (one-way or two-way) of city streets.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 14. The loss of Downtown to East End/East Downtown connectivity at Polk and Runnels also impacts METRO service from the East End to Downtown. This will increase complexity for routes 40, 41, and 48, impact reliability for customers, and potentially incur service costs for METRO. Keeping Polk open would mitigate some of these issues and is recommended.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 15. Proposed Lamar St at St. Emanuel intersection is difficult to see on the schematic but seems awkward with difficult geometry.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	D. Segment 3 Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288 16. When reconstructing METRO's Green/Purple line crossing of I-69/I-45 trench between East End and downtown, design larger radii turns to support faster train operation speeds. Improve signal operations for rail crossing at St. Emanuel and design Hamilton crossing to work effectively.	TxDOT coordinated with METRO regarding the operations and construction of these lines. METRO did not propose any changes to the existing configuration of the lines, however TxDOT will continue to coordinate with them during detailed design.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 17. Coordinate with the City of Houston and METRO about the potential for dedicated transit lanes on Capital and Rusk as well as rail connection through proposed cap park.	TxDOT coordinated with METRO regarding the operations and construction of these lines. METRO did not propose any changes to the existing configuration of the lines, however TxDOT will continue to coordinate with them during detailed design.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 18. Ensure potential bottle necks are evaluated and eliminated as needed: a. Evaluate if the IH-45/IH-69N to IH-10 Ramp can be separated to eliminate some of the likely weaving though that section. b. IH-69S south of downtown merges seven southbound lanes into six lanes, which drop to four lanes once two lanes exit to local streets on south end of midtown. This could result in a major bottleneck similar to the existing IH-69 NB at the Spur.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email		Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 19. In the area north of Minute Maid Park, the operations of the proposed southbound frontage road and existing Hamilton appear problematic. Having two parallel one-way streets traveling the same direction and located 100' apart could create conflicting queues for motorists both on these streets and crossing them. Consider consolidating these streets or revising ramp access.	The layout of the City street system was closely coordinated with the City of Houston and other stakeholders. Signage will be designed and installed to indicate and manage traffic flow from all streets.

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553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 20. Ensure underpass at Commerce/Navigation proposed by GCFRD can be constructed with acceptable and safe grades/visibility for all modes of traffic.	The NHHIP design has been revised to better accommodate the proposed Commerce/Navigation underpass design that is a Gulf Coast Rail District/City of Houston project. The NHHIP design revision includes shifting St. Emanuel St. closer to I-69 which improves the grades/visibility for all modes of traffic that the City will allow in the future underpass and also allows the St. Emanuel St./Franklin St. connection to function in both the existing or reconstructed Commerce/Navigation underpass configuration should it move forward.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 21. The intersection of Franklin and St. Emanuel frontage road may require reconsideration given existing grades, typical travel speeds, and sight distance, should the full underpass be built.	The NHHIP design has been revised to accommodate the proposed Commerce/Navigation underpass project by GCRD and the City of Houston by shifting the location of St. Emanuel closer to I-69. Even in the absence of construction of the Commerce/Navigation underpass, St. Emanuel will be constructed to meet TxDOT design criteria.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 22. Ensure rail underpasses are built with drainage improvements to avoid flooding.	All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 23. Ensure at grade crossings of railroads is avoided in the proposed design for enhanced freight and vehicular circulation and safety.	The project goals were to remove as many at-grade railroad crossings as possible to improve safety and capacity. The project creates no new at-grade crossings and replaces four (4) existing at-grade crossings with grade separations.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 East: IH-69, IH-45, SH 288* 24. Consider designing the proposed detention basin north of Runnels as a wet bottom basin that is a publicly accessible gateway feature from the bayou trail system.	A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 1. Address the increased barrier between the Northside neighborhood and the Central Business District due to the wider footprint of the roadway.	TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto St. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design will minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 2. This realigned segment of I10 and I 45 has significant impact on existing businesses in an area already impacted by freight rail lines. Coordinate with the City and UPRR on the potential to realign the freight main along the passenger main to remove rail crossings through Downtown.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with HB&T, BNSF, and UPRR railroad representatives, and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. Please note the project will accomplish some nearby grade separations. After coordinating with local stakeholders, TxDOT determined to grade-separate Rothwell Street and Providence Street under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jenson Drive and Main Street will no longer cross the tracks at-grade.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 3. Planning and design should facilitate connection between area north of UPRR on the north side of the post office site to Downtown. This could potentially be incorporated into the design for the Downtown Connector, and/or the Bagby and Washington Avenue extension design.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 4. Plan for the extension of San Jacinto Street to Fulton including potential grade separation at the UP Passenger Main crossing which is impactful to drivers and transit in this area.	TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 5. Provide improved version of existing pedestrian and bicycle bridge crossings of freeway east of Elysian and link to a new north-south trail connecting to Near Northside.	The existing crossing would be replaced as part of the NHHIP. TxDOT evaluated options for a new bridge, including possibly constructing it under Elysian St., as suggested by others. However, this is not possible because it would not meet vertical clearance requirements with the reconstructed Providence and Rothwell streets. The revised schematic shows the proposed location of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge just west of the BNSF rail crossing. This location will provide improved pedestrian connectivity compared to the existing conditions.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 6. The schematic drawings should define or allow street network under the freeway segment of IH 10 north of Downtown designated "Excess ROW."	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP, including the area noted. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 7. McKee and Hardy streets provide pedestrian bicycle connectivity between Buffalo Bayou and the Northside neighborhood. Ensure bridges across I 10 are designed to incorporate safe pedestrian crossing and high comfort bike facilities.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects. TxDOT has agreed to follow the requirements of the COH Bike Plan. There will be a pedestrian/bicycle connection across I-10 at Hardy St. and McKee St.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 8. The loss of the existing downtown connector tied into Franklin should be re-evaluated to see if it could be used as part of a high capacity transit network or light rail extension.	The connector cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. The connector would be replaced with a dedicated bus lane along I-10.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 9. Coordinate with the City, METRO and Texas Central Partners to accommodate a high capacity transit connection to the Northwest Transit Center and proposed High Speed Rail Terminal. The existing I-10 corridor west of Segment 3 could be planned to include the extension of METRO's purple and green lines. The current NHHIP plans do not consider this connectivity, and in fact, might preclude it, since the plans call for the demolition of the HOV ramp.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO; METRO is evaluating potential options for BRT connections from the Northwest Transit Center and proposed High Speed Rail Terminal to Downtown. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design of the NHHIP. The existing downtown connector would be relocated approximately 1/4 mile east of the current connector. The proposed project would provide a dedicated bus lane to/from Downtown to replace the operations of the existing downtown connector. The replacement of the HOV ramp with the I-10 express lanes does not preclude METRO's extension of the purple and green light rail lines.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 10. The City requests that TxDOT begin a collaborative design process with the City and METRO to plan how connection of future I-10 high capacity facilities would connect to the downtown grid.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO; METRO is evaluating potential options for BRT connections from the Northwest Transit Center and proposed High Speed Rail Terminal to Downtown. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design of the NHHIP.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 11. Reconstruct Hogan, Quitman, McKee and Hardy bridges with safe pedestrian and bike friendly crossings and sidewalks.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 12. The proposed realignment of the freeway near Hardy Yards will have significant noise and visual impacts. The current DEIS does not adequately address mitigation along this area.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report demonstrates no predicted traffic noise impacts at the existing residential development in the Hardy Yards area as a result of the proposed project. Per FHWA and TxDOT noise policy, impacts are not evaluated and noise mitigation is not proposed for currently undeveloped areas. TxDOT will design bridges in consideration of visual aesthetics, including views from the Near Northside super neighborhood and surrounding areas, including Hardy Yards.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 North: I 45, I 10* 13. The DEIS does not adequately reflect the impact on White Oak Bayou greenway. Coordinate with stakeholders to mitigate these impacts.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to maintain existing open space and replace affected open space by creating new open space where feasible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. Impacts to parks, open spaces along the bayous, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some resources are likely unavoidable. The proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou and the existing hike/bike trail would remain. The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The impact would be primarily aerial (bridges over the open space), with some columns to support the bridges. The primary use of the White Oak Bayou greenway in the area of the NHHIP is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 1. Review potential to maintain IH-10 HOV Connector near Amtrak Station coordinating with METRO to address express transit connectivity from downtown to NW transit center. If the IH-10 Connector is removed as proposed, allow provision for Washington Ave. connection.	The connector cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10 and Downtown Connector. Through coordination with METRO, the IH-10 HOV connector would be replaced with a dedicated bus/HOV lane along the eastbound I-10 Express Lanes so that buses and HOV access directly to Smith Street. TxDOT studied a connection from the Downtown Connectors to Washington Ave and Memorial Blvds, but a safe connection will not work as the Downtown Connectors need to remain elevated above the UPRR rail line and thus TxDOT could not make a ramp meet minimum design criteria.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 2. Allow for Houston Avenue realignment and direct connection to Walker/McKinney as proposed by the Downtown District.	TxDOT evaluated this in coordination with the COH and stakeholders and it was determined that a connection between Walker St./McKinney St. and Houston Ave. is not feasible due to vertical restrictions associated with the Downtown Connectors and Buffalo Bayou. Termination of the two-way north-south surface street north of the bayou would adversely impact local connectivity.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 3. Allow for reconnection of Dart Street under the freeway to allow direct local access from the First Ward to Downtown, as proposed by the Downtown District.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 4. The proposed one way connection from Walker/McKinney loop street should be removed since it separates Sam Houston Park from Buffalo Bayou. This is also a key biking and jogging route from downtown to the bayou and creates a dangerous crossing point on a heavily-used route.	TxDOT studied historic resources in accordance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. TxDOT met with the COH and maintaining a Walker St. connection to Allen Parkway was requested. At this time, no change to the project design is proposed. TxDOT is open to discussing this connection further with the COH.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 5. In the proposed configuration along Heiner Street between the Fourth Ward and Downtown, the facility will have a narrower footprint than exists now. This presents the opportunity to use the leftover space to create a linear park connecting Midtown and Fourth Ward to Buffalo Bayou. Consider incorporating this into the proposal or designing the facility in such a way to accommodate this.	In response to requests from stakeholders, TxDOT revised the design to provide additional space for a shared-use path along Heiner Street between Bagby and Dallas Street. The path itself will be constructed on this additional space by organizations other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of this path.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 6. The proposed Downtown Connector should be designed to allow Andrews Street to connect frp, 4th Ward to Downtown. If a regular street connection is not possible, then the connection could be built as a walking and biking path to connect 4th Ward to Downtown.	TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St. TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 7. Evaluate whether the downtown connector on the west side of downtown could be brought down to grade further north, so that the elevated section ends near West Dallas and Allen Parkway. This will allow for more green space, room for multi-modal transportation facilities, and restoration of the historic street grid in this area south of W. Dallas Street.	TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 8. Instead of an off-ramp from a cloverleaf ramp, connect Clay Street as a two-way road between Allen Parkway and Dallas Street to provide access to Sam Houston and Buffalo Bayou Parks.	TxDOT reviewed this suggestion with the COH and a two-lane Clay configuration between Allen Parkway and West Dallas will not work with the existing Polk/Clay one-way pair configuration into downtown which will not be changed in the NHHIP. Therefore, it was decided to maintain the one lane Clay configuration shown in the schematics. Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT is coordinating with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 9. Potential impacts to visual quality, noise, and historic resources need to be more closely considered for Sam Houston Park.	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project would significantly reduce the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT has documented Sam Houston Park and historic-age buildings and structures within the park boundaries. The park itself is not NRHP-eligible. The NRHP-listed and Registered Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL)-designated boundaries for the Kellum-Noble House are limited to the immediate vicinity of the house. The Texas SHPO agreed that the proposed project would have no adverse effect to the Kellum-Noble House. Study results are documented in the Final Historical Resources Survey Report (September 2019). Traffic noise was modeled at parks near the proposed project; results are documented in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. At Sam Houston Park, noise levels are predicted to decrease by 3 decibels at approximately the center of the park as a result of the proposed project.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 10. Sabine Street at Allen Parkway should be a T-intersection without the sweeping right turn.	Sabine Street at Allen Parkway has been revised to reflect a T-intersection without sweeping right turns.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	D. Segment 3 Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated 11. The realignment of I-45 along Pierce Elevated creates a unique opportunity to connect adjoining neighborhoods with a unique urban space. We look forward to working with TxDOT to discuss options along this corridor.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and stakeholders regarding the project and agree this coordination has resulted in many positive enhancements to the design presented in the DEIS. For example, TxDOT redesigned the Downtown connectors to be below grade at Andrews St. to allow for a pedestrian/bicyclist connection between Fourth Ward and Downtown. TxDOT will continue to work with these groups throughout future phases of the project to address community concerns.
553	City of Houston	7/25/2017	Email	*D. Segment 3* *Segment 3 West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated* 12. Coordinate with the City regarding the future of the Pierce Elevated Freeway, including options such as its demolition or its preservation and repurposing. If preferred by the City, locate and design the downtown connectors to preserve some of the existing freeway bridge structures.	The project also significantly reduces the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT will coordinate with stakeholders during detailed design to identify opportunities to enhance open spaces and amenities along the bayous. As the project significantly reduces the highway footprint between Dallas Street and Houston Avenue in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown cannot be left in place as it conflicts with the proposed design. However, the portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment by others. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	We write to you as a coalition of Houston neighborhood, civic, parks, transportation, quality of life and historic preservation groups. All of our organizations have worked for many years to improve our city. And although we all fully recognize the need for thoughtful infrastructure and mobility improvements for our growing region, we share strong concerns that TxDOT's North Houston Highway Improvement Project is being designed in a manner that runs counter to our work and to what makes Houston great – our diverse neighborhoods, our parks, our connections to one another, and our bayous.	During development of the NHHIP, TxDOT has worked to develop a project that minimizes adverse impacts to neighborhoods, parks, other community facilities, and the bayous; provides positive impacts where feasible; and improves highway mobility and safety in the area. Since receiving the coalition's letter, TxDOT has conducted follow-up meetings with representatives of the coalition to discuss the comments provided, and has revised the proposed project in response to input received from the coalition and neighborhood groups and residents, property owners, agencies and other stakeholders. Project design changes after publication of the Draft EIS are summarized in Section 2 of the Final EIS. Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts are discussed in the Final EIS and associated technical reports. These responses to comments discuss some of the efforts by TxDOT to be evaluate and address the needs and concerns of the coalition members and other stakeholders.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	Our groups believe that this project must be evaluated in the context of Mayor Turner's drive for Complete Communities, particularly given the unfortunate legacy of highway projects that split communities, especially low-income neighborhoods. The project must serve Houston's current and future economic development needs – not just from the perspective of developed land which will permanently come off the tax rolls and be unavailable for commerce and industry – but also from the perspective of all those qualities which make our city a desirable place to live.	TxDOT has coordinated with the City (including Mayor Turner, city council members, and city departments) during development of the NHHIP. The COH is an EIS Participating Agency and TxDOT held five group meetings for participating agencies at key project milestones. In addition, TxDOT and the NHHIP Study Team have attended dozens of coordination meetings with City representatives to discuss the City's desires and concerns related to the project. TxDOT is coordinating with COH, including consideration of the Mayor's goals as described in the Complete Communities initiative (four of the five identified communities are adjacent to NHHIP). A significant part of the City's initiative is to listen to residents in the identified communities, and know their goals and desires for their community. During the preparation of the EIS for the NHHIP, TxDOT has met and listened to these same communities.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	We understand from TxDOT's "purpose and need" statement that the I-45 expansion must be viewed in a regional context. Some of the traffic the project is estimated to carry will have its destination inside the City of Houston, but much of it will have regional destinations. For this reason, it is critical that TxDOT delivers a project that leaves Houston in a better position than before, and takes care to ensure that the I-45 expansion does not negatively impact the city in order to deliver benefits to surrounding areas.	Comment noted.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	We believe that while the I-45 expansion may offer regional mobility benefits, it must also be evaluated against the broader goal of intra-city and neighborhood mobility. To serve Houston's interests, at a minimum, the project should improve mobility across all transportation modes within the city, and it should improve mobility on surface streets for all modes of transportation, whether people or engine-powered.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	Our concerns have grown as we have closely reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that TxDOT has made available for public comment. Many organizations within this coalition participated in the scoping process for the proposed project in 2015, as did the City of Houston. The DEIS does not reflect far too many of the scoping suggestions made by both the City and our organizations during that public comment period. Furthermore, despite these suggestions, TxDOT has made very few commitments in response to those scoping comments.	As required by the NEPA process, TxDOT solicited, received, and evaluated public input that helped to identify items such as the project purpose and need, alternatives, evaluation criteria, and environmental constraints. While all comments received are recorded and evaluated, not all comments are found to be applicable and feasible for implementation. TxDOT is continuing to consider all comments received (and will continue to do so even after the FEIS and Record of Decision) and, where feasible, has incorporated community concerns into the schematics and environmental documents. For example, TxDOT has, as was suggested by the Coalition, met and has continued to work with the Harris County Flood Control District on drainage and flooding issues. Another example, in response to the COH comments submitted on May 29, 2015, TxDOT agreed with COH that Houston Avenue will have two-way traffic to North Main Street. TxDOT has also, as was suggested by COH, added to the project highway caps in two areas on Segment 3 in Midtown. As the project evolves, additional suggestions and requests from the community will be incorporated into the project. Since receiving the coalition's letter, TxDOT has conducted follow-up meetings with representatives of the coalition to discuss the comments provided, and has revised the proposed project in response to input received from the coalition and neighborhood groups and residents, property owners, agencies and other stakeholders. Project design changes after publication of the Draft EIS are summarized in Section 2 of the Final EIS. Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts are discussed in the Final EIS and associated technical reports. These responses to comments discuss some of the efforts by TxDOT to be evaluate and address the needs and concerns of the coalition members and other stakeholders.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	The proposed rebuilding and rerouting of I-45 / I-10 at the expense of numerous neighborhoods, signature parks, and Houston's evolving linear park system represents the kind of single-purpose, massive highway project that most American cities are actively dismantling, not building. Projects such as this divide and often have the effect of destroying communities. This potential for division is not adequately addressed in the DEIS. At a time when Houston seeks to build complete communities, TxDOT takes a single-purpose approach to land use in Houston. Where the DEIS does disclose certain impacts, it transfers the necessary mitigation of these impacts to others. Furthermore, the DEIS does not adequately identify which other entities will be responsible for mitigation or the agreements reached with those third parties. Other than passing references to Metro and the Houston Bike Plan, it largely fails to put the Highway Improvement Project into a comprehensive transportation plan context. Consideration of integrating mass transit, local streets and pedestrian / bike routes, and new linear parks being built around the city are not contemplated in the DEIS.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation including, but not limited to, METRO, City of Houston, and Bike Houston. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report includes more detail about coordination with stakeholders. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	We have set forth below general comments and examples of how this project does not meet Houston's transportation, neighborhood and quality of life needs. We have also attached a detailed list of the specific issues we urge TxDOT to address. In our comments, we have broadly characterized these deficiencies across several areas: • Disproportionate impact to low-income communities • Impact to economic development opportunities • Impact to parks and recreation areas • Poorly conceived highway/urban interfaces • Noise impacts • Air quality impacts • Visual impacts • Impacts on walkability and cycling • Water quality and flooding impacts	The Final EIS includes technical analysis of each of the items noted in your comment.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	We understand the North Houston Highway Improvement Project's automotive benefits, but the project will have significant impacts on communities, multi-modal safety, and the environment that the DEIS does not adequately address. Given the substantive deficiencies in the DEIS, it should be supplemented and the public process kept open until such time as TxDOT fully addresses the impacts as summarized in this letter and its attached detailed comments.	The Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. The DEIS, by nature, is a preliminary analysis based on best available information at the time. TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters (including the Coalition) have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for a minimum of 30 days. Additionally, TxDOT will provide another 30-day comment period once the Final EIS is published.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Disproportionate Impact to Low-Income Communities** The DEIS clearly states that the proposed project will have a "disproportionate impact on low-income and disadvantaged communities." A plain reading of the DEIS indicates that these impacts include visual, noise, air pollution, and the splitting of communities. Executive Order 12898 requires that Federal agencies make achieving environmental justice part of their mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. The Federal Highway Administration delegated to TxDOT their Federal and NEPA compliance responsibilities; the document fails to explain how this responsibility is being fulfilled by TxDOT.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Disproportionate Impact to Low-Income Communities (cont.)* The DEIS makes clear that the project will displace dozens of single-family homes, many hundreds of multi-family housing units (many of which are public housing), thousands of jobs, houses of worship, schools and social services. These impacts will occur largely in low-income black and Hispanic communities. The project will exacerbate physical barriers between neighborhoods, and between neighborhoods and downtown, and again, most of these affected communities are low-income.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The DEIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. All property acquisition and relocations will be handled in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. TxDOT's acquisition and relocation assistance program will provide assistance and counseling to all persons and businesses required to relocate. Displaced persons and businesses will receive relocation benefits as provided by federal and state law. There are multiple examples where the proposed project will remove physical barriers and add new connections to improve connectivity (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) between minority and/or low-income communities. Additional information is included in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Disproportionate Impact to Low-Income Communities (cont.)* The proposed project further separates low-income neighborhoods from opportunities. For example, Polk Street's connection to downtown will be eliminated, despite its important role as a critical east-west connector between Downtown and routes to the East End and Third Ward for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that we can restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. We devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however we found that we could not get enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Disproportionate Impact to Low-Income Communities (cont.)* On the segment between 610 and Beltway 8, which includes the edge of the historic Acres Homes neighborhood, TxDOT proposes widening I-45. Unlike higher income areas of town, or even in the areas between I-10 and 610, TxDOT does not propose to build the highway below grade.	The decision to depress or elevate a freeway is based on several factors. For the engineering analysis, the primary consideration was how to most effectively address safety issues, enhance connectivity, and reduce congestion.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Disproportionate Impact to Low-Income Communities (cont.)* The U.S. Census Bureau shows the largest share of people who bike, in large car-dependent cities like Houston, are in lower-income brackets. Given the immediate surrounding neighborhoods and the location of our Bayou Greenways, current and future bicycle infrastructure, bicycle connectivity is of paramount concern for these low-income communities (see below for more detail).	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. 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, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Impact to Economic Development Opportunities** The proposed project will take significant amounts of private land currently on Houston's tax rolls and will eliminate the possibility of economic activity on a permanent basis. These include high value real estate in the EaDo area and many other acres of land across the city. TxDOT estimates an annual $789,000 residential property tax loss, $1.2 million business property tax loss, $1.0 million other property tax loss, and $5.2 million potential sales tax loss. These losses do not account for degradation of property values due to visual and noise impacts. Discounting these losses at the City of Houston's cost of capital of approximately 4%, the present value of these losses is on the order of $200 million, again without accounting for the loss in value to adjacent properties due to noise and visual impacts. The DEIS does not propose any mitigation strategy for these impacts, other than the possibility of platforms upon which to build parks costing hundreds of millions of dollars, paid for by unidentified third parties, that may enhance nearby property values.	The project would improve mobility and reduce user delay costs, which would have positive economic benefits and increase potential development opportunities. TxDOT has been coordinating with the COH, management districts, and TIRZs to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Impact to Parks and Recreation Areas** The DEIS simply ignores or dismisses the impact of the project on parks, recreation, and open space, and dramatically underestimates the impact to Houston's bayou parkland. Using TxDOT's May 2017 Schematic to estimate Bayou Greenway and parks impacts, Houston will lose approximately 27 acres of current open space. These impacts are not disclosed or contemplated in the DEIS. The following tables estimate the park and recreation area impacts of the proposed project. *note- see coalition letter for tables with estimate of park and recreation area impacts*	The analysis in the DEIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. With respect to 4(f) resources, the Final EIS abides by relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and FHWA 4(f) guidelines.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Impact to Parks and Recreation Areas (cont.)* As TxDOT points out in the DEIS, "Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 prohibits the Secretary of Transportation from approving any program or project that requires the "use" of 1) any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance as determined by federal, state, or local officials having jurisdiction thereof…" This project has considerable impact on such areas.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**White Oak Bayou Greenway** The White Oak Bayou Greenway is part of Bayou Greenways 2020, a $220 million public/private investment by the City of Houston to provide continuous linear parks and recreation areas, with hike/bike trails, along 150 miles of Houston's major waterways. The White Oak Bayou Greenway extends over 15 miles from the city limits to UH Downtown where a federally funded TIGER project, currently under construction, is connecting White Oak Bayou Greenway to Buffalo Bayou Park. That TIGER project also includes neighborhood connections to Main St. and Leonel Castillo Community Center, plus bikeways to the transit centers on Fulton. It represents the kind of complete community effort that Houston is working toward and for which federal funds are currently being deployed.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to maintain existing open space and replace affected open space by creating new open space where feasible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. Impacts to parks, open spaces along the bayous, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some resources are likely unavoidable. The proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou and the existing hike/bike trail would remain. The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The impact would be primarily aerial (bridges over the open space), with some columns to support the bridges. The function of the White Oak Bayou greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the greenway area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the White Oak Bayou greenway in the area of the NHHIP is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH. Aesthetic improvements along Heights Bike Trail between Taylor Street and Main Street will be provided (coordinated by TxDOT with Houston Parks Board and other entities). Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*White Oak Bayou Greenway (cont.)* The 1,100 feet of White Oak Bayou Greenway from the current I-45 overpass at UH Downtown west to Hogg Park are completely open to the sky and the bayou except for small under crossings at the railroad bridge and Hogan Street. The linear park features wildflowers and a hike / bike trail maintained by the Houston Parks Board. It offers amazing views of downtown for most of its length. The impact to this visual resource and to the Greenway itself is not described in the DEIS. All that sense of open space will be significantly impacted by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. The project will extend seven new highway over-passes above the Greenway's widest stretch. The new overpasses would create an overwhelming new visual and audible intrusion onto the landscape. Moreover, additional lanes parallel to the bayou encroach further into the south side of the Greenway to the point where they impose on the bayou itself.	Visual impacts were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on the viewscape in some areas are likely unavoidable. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the during detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design, where feasible.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*White Oak Bayou Greenway (cont.)* The DEIS appears to suggest that if the project maintains just the hike/bike trail, no impact results. That ignores the impact to the Greenway and open space itself of which the hike/bike trail is just a component. The project eliminates that open space. While some freeway will be removed by the project, the Houston Parks Board estimates a net loss of 18 acres of open space effectively covered by the project in just the stretch between UH Downtown and Hogg Park. That open space will be lost forever. Because the DEIS fails to identify the impact, it fails to offer alternatives or mitigation to minimize that impact as required.	The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The impact would be primarily aerial (bridges over the open space), with some columns to support the bridges. The function of the White Oak Bayou greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the greenway area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the White Oak Bayou greenway in the area of the NHHIP is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	Little White Oak Bayou Greenway The project will remove and/or impair greenspace that now de facto serves the community as a place of respite and even as an active park with informal trails. Houston has active plans to take that acreage and make it a greenway park. The DEIS does not discuss this impact. The FEIS should address acreage of open land lost on Little White Oak, both to be covered and impaired.	The proposed project would reduce some open space along the bayous, but visibility and open space in those areas would also be improved where highway overpasses are eliminated. Per an interlocal agreement between the COH and HCFCD, COH's use of property for which HCFCD has drainage easements (such as trails along White Oak Bayou) is intended to be temporary in nature. Neither the HCFCD nor COH intend to designate any part of the trail as a park, recreation area, scientific area, wildlife refuge, or historic site for any purpose, or to dedicate any part of the trail as a park for any purpose. In meeting with the Houston Parks Board, TxDOT understands there is a vision to extend trails along Little White Oak Bayou. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Little White Oak Bayou Greenway (cont.)* Little White Oak Bayou represents a prime opportunity to extend open space connectivity north from White Oak Bayou Greenway to Woodland and Moody Parks and beyond up to Halls Bayou and ultimately Acres Homes. This connection between Acres Homes and downtown would benefit many of the underserved communities directly impacted by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. Through most of Segment 2 the project follows the course of the Little White Oak Bayou. The 20 lanes of the new I-45 will eliminate 10 acres of open space along Little White Oak Bayou. It is imperative that the project fully embrace the ecological values and open space potential offered by Little White Oak Bayou. The DEIS must be supplemented with specific design features to preserve this potential. The DEIS suggests that lack of immediate funding for some of these related projects relieves the North Houston project from addressing or mitigating impacts it creates. That is not the point. The project has an obligation to fit within larger identified Houston land use initiatives, not become another single-purpose barrier to larger land use schemes. Attachment 1 contains specific segment by segment comments on these impacts.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to replace affected open space by creating new open space where possible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Woodland, Sam Houston, and Other Parks** The DEIS identifies less than an acre of impacts to City of Houston parks. It dismisses that impact as related to marginal greenspace rather than the "use of facilities". The Houston Parks Board calculates the total loss of open space in City parks at 3.27 acres (see above). In a letter to the City of Houston's Parks and Recreation Department dated February 24, 2017, TxDOT is seeking a "de minimis" certification from the City of Houston for these impacts. The City of Houston, to date, has not concurred with this conclusion. Our coalition would not support such a conclusion. As with the Bayou Greenways, the DEIS dismisses the impact to green space and open space as non-existent if the project does not impact other features of the park.	The project complies with the relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Woodland, Sam Houston, and Other Parks (cont.)* The DEIS ignores the noise and visual impact to all of these parks. Although currently below grade at Woodland Park, I-45's constant din of freeway noise is already part of the fabric of a Woodland Park visit. With an added upper deck, above grade, the noise will be even more oppressive and incessant.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary evaluation of noise and visual impacts. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. An addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report was prepared. Both documents are included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents anticipated noise impacts to Woodland Park as a result of the project. A noise barrier is proposed at Woodland Park. The determination of, and impacts to, Section 4(f) properties were addressed in accordance with the regulations. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents potential impacts to parks. The Final EIS includes an analysis pursuant to 23 C.F.R. 774.15 of whether any noise impacts to public parks and recreation areas rise to the level of a Section 4(f) constructive use and, specifically, whether the projected noise level increase attributable to the proposed project would substantially interfere with the use and enjoyment of a noise-sensitive facility.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Woodland, Sam Houston, and Other Parks (cont.)* In recent years, the Sabine Promenade/Buffalo Bayou Park area has undergone a nearly $90 million enhancement. TxDOT's plan for this area is not appropriate since it encourages faster turn movements in a location where people should be driving slowly to be aware of people walking and biking. In addition, given the visibility of downtown from Buffalo Bayou, TxDOT's freeway standards are not appropriate.	The freeway in this area is being replaced with Downtown Connector and ramps providing access to the city street network. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. 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.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Woodland, Sam Houston, and Other Parks (cont.)* Furthermore, nearby Sam Houston Park is one of Houston's most important historical destinations, featuring the oldest building on its original construction site in Houston and the oldest surviving building in Harris County. Sam Houston Park is also a State Archaeological Landmark and contains four buildings designated as Registered Texas Historic Landmarks. One of these buildings is also registered under the NRHP. The DEIS fails to mention the visual and noise impact to this showcase of Houston's heritage. The DEIS fails to disclose whether or not these properties are registered under the NRHP, and whether the Texas SHPO has or has not concurred with the effects of the project.	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project would significantly reduce the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT has documented Sam Houston Park and historic-age buildings and structures within the park boundaries. The park itself is not NRHP-eligible. The NRHP-listed and Registered Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL)-designated boundaries for the Kellum-Noble House are limited to the immediate vicinity of the house. The Texas SHPO agreed that the proposed project would have no adverse effect to the Kellum-Noble House. Study results are documented in the Final Historical Resources Survey Report (September 2019). Traffic noise was modeled at parks near the proposed project; results are documented in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. At Sam Houston Park, noise levels are predicted to decrease by 3 decibels at approximately the center of the park as a result of the proposed project.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Deck Parks** The DEIS makes reference to potential deck parks while clearly absolving the project from any responsibility in funding and creating the parks. Many of our organizations have been involved over the years in raising private and public funds to expand parks in Houston and provide other amenities. These deck parks discussed in the DEIS can only be designed if the capping greenspace is designed to account for the weight of the parks. These designs must be created and paid for as part of the highway project, or TxDOT's suggestion of decking is meaningless.	The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Deck Parks(cont.)* It will be difficult to raise private and public money for deck parks if TxDOT is permitted to destroy the open spaces unlocked by the Bayou Greenways Initiative. The project exacerbates divides created in Houston by freeways by creating a massive trench with double freeway width on the east side of downtown. A proposed deck park there appears to be approximately 30 acres in area adjacent to the convention center. Klyde Warren Park is a great asset for Dallas but it is comparatively small at five acres and provides a limited connection over one freeway at a cost of over $100,000,000. Projecting similar costs for Houston, a deck park would cost more than $500 million. Without full funding, the deck park proposal has limited meaning and attempts to shift the cost from the proponent of the project to the community impacted. In doing so, it fails to mitigate the impact created by the project. Houston already has major fundraising initiatives before it to improve and expand its current park system. Diverting those efforts to cover up an expanded freeway expansion by the state would be very difficult, especially given the strong need to improve parks across the city. Furthermore, by failing to analyze the impacts of the project "with and without deck," TxDOT makes a full evaluation of the impacts of the project impossible to achieve.	The Mayor has appointed a committee to oversee the potential designs and funding options for uses for the open space areas in Segment 3 and TxDOT will consider its recommendations. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	Because of these deficiencies in the DEIS, our organizations request that TxDOT conduct a Supplemental DEIS under applicable Federal law as carried out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated 12-16-2014, and executed by FHWA, in order to properly measure park and open space impacts, options, and to propose reasonable mitigation strategies.	The Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. The DEIS, by nature, is a preliminary analysis based on best available information at the time. TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters (including the Coalition) have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for a minimum of 30 days.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Poorly Conceived Highway/Urban Interfaces** TxDOT does an enviable job of designing highways for efficient flow of traffic, a track record of which the Department is justifiably proud. Nevertheless, over the years TxDOT has done a very poor job of ensuring that its projects integrate with an urban context where traffic slows from 65 to 30 MPH. The cumulative result over the years has meant that in Houston freeways become barriers between neighborhoods, dump freeway traffic into residential areas with very serious impacts, eliminate pedestrian walkability, erect barriers to bicycle access, and create many unsafe conditions for motorists and non-motorists alike.	TxDOT has coordinated with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations, as well as the COH local street design standards, on city streets where appropriate. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets, will be used for street design. With respect to Segment 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. Another matter, TxDOT acknowledges that the segment does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavy retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and we must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly with crosswalks at all street crossings and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. The proposed project includes improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and allows for additional trail connections. All project improvements will be designed to meet standards for safety.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Poorly Conceived Highway/Urban Interfaces (CONT)* In its comments to TxDOT in May of 2015 as part of TxDOT's scoping process, the City of Houston's Planning Department pointed out that "The City of Houston has adopted a Complete Streets policy to ensure streets are constructed for all users of the system. The City also required the streets should be built using Context Sensitive Design guidelines as those recommended in the *ITE – Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach* and *NACTO – Urban Street Design Guide* , and others." Since the project location is within an urban area of the city, including Downtown, any future engineering design should meet these guidelines. Unfortunately, multiple streets have been shown with sweeping, large radius turns. Several of these match the existing roadway curb lines which may have been designed at a different time for different users. TxDOT should not ignore the opportunity to modernize its approach and correct these outdated designs as it expands I-45.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segment 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. Another matter, TxDOT acknowledges that the segment does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and we must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan. 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Poorly Conceived Highway/Urban Interfaces (CONT)* In its comments during the 2015 scoping process, the Houston Parks Board suggested that "the termination of the proposed spur at Allen Parkway should be designed in order to accommodate safe pedestrian crossings at that intersection and in a way that drivers are reminded that they are entering a park." TxDOT has ignored this suggestion.	TxDOT evaluated this request. It should be noted that termination of the proposed spur will be at Pease and Jefferson and not at Allen Parkway. Concerning the exit and entrance to the direct connectors at Allen Parkway, TxDOT notes the access will be just before and after a traffic light and crosswalks. Additionally, traffic calming measures will be implemented, including but not to limited to signage and pavement markings to enhance pedestrian and bike safety. The intersection (like all others) will be coordinated with COH and designed to ADA standards.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Poorly Conceived Highway/Urban Interfaces (CONT)* There is no indication that TxDOT intends to design the project's highway-urban interfaces taking into account Houston's Complete Streets policies. Section 7.3 of the DEIS includes no reference to these criteria or to the City's scoping comment.	TxDOT coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. The scope of the City's policy (executive order on Complete Streets) describes the goal that transportation entities (such as TxDOT) will partner with the City, which TxDOT has done. The policy also states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. As described in the Final EIS, the function of the frontage roads on the project is different for different locations. In some locations there are no frontage roads. TxDOT must propose a design that is safe and efficient for the function of the roadway. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise Impacts** The DEIS states that the I-45 expansion will have noise impacts. The brunt of these noise impacts will be borne by low-income communities like Acres Homes, Near Northside, Brooke Smith Addition, and the Fifth Ward.	All areas, including low-income communities, are evaluated equally, in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011). Because the project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, most noise impacts will effect minority and/or low-income populations. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, including for many areas of the neighborhoods noted in the comment, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. In addition to noise barriers, TxDOT is providing the opportunity for adjacent property owners in environmental justice areas to receive noise mitigation that did not otherwise qualify under TxDOT's noise guidelines or FHWA criteria. These walls could also serve as visual barriers should the adjacent property owners want a visual screen between the property and the highway. These walls are described as "aesthetic walls". TxDOT is proposing this mitigation to further offset adverse effects in environmental areas. These walls are proposed where they would be effective for noise mitigation (reduce traffic noise levels by at least 3 dB(A) and provided in locations in the TxDOT right-of-way where they would not restrict access to the property, not impede drainage, and otherwise be constructible. Tentative locations are being proposed as shown in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. These locations may change during final design of the facility. Ultimately, the decision whether to construct the walls will be decided by a vote of the adjacent property owners, as required by federal noise impact regulations.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Noise Impacts (CONT)* Nevertheless, TxDOT avoids making any affirmative commitments to mitigate noise impact, and instead sets forth obtuse language about neighborhood choices that will enable TxDOT to avoid barriers. In some instances, TxDOT claims that abatement is reasonable when "there was more than 50 percent residential land use, otherwise abatement was not considered feasible and reasonable" – thus excluding any neighborhood with many empty lots. In other instances, TxDOT carves out another exemption by stating that "traffic noise barriers would be located along the outside of the frontage road/right-of-way where barriers could be continuous, without gaps for driveways or streets." Note that TxDOT has not followed this practice in high-income areas like Bellaire. We request that TxDOT ensure that low-income areas and park users are afforded the same deference as other parts of town with populations that have higher household incomes.	All areas, including low-income communities, are evaluated equally, in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has set forth specific criteria that TxDOT must adhere to when analyzing and proposing noise abatement. Those guidelines include (1) reduction of noise impacts by at least 5 dBA at more than 50% of impacted receivers, (2) the amount of barrier constructed must not exceed 1,500 square feet per benefitted receiver, (3) the barrier must provide a 7 dBA noise reduction for at least 1 receiver, and (4) the barrier must be both "reasonable" and "feasible" as defined in FHWA's regulation titled Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise (23 CFR Part 772). The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures for various noise receptors, including residential, parks and others. The final decision to implement proposed noise barriers would be made during detailed design with input from benefitted property owners and residents, as required by 23 CFR Part 772. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project and are not accounted for in the analysis included in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. TxDOT is investigating alternative locations for noise barriers (similar to those constructed in Bellaire) in those areas of the corridor where they would be physically constructible, meet sight distance criteria, achieve noise abatement thresholds, and not interfere with emergency operations.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Noise Impacts (CONT)* The DEIS is silent with respect to noise impacts on parks and recreation areas, another reason why we believe that TxDOT should conduct a Supplemental DEIS to disclose the impact on parks and recreation areas. Failing to do so would violate the terms of its MOU with the FHWA that delegated Federal responsibility for analyzing such impacts under Section 4(f).	The determination of, and impacts to, Section 4(f) properties were addressed in accordance with the regulations. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents potential impacts to parks and evaluates mitigation measures.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Air Quality Impacts** The DEIS states that the project "would be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)/Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and RTP, and the STIP/TIP and RTP would conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP)." Purportedly, this inclusion would assure that the project is in compliance with air quality under the Clean Air Act (CAA) and environmental justice under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12898. As TxDOT is well aware, air quality impacts are notoriously complex. This group requests that TxDOT incorporate in its Final EIS all of the information gleaned from TCEQ studies of air quality impacts along Houston's highways (see http://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/texas/article/State-to-measure-airpollution- along-freeways-4769770.php for more information. Our coalition is particularly interested in the incorporation of this air quality analysis given the close proximity of the project to low-income areas, schools, and churches, as well as the project's many interfaces with Houston's signature Sabine Promenade, Buffalo Bayou Park and White Oak Bayou.	The project is in the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). On August 2, 2019, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) found that the 2045 RTP and the 2019-2022 TIP met all the requirements for making a joint conformity determination under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The referenced Houston Chronicle article discusses TCEQ's installation of two near-road nitrogen dioxide monitors in Houston pursuant to an EPA regulation ordering large cities to install roadside monitors for nitrogen dioxide (50 FR 16184, March 14, 2013). TxDOT examined the data collected by near-road air monitors and other monitors in the area in the CO Traffic Air Quality Analysis Technical Report. Near-road and other monitor data demonstrate PM2.5, NO2 and CO levels less than the NAAQS. EPA required near-road monitors for these three NAAQS.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Visual Impacts** TxDOT adopts the assumption that "most viewers do not pay full attention to the I-45 corridor because the presence of the transportation infrastructure has become integrated into their routine" and that therefore "the sensitivity of the residential viewer ranges from low to moderate depending on the location of the viewer." To our organizations, it is inconceivable that the visual impact of a highway expansion of this scope and magnitude, creating one of the largest highways in the United States, does not rise beyond the level of "low to moderate." The DEIS seems to imply that "most viewers" are residents or daily commuters that travel along I-45; it fails to recognize in this visual impact analysis that many users are from out of the region, and that tourists, visitors or newcomers to Houston would experience this visual effect for the first time.	TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the during detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. Additionally, there are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Visual Impacts(cont.)* In fact, the terrible appearance of I-45 has for many years been recognized by the business and civic communities of Houston as a major first-impression problem that negatively affects the city's ability to attract visitors, events, and job relocations to Houston. I-45 as the main airport corridor gateway is recognized as the most important viewshed in Houston from an economic development perspective, yet it's widely understood that businesses explicitly instruct potential new hires not be transported from the airport on I-45 because of its unsightly character. While TxDOT has utilized federal grants over the last number of years to add trees and landscaping along area freeways, TxDOT offers no plan here to integrate context-sensitive design elements to ensure that the I-45 project is a visual asset, not a concrete scar across the community.	Aesthetic design is part of TxDOT's project development process and will be performed during detailed design, which is the final design stage of the project development process. Many of the elements that impact landscape and aesthetic design overlap into all parts of the final design process. Typically these areas include: •bridge design •lighting design •roadway design •hydraulics •environmental mitigation •landscaping TxDOT will consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site during detailed design, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. TxDOT is willing to enter into public-private partnerships for enhanced aesthetics to help the COH portray the visual elements referenced by the Coalition.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Visual Impacts(cont.)* A part of the impact, it must be said, has the potential to be positive in the corridor: the removal of a number of billboards. TxDOT makes no mention of how they are to be removed. The cost of removal must be entirely part of the project. TxDOT makes no mention of its plan at all in the DEIS, no mention of the number of billboards to be removed, when or how they are to be removed or the cost of removal. The full cost of total removal of the billboards must be included in the project and not be transferred to local government. Nor should the removed billboard structures be forced on other stretches of Houston freeway through relocation.	TxDOT will pay for removal of the billboards that are in the new right-of-way; these are identified as displacements in the Final EIS. TxDOT is not involved in the decision whether a billboard may be relocated within the city; that is governed by the City of Houston pursuant to their billboard ordinances. Additionally, the DEIS and FEIS are stage gates required to advance a project to detailed and final design phases of work. The details that are being requested would be developed during later phases of project development.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Visual Impacts (cont.)* The DEIS states that "elevated lanes in the center of I-45 would create an additional visual barrier and potentially alter the existing visual conditions of the area." In another section of the DEIS, TxDOT claims that "the vividness of this landscape unit is moderately low. The areas containing Moody Park, Little White Oak Bayou, and the historic cemeteries provide a distinct viewshed within this landscape unit. The overall visual quality of this landscape unit is moderate." Apparently because the quality of these park and historic cemetery landscapes is "moderate" in TxDOT's estimation, additional impact does not merit further attention. By this logic, because Houston's scenic beauty is relatively limited, further impacts are entirely acceptable.	TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. TxDOT prepared simulations (renderings) of the project alternatives from the location of parks and bicycle/pedestrian trails adjacent to or intersecting the proposed project area. To address the comments about visual impacts of the proposed project in the Segment 3 study area, TxDOT prepared four simulations from Key View Points (KVPs) within Landscape Unit 3. These simulations were assessed to provide an updated visual impact assessment for the Preferred Alternative in this area. The Study Team reviewed and updated the previous impact analysis, considering visual character and quality, viewer exposure and sensitivity, and the revised project design where applicable. While recognizing that the vividness of the landscape is "moderately high", the overall visual quality in the area of these parks was still considered "moderate". TxDOT will consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site during detailed design, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. Where practicable, mitigation to improve the visual and aesthetic qualities of the project area will include the following features: •Landscape plantings and re-vegetation per TxDOT's Green Ribbon Landscape Improvement Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. •Promoting roadside native wildflower planting programs •Noise barriers which are integrated into the context of the surrounding environment •Aesthetic walls which are integrated into the context of the surrounding environment •Providing adequate signage and easy access to roadway facilities •Treatment of the side surfaces and columns of the project using façade materials of varying texture, color, etc. •Installation of landscaping and maintenance for the detention basins. •Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential green spaces. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreational use of green space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. Wet bottom detention basins will be considered if a partner entity agrees to maintain them.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Visual Impacts* TxDOT fails to consider the visual impact of the I-45 expansion on historic structures in Sam Houston Park. TxDOT's DEIS has no information with respect to how the new highway will be lit and how that lighting scheme will affect adjacent low-income neighborhoods, making an evaluation of such impacts impossible at this stage. In terms of impacts on other historic resources, the project segment between 610 and I-10 impacts several historic neighborhoods. Three designated historic districts are located along I-45 south of North Main Street. The project's effect on the National Register-listed Near Northside Historic District on the east side of I-45 must be addressed as part of the review process along with potential impacts on two city-designated historic districts on the west side of I-45: Germantown and Woodland Heights. Both of the city-designated districts are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. The Brooke Smith Addition on the west side of I-45 and the north side of North Main Street is also potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. The project's potential impact on historic resources in the First Ward, on the west side of I-45 south of I-10, should also be considered, particularly the National Register-listed Jefferson Davis Hospital (1925).	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project would significantly reduce the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT has documented Sam Houston Park and historic-age buildings and structures within the park boundaries. The park itself is not NRHP-eligible. The NRHP-listed and Registered Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL)-designated boundaries for the Kellum-Noble House are limited to the immediate vicinity of the house. The Texas SHPO agreed that the proposed project would have no adverse effect to the Kellum-Noble House. Study results are documented in the Final Historical Resources Survey Report (September 2019). TxDOT has designed the project to minimize impacts to neighborhoods along I-45 between I-610 and I-10, and is taking into account the historic properties in the project's APE. The project would remove a noncontributing garage in the Near Northside Historic District but would not directly impact any contributing resources in Near Northside. No new ROW will be acquired from the NRHP-eligible Germantown Historic District and the visual impacts from the highway should be reduced because the highway would not be higher than existing. The project would have no adverse effect to historic properties in the NRHP-eligible Brooke Smith Addition. The Woodland Heights district and Jefferson Davis Hospital are located outside the project APE. NRHP-eligible boundaries for a previously identified historic district in the First Ward do not extend northward into the project APE. The THC has concurred with the effects determinations. Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting could be provided under agreements with local entities.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Visual Impacts (cont.)* TxDOT's visual impact analysis concludes by saying that "because significant adverse impacts are not anticipated, this resource is not anticipated to be analyzed further in the detailed cumulative impacts analysis." Our group disagrees with TxDOT's DEIS conclusions on visual impact, and requests that in the Final EIS, TxDOT include detailed visual simulations from the roadway, from all the perspectives of affected parks and recreation areas, neighborhoods, cemeteries, and historic structures. These analyses should include information on daytime and nighttime visual impacts. Tree and landscape plantings impact the visual nature of the freeways and air quality, runoff, and water quality. TxDOT should address how landscape and tree planning, Green Ribbon and other funds will be used within this project, and should address whether special actions being taken to accumulate the required expenditures as mitigation within this specific project or whether or not the funds will be spent throughout the region.	TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. TxDOT prepared simulations (renderings) of the project alternatives from the location of parks and bicycle/pedestrian trails adjacent to or intersecting the proposed project area. To address the comments about visual impacts of the proposed project in the Segment 3 study area, TxDOT prepared four simulations from Key View Points (KVPs) within Landscape Unit 3. These simulations were assessed to provide an updated visual impact assessment for the Preferred Alternative in the area of Segment 3 of the NHHIP; locations of KVPs for the simulations are shown on an exhibit in Appendix A of the VIA Technical Report addendum. The Study Team reviewed and updated the previous impact analysis, considering visual character and quality, viewer exposure and sensitivity, and the revised project design where applicable. Where practicable, mitigation to improve the visual and aesthetic qualities of the project area will include the following features: •Landscape plantings and re-vegetation per TxDOT's Green Ribbon Landscape Improvement Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. •Promoting roadside native wildflower planting programs •Noise barriers which are integrated into the context of the surrounding environment •Aesthetic walls which are integrated into the context of the surrounding environment •Providing adequate signage and easy access to roadway facilities •Treatment of the side surfaces and columns of the project using façade materials of varying texture, color, etc. •Installation of landscaping and maintenance for the detention basins. •Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential green spaces. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreational use of green space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. Wet bottom detention basins will be considered if a partner entity agrees to maintain them.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes** In scoping comments prior to the preparation of the DEIS, both the City of Houston's Planning Department and the Houston Parks Board commented on the dangers of "the proposed 15' shared use lane along frontage roads due to safety concerns arising from the speed differential between bicycles and other vehicles in these environments. Bicycle accommodations should be provided in the form of a 10' shared use path or protected bike lane." TxDOT ignored this comment in the DEIS; we can find no evidence of an analysis performed on this important safety issue.	TxDOT acknowledges the concern raised of bicycle safety and in response has coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. TxDOT would note, however, that both the City's executive order on Complete Streets ("Complete Streets do not mean that all streets are identical.") and Bike Plan provide a framework for improving the functioning of bicycle facilities. They do not mandate certain design standards for every street as they relate to bicycles. With respect to NHHIP, the operation of frontage roads is different from segment to segment, and so the incorporation of bicycle design standards will be different depending on location and operation of the frontage road. It should be noted however, that although the bicycle facilities may vary depending on location, TxDOT is no longer proposing an outside 15' shared use lane. Bicycle facilities will be dedicated facilities and will be detailed during design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes (cont.)* The City of Houston requested that TxDOT ensure all bridges across the freeway and street crossings under the freeway provide for a minimum 6' unobstructed sidewalk, and that NACTO criteria are incorporated in all highway/surface street intersections. There is no indication in the DEIS that such criteria will be incorporated into the project, and we can find no reference to an analysis performed on this important accessibility issue. For example, as the City of Houston noted in 2015, many intersections in Segment 1 are proposed with suburban intersection design considerations. This segment falls within an urban area and all intersections should be designed to improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. To this end, an intersection design that incorporates a free flow right turn lane with a pedestrian island creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians since many drivers do not yield to pedestrians at such intersections. There is no indication that TxDOT has incorporated ideas like this in the DEIS.	Per the TxDOT Design Manual, TxDOT follows AASHTO criteria for bicycle facility design. However, for this project, TxDOT looked at a range of bicycle facility guidance including NACTO. 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. The Final EIS includes details on these proposed pedestrian realms. 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.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes (cont.)* As another example, a wider freeway through the Near North Side will create a significant community impact further dividing the Woodland Heights and Near Northside communities. Eliminating North Street removes a very practical, low volume, multi-purpose crossing of the current I-45. A deck park may help mitigate the further divide and loss of connectivity resulting from the project, but only if the deck and park are fully funded by the project, and the park is not separated from the community by the high-speed access roads set forth in the DEIS (see above for general discussion of Deck Parks).	Historic neighborhoods and cemeteries were constraints to widening the ROW; therefore, the proposed project is within the existing I-45 ROW in much of Segment 2. The resulting design minimizes the need for new ROW by holding the existing ROW lines through the majority of the segment and shifting the frontage roads above the highway within the limits of the proposed cap. Construction of a wider freeway through the Near North Side would require the acquisition of additional ROW. To elevate I-45 above the 100-year base flood elevation in the vicinity of the Little White Oak Bayou crossing, the North Street bridge must be removed. N. Main St. will be the nearest street (to existing North St. bridge) to cross I-45, and will have pedestrian-bicycle accommodations. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. A trail between Woodland and Moody Parks would need to be constructed by entities other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of a proposed trail. TxDOT will continue to evaluate the design of frontage roads, which will be further refined during detailed design. TxDOT agrees the highway caps provide an opportunity if the open spaces are developed for public use. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. This would require additional development and funding by entities other than TxDOT. 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, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project, including ensuring safe access to the highway caps.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Impacts on Walkability, Cycling and Other Transportation Modes (cont.)* As the site of many fatal accidents in Houston, access roads should be designed to be safe. Twelve foot lanes, three one-way lanes, and high design speeds, mixed with entering and exiting traffic, does not make for a safe road. The DEIS does not explain why high speed designs and high volumes are required on these roads. The Final EIS should explain why TxDOT has made these trade-offs of faster highway access at the expense of public safety.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segment 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. Another matter, TxDOT acknowledges that the segment does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavy retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and we must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Flooding Impacts and Water Quality Impacts** The DEIS recognizes that "potential impacts on surface water quality from the proposed project would be primarily related to storm water discharges into streams and drainageways that traverse" the project. Unfortunately, the DEIS analysis of water quality impacts falls into the same trap as the visual impact analysis. The latter suggests that because Houston is generally unsightly, making it a bit less attractive is not of great consequence. The water quality analysis basically says that Houston's bayous are hopelessly polluted, so a bit more pollution is not impactful. The DEIS recognizes that Buffalo Bayou, Little White Oak and White Oak Bayou are classified by TCEQ as "impaired streams", and that "the discharge of storm water runoff into these drainage features" (i.e., in our parlance, bayous), would be unavoidable. Further, it argues that because White Oak, Buffalo and Little White Oak are impaired, TxDOT has a lesser burden to protect existing water quality. Because these streams are impaired, TxDOT should have a greater obligation not to harm them further—especially since TxDOT itself is already contributing to the problem with its current practice of dumping freeway water directly into Houston's bayous. Any Houstonian who has walked along a bayou underneath a freeway in Houston knows exactly what this means – every time it rains, or even when it's windy, tons of trash are dropped into our waterways, and flow into Galveston Bay, an important estuary for the greater region.	TxDOT does not have a "lesser burden to protect water quality" and the Draft EIS does not state this. The Draft EIS documents the affected environment for water resources, including the TCEQ's stream classifications (as related to water quality) and the TCEQ regulates the treatment of stormwater and other discharges to the waters. TxDOT will comply with all water quality regulations. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures will be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Flooding Impacts and Water Quality Impacts (cont.)* TxDOT's DEIS sets forth that it will meet stormwater discharge requirements during construction. Nowhere is it clear how TxDOT will prevent the flow of the thousands of tons of trash that are transported from freeways to bayous during Houston's frequent "gullywashers". Needless to say, the project will produce much more impervious surface with the potential to increase flooding and accelerate pollutants into the natural waterways. The DEIS should more clearly define creative strategies to minimize those potential impacts. Those strategies may include wet bottom detention basins that can filter water and roadside drainage filters to capture trash at its source. That work could be further expanded to include recreation and additional water quality functions.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project , pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures will be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. Specific best management practices for water quality will be determined during final design and updated throughout construction, as necessary. Additional impervious surface is accounted for in the proposed drainage infrastructure. This project will collect, convey, and detain where necessary the stormwater runoff from not only the highways, but adjacent properties that are currently draining to the highways. The project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be parks.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Flooding Impacts and Water Quality Impacts (cont.)* Waterways affected by the project are already listed as impaired waters. We ask that TXDOT model the runoff and stormwater discharges into Buffalo, White Oak, Halls and Little White Oak Bayous in order to meet state requirements that prohibit the addition of any pollutant load into impaired waters and focus instead on improving those waters through the additional application of more rigorous best management practices for stormwater and runoff. Similarly, please further adopt and disclose the best management practices and plans that will be adopted, including source controls, to avoid further discharge of trash into these waterways.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures will be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	*Flooding Impacts and Water Quality Impacts (cont.)* Some of TxDOT's more recent flood control structures have made good strides in integrating the landscape with detention. Others have not. The detention basins planned on either side of Little White Oak Bayou, south of Patton, require thoughtful planning so that water edges are accessible to wildlife, and pedestrian and bicycle trails connect both to the existing bike trail going north along Little White Oak Bayou from Cavalcade and to Moody Park to the southeast. The detention basin recently constructed in the Heights stands out as an example of lost opportunity, where despite extensive community involvement, citizen input and repeated requests from local City Council members, TxDOT built a detention pond with a single use that is completely isolated from the surrounding community – this in one of the highest land value areas of the City of Houston. Despite requests to this effect during the scoping period in 2015, TxDOT has rejected the possibility of wet bottom detention areas unless someone else maintains them. We request that TxDOT further explain in the Final EIS why it should not have the responsibility for doing everything possible to deliver into Houston's bayous cleaner water from the highways it maintains and owns.	TxDOT can build the detention pond south of Patton Street where a truck stop is currently located with a wet bottom. TxDOT would need a partner to maintain the pond and any other amenities that may be added. As stewards of public funds, TxDOT is responsible for providing the stormwater facilities necessary for the safe collection and conveyance of runoff within project limits. Enhancing the facilities above and beyond this requirement will need to be evaluated during final design on a case-by-case basis. TxDOT will comply with its statewide permit for discharges of stormwater. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be parks.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Conclusion** The I-45 Expansion Project is a once-in-two-generations project that needs to be executed very carefully to avoid the serious impacts to the community at large that the current plan represents. Without a truly comprehensive review of the project, the DEIS fails in its fundamental purpose to inform the design and decision making process required before creating such a serious impact on the City of Houston. We urge TxDOT to go back and take the hard look required under NEPA and review required by Section 4(f) to more fully address the issues outlined here. The undersigned organizations stand ready to work directly with TxDOT on the North Houston Highway Improvement Project to produce the best possible result for the greater Houston area, but that work can only proceed from a planning document that fully acknowledges the impacts of the project and seeks to identify ways to improve it.	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. There is accordingly no need for TxDOT to prepare a supplemental Draft EIS. TxDOT appreciates the Coalition's comments and suggestions, and has carefully considered these comments during the continued development of the project and preparation of the Final EIS

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**NOTE: These 186 comments were provided by a coalition of groups without a specific name. Their organizations and representatives are listed along with the first comment but all comments are attributed to the group. **Coalition signatories: Bakeyah Nelson (Executive Director, Air Alliance Houston), Mary Lawler (Executive Director, Avenue CDC), Bruce R. Dodson (Executive Director, Bayou City Waterkeeper), John Long (Executive Director, BikeHouston), Anne Olson (President, Buffalo Bayou Partnership), Kevin Moore (President, Eastwood Civic Association), Eileen Lawal (Chair, Freedmen's Town Preservation Committee), Becky Houston (President, Friends of Woodland Park), Bob Stokes (Executive Director, Galveston Bay Foundation), Wendy Parker (Chairman, Germantown Historic District), Mark Williamson (President, Greater Heights Super Neighborhood 15), Alice Collette (Executive Director, Heritage Society), Doreen Stoller (President, Hermann Park Conservancy), Beth White (CEO, Houston Parks Board), Jim Weston (Chair, I-45 Coalition), Richard Petty (LINK Houston), Andrew Gallagher (President, Montie Beach Civic Club), Kathleen O'Reilly (President, Museum Park Super Neighborhood 66), Anne Culver (President, Scenic Houston), Barry Ward (Executive Director, Trees for Houston)**	**None needed**
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration** The City of Houston adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2013 to ensure streets are constructed for all users of the system. The City also requires that streets should be built using a Context Sensitive Design guidelines as those recommended in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) - Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach and National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) – Urban Street Design Guide and others. Since the project location is within the urban core of the City, the design on the proposed project should meet these guidelines.	The City's executive order on Complete Streets (EO 1-15) contemplates that other transportation entities (e.g. TxDOT) will partner with COH, which TxDOT has done. TxDOT has had numerous meetings with COH to discuss the design of city streets that cross NHHIP and to discuss Complete Streets concepts. For example, in coordination with COH, TxDOT developed a plan for bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, which includes a 15-17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic. TxDOT will include this bicycle/pedestrian realm on city street crossing in other areas of the project.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration** [CONT] The existing freeway infrastructure built in the 1960's separated communities, impacted neighborhoods and had a significant impact on the City of Houston. The NHHIP should improve connectivity between communities in and around Downtown; not reduce it. Where possible, strong connections should be maintained and new ones should be added to the existing street network. Reducing street connectivity in areas in the urban core of Houston should be avoided or mitigated wherever possible. Connectivity should be considered not only for vehicular traffic, but for all modes of transportation; inclusive of people on foot, people on bicycles, transit users, and for freight.	TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is that TxDOT will restore a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the GRB Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration [CONT]** Based on the schematic exhibits it's not clear if local street network operations have been analyzed at the same level of detail as freeway operations. While the freeway operations are critical for regional circulation, the local circulation is critical for the City of Houston and for the adjoining communities impacted by this project. Improving connectivity, by providing multiple routes where people can travel, is critical to avoid relocating congestion from freeways to local streets.	The traffic analysis for the NHHIP included evaluation of freeway operations and the interaction between the freeways, frontage roads, and the local roadway network typically within one to two intersections of the frontage roads.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration [CONT]** The NHHIP project should be built to reflect the infrastructure needs for the next 50 years. This can only be achieved if multimodal consideration of transit and freight are integrated into the proposed design. Houston is a multi-centric city. Activity centers are located throughout the region and integrating two-way high capacity transit into the design benefits the overall region. The proposed MaX Lanes concept could be designed and operated to ensure that reliable and frequent high capacity transit could be operated to connect all regional activity centers. The existing HOT lanes operations do not allow for reliable transit operations resulting in significant increase in single occupancy trips in our region.	High capacity transit was considered during the North-Hardy Corridor Studies, which the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) participated in with TxDOT and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Modes of transportation addressed in the North Hardy Corridor Studies included transit (bus and rail) and highway. The studies identified a need for alternative transportation modes in the north Houston corridor. METRO is implementing the transit plan in the corridor, including light rail projects. The Gulf Coast Rail District and TxDOT's Rail Division are studying other regional commuter rail alternatives. The proposed NHHIP would implement proposed highway improvements. The proposed project could accommodate future transit options. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to accommodate improvements to the overall network connectivity for all modes of transportation. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] or automated vehicles).
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration [CONT]** The U.S. Census Bureau shows that the largest share of people who bike, in large car dependent cities like Houston, are in lower-income brackets. Given the immediate surrounding neighborhoods and the location of our bayou greenways, current and future bicycle infrastructure, bicycle connectivity is of paramount concern. Providing for high-comfort bikeway connectivity across and along the proposed project is essential to the changing demographics in our region. It is also needed to address the additional barrier between neighborhoods, especially the increased barrier between lower social-economic neighborhoods and the Central Business District. In areas where vehicular connectivity may be removed, options should be evaluated to preserve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.	TxDOT has worked closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segment 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. Another matter, TxDOT acknowledges that the segment does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavy retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration [CONT]** The proposed schematic drawing does not identify sidewalks along sections of the proposed project. In general, sidewalks should be identified along all frontage roads and public streets on the schematics in all typical sections. All bridges should have wide sidewalks for safe crossing. Ensuring access to pedestrian and ADA accessibility along all public streets is critical.	Sidewalks were shown on the schematics for Segments 1 and 2 and sidewalks are now shown on the updated schematics for Segment 3. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding incorporating the Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets for Segment 3. The schematic was updated to show the sidewalk network agreed upon by TxDOT and the COH.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration [CONT]** We look forward to coordinating with TxDOT on the proposed deck structure across the freeway; however, it is also important to have safe connectivity and accessibility to these areas across the proposed frontage road. The deck structure should also be coordinated with the City and other adjoining entities to ensure appropriate design and infrastructure for proposed improvements over these decks.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing concepts for each of the highway cap areas to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 1** Consider extension and direct connection from I-45 MaX lanes to Greens Road to serve Greenspoint area. This will help with redevelopment of the area and support potential METRO Limited Stop Downtown to Airport Route (e.g., Downtown> Shepherd> Greenspoint> IAH)	This area is outside the project limits and not a part of the proposed project. TxDOT is currently conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study for I-45 north of Beltway 8 and is evaluating future transportation needs in the Greenspoint area and north to Conroe.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 1 [CONT]** Ensure Halls Bayou Crossing north of W. Mt. Houston is designed to allow trail crossings under freeway and frontage roads.	TxDOT will coordinate with COH during detailed design to accommodate an alternate route across I-45 in this area, if the proposed trail crossing proves to be not feasible.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 1 [CONT]** Connections on Crosstimbers, Victoria/Lyerly, Tidwell Rd., Cortlandt/E Witcher, Rosamond, W Parker Road, Rittenhouse, etc. should be designed with high comfort intersections for bicyclists and pedestrians. These are vital connection for the Independence Heights, Garden Oaks, Oak Forest and Acres Homes areas to safely reach either Little White Oak Bayou or the Red Line into downtown.	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.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 1 [CONT]** The HOV ramp from Airline Drive providing access to Independence Heights and Northside Community is being removed. Provide alternative access for the communities to managed lanes.	TxDOT has coordinated extensively with METRO on the mentioned connections. The proposed design adds two alternative access points that replace the access currently provided by the existing T-ramp south of Crosstimbers and dramatically increases the access to the MaX lanes that does not exist today. From I-610: Drivers wishing to access the northbound MaX lanes enter I-610 at N. Main St. west of I-45 or at Cochran St. east of I-45 and then use the new connectors that access directly to I-45 northbound MaX lanes. From I-45: Drivers now have a direct connection between I-45 and I-610. A new "wishbone" ramp system will allow southbound MaX lane users to exit directly to the ramp connecting I-45 southbound and I-610 westbound and eastbound. Drivers will be able to access the southbound MaX lanes by entering the I-45 southbound mainlanes at Crosstimbers and then entering the MaX lanes off the mainlanes just south of I-610.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 1 [CONT]** Provide local street connection between Veterans Memorial and I-45 southbound frontage road along the METRO T-Ramp.	Access to the southbound frontage road is currently at the intersection with Veterans Memorial, and would remain. Any additional local street connection would be a City project.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 1 [CONT]** Little White Oak Bayou extends north of I-610 to Crosstimbers in Independence Heights and ultimately to Acres Homes. See Segment 2 comments and apply to Segment 1. Also, design any detention basins along this section of the bayou to be accessible green space.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be parks. To the extent applicable, TxDOT responses to the Coalition's comments concerning Segment 2 apply to Segment 1.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2** Clarify end of streets like North Street, Woodland Street and Farwood Street on the east side of I-45. Ensure connectivity to the Frontage Road for some, if not all streets.	TxDOT will work with COH to refine the termini of North, Woodland, and Farwood Streets during detailed design to ensure safe connectivity.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2 [CONT]** Consider extending IH-610 Segment east to allow Helmers Street connection across the freeway. Helmers would be a very useful north-south connection, potentially as a residential minor collector, as it is continuous from Fulton Street on the South to Berry Street on the north, a distance of almost 3 miles. Right now, only north-south connections through here are Fulton and Irvington and Fulton has Red Line impacts. Extension of Helmer may allow for safe pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between neighborhoods across IH-610.	Extending Helmers St. would conflict with the proposed I-45/I-610 interchange ramps.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2 [CONT]** Assess the option to bring pedestrian and bicycle trail underneath freight railroad north of Stoke Street. If pedestrian and bicycle connection cannot be provided under the freight rail line, integrate pedestrian and bicycle facility into frontage road design to cross rail ROW and provide connection to Stokes Street.	In follow up discussions with the Coalition concerning this subject, TxDOT understands that the Coalition desires the construction of a sidewalk on Stokes Street for pedestrians crossing under I 45 (for example, children walking to the nearby elementary school). TxDOT commits to constructing the sidewalk for that portion of the roadway on TxDOT property. The remainder of the roadway is owned by the City of Houston, who must construct any sidewalk on their property.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2 [CONT]** The removal of North Street Bridge creates greater access issues between Heights and Northside possibly leading to more traffic congestion. Provide pedestrian and bicycle connection along I-45 and Little White Oak Bayou to mitigate the removal of the North Street bridge.	The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will provide improved pedestrian-bicycle accommodations on the North Main St. bridge.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2 [CONT]** Little White Oak Bayou: This bayou section is an important piece of the expanding high comfort bicycle network that provides connectivity from outside the N Loop 610, under I-45 away from traffic, and into downtown making further east and west connections through Buffalo Bayou. Acknowledgement of this bayou as a necessary connector for bicyclists, pedestrians, and naturalists is unaddressed in this design and crossings (Hogan/Crockett, Houston, Quitman/White Oak Dr., Main St, Patton, Cottage etc.) allowing full access to Little White Oak Bayou need to be maintained and carefully designed with high comfort bicycle and pedestrian crossings. Surrounding neighborhoods are historically under-served and connections via bicycle and on foot are measurably significant. The project should replace the existing culvert north of Patton Street with a bridge span designed to allow trails on both sides of the bayou. At I-610, a safe route along the bayou should be included (could suggest replacing this culvert, also or high comfort bike lane at signalized frontage road intersections).	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. TxDOT will accommodate existing and future bikeways along city streets as shown on the City of Houston Bike Plan. Finally, in response to this comment and all of the Coalition's comments concerning bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT notes that it will follow law and policy to incorporate safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities into the project. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with COH on its plans for walking and bicycling facilities. TxDOT will accommodate those plans, if feasible, but COH will be responsible for operation and maintenance.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2** *[Comment 18 CONT]* *Little White Oak Bayou:* The new trail should connect to the existing bike trail along Little White Oak Bayou between Enid and Calvacade, on the west side of I-45 and to a new park at the retention pond areas on the east side of I-45 (where Love's Truck stop is currently), and on to Moody Park/Woodland Park/White Oak Bayou trail. Mitigate for loss of green space along the bayou in this area and replace the existing trail with an equivalent trail.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2** Deck Park over I-45 near North Main - The original I-45 construction bisected one community into two. This has become a permanent separation resulting in different community cultures on either side of the freeway. There are constant efforts to reunite the communities but the swath of freeway that separates them remains a physical barrier. Create a deck park over the freeway near North Main. This will be a physical reattachment point, reuniting the divided communities. Address the accessibility issue to the proposed Deck Park location near Main Street with the proposed multilane frontage roads and U-turn ramps.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in this area and support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2** Justify the need for 1 lane northbound frontage road from Quitman Street widening to 4-lanes near Main Street. Ensure pedestrian and bicycle accessibility along the proposed frontage road.	The segment between Quitman St. and North St. is a series of ramps handling multiple traffic movements to and from the highway, with no driveway access. This segment is constrained by a historic property. From North St. to N. Main St., it becomes a frontage road with a sidewalk. The four lanes are needed to handle projected traffic volumes.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2** The proposed design has significant impact on the adjoining neighborhoods. Address the additional barrier between neighborhoods, especially the increased barrier between the Northside neighborhood and the Central Business District. See Segment 3 comment about a Fulton-North San Jacinto Street connection.	TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto St. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design will minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 2** Connectivity in and out of Northside neighborhoods needs to be addressed in a way that it becomes improved not worse by new design.	The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district. TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto St. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Ensure proposed design does not prohibit future two-way high capacity transit on I-69/US 59 with focus on Spur 527. Direct or expedited connections from the existing HOV/HOT to Wheeler TC should also be explored.	I-69 south of and including Spur 527 is being evaluated by TxDOT in a separate study.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** With the proposed reconfiguration of I-69 at Wheeler Transit Station, there is an opportunity to improve multi-modal circulation, access to the transit center and plan for future capacity needs with the University Corridor and US 90A transit connections. Coordinate with City and METRO to ensure this area is designed to maximize future transit and development opportunities. The Deck Park Cap at this location provides an opportunity for public and private investment to develop a Transit Oriented Development. TxDOT should actively engage in the development and implementation of the Wheeler Area Park Cap and related street and transit connections.	TxDOT has coordinated with the COH and METRO regarding a highway cap in this area.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Evaluate options to maintain Blodgett connection from San Jacinto to Main St. This is very useful connection and very helpful to the bus operations at the Transit Center. With the redesign of the San Jacinto on-ramp to east side of street, this should be achievable.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO and COH regarding Blodgett St. between Main St. and Fannin St., the existing Blodgett St. cannot be maintained because it conflicts with the proposed depressed section. METRO has developed a plan for an alternate route for bus circulation. Between Fannin St. and San Jacinto, Blodgett St. would remain.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** IH-69 exit to Main Street near Wheeler TC should be designed to allow improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safe crossings as identified in Houston Bike Plan/METRO Bike & Ride studies.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Ensure all bridges, including Montrose, La Branch, Austin and Almeda bridges are wide enough for safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings.	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.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** The proposed project allows for separated pedestrian and bicycle facility along the south side of US 59 between Graustark and Main Street and the Center Point utility corridor. This would safely connect the Montrose and Boulevard Oaks neighborhoods to the Wheeler Transit Center. Evaluate feasibility of grade separated trail extension below Montrose bridge since midblock crossing at the bridge may be challenging.	TxDOT will evaluate and try to accommodate plans provided by others for a pedestrian and bicycle facility in this area. A grade-separated facility under Montrose would not be feasible within the currently proposed right-of-way as it would require shifting the retaining wall out and constructing a longer bridge. The relocated transmission towers between Montrose and Main will use up most of the proposed ROW behind the proposed retaining wall. CenterPoint has not confirmed the size and location of these towers within the ROW, but CenterPoint's approval would be required to construct a trail in close proximity to their relocated towers to allow maintenance access for their facilities.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Links to Downtown should support high-quality, fast, reliable connections to major activity centers.	Comment noted.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** As currently proposed, the primary access to and egress from the SH 288 Managed Lanes or Toll Lanes would be provided on Chenevert Street south of Elgin, adjacent to the Houston High School for International Studies and Baldwin Park. This configuration is suboptimal for everyone involved. Drivers using the Managed Lanes will more likely be destined for Downtown than Midtown, or might be trying access another freeway to continue. Either way, ending up on Chenevert Street will introduce unnecessary delay and confusion. Presence of the existing freeway ramps disrupt the neighborhood fabric and introduce unsafe vehicle speeds in a residential area. The proposed design would set this problem in concrete for another 50 years. Like other managed lanes connections, the SH 288 Managed/Toll Lanes could just be connected to the SH 288 main lanes near Alabama. The other option would be reconfigured the ramps to connect to Hamilton and Chartress that serve as the frontage road along this section of the freeway. Doing so would make access much more intuitive, improving the chances of success for the Managed Lane project. It would also give drivers headed toward Downtown or other connecting freeways a more convenient route for doing so than Midtown surface streets.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** As part of the removal of the ramps from the neighborhood, the grid of local streets be reconnected including Francis Street, Chenevert Street, and Holman Street. Re-gridding the streets would create surplus land for redevelopment to mitigate the impact of the project on adjacent neighborhoods. Connecting Holman Street through to Hamilton Street would obviate the need for the freeway-style ramps connecting to Chenevert Street south of Holman Street. Removing them would be more consistent with the context of the neighborhood while improving safety, reducing right-of-way acquisition, and creating more surplus right-of-way.	Based on public input, the ramp to Chenevert St. has been removed; the proposed SH 288 managed lane ramps will terminate into the SH 288 general purpose lanes and would not directly connect to Chenevert St. Connecting Holman St. between Holman St. and Chenevert St. is not possible due to conflicts with the proposed I-69/SH 288 interchange.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Connectivity on the east side has historically been limited and the project should ensure that this issue is appropriately addressed. There is no proposed street that provides direct two-way east-west access between Downtown and the East Downtown / East End area along the stretch between IH- 45 South to IH-10, a distance of nearly 2 miles. Even those streets that cross the proposed IH- 45/IH-69 trench require switching to an adjacent street through several turns to continue east/west.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** The loss of connections such as Polk, Leeland/Bell and Runnels are significant. Include Runnels to McKee or Canal to Ruiz connection. The loss of Runnels cuts off the area of the East End north of the West Belt Subdivision rail line and Buffalo Bayou and limits access to Downtown to just the Franklin/Navigation underpass. Other option for residents is to backtrack to Harrisburg, which doesn't connect to downtown that well due to the street network, stadiums and large parking lots in the area. One of these proposed connections would be significant improvement.	Runnels St. cannot be extended across I-69 due to the vertical transition of the highway from below-grade to elevated, and cannot be extended below I-69 within the proposed ROW of the project. An alternative east-west route is using Navigation Blvd. to Commerce St., then west on Commerce St. to Downtown.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Evaluate options for northbound exit from US 59 main lanes to Runnels Street.	This was considered during design. It is not possible to have an exit to Runnels St. due to proximity of I-10 direct connectors and inadequate distance to transition from below-grade to at-grade.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Evaluate options for extending Canal Streets across I69/US 59/I-45 between Downtown and Second Ward.	Canal St. is a city street, any extension across the highways would be the responsibility of the City of Houston. The project would not be able to accommodate an at-grade extension of Canal St. across I-69 due to the vertical transition of the highway from below-grade to elevated.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Existing two-way connection of Nance Street to Jensen is being replaced by one-way frontage road along Rothwell. Identify another two-way connection between Jensen and Nance Street. This is especially important since the westbound frontage road along I-10, which is not proposed to be extended across I-69.	The proposed design provides east-west connectivity along I-10 with the proposed Rothwell St. and Providence St. connections. The new east-west connections would be grade-separated at railroads to provide unimpeded flow. The schematic has been updated to retain the two-way traffic between Jensen and Meadows. TxDOT will evaluate adding a west-bound I-10 frontage road connection across I-69 during detail design between Meadow and Jensen.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Maintain Jensen Street exit from IH 10 eastbound or provide other alternatives to maintain connectivity without at-grade rail crossings.	The Jensen St. exit cannot be maintained in its current location due to safety concerns. The exit would be relocated and grade-separated at railroads to provide unimpeded flow. Additionally, TxDOT will evaluate adding an I-10 east-bound exit to Gregg St. during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Identify option for ingress and egress from I-69 near the Buffalo Bayou areas to improve access to and from Downtown, East Downtown, East End, and 5th Ward.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east . TxDOT also coordinated with the Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority and the East Bayou Civic Club regarding access for the Fifth Ward area. TxDOT developed a revised design to grade-separate Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. Other suggested improvements, including an additional northbound exit from I-69 near Buffalo Bayou were evaluated but were determined to not be feasible due to the proximity of I-10 direct connectors and inadequate distance to transition from the below-grade section of I-69.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Proposed design still has limited connectivity to the 5th ward areas north of Buffalo Bayou. The exit ramp for Jensen previously proposed has been removed. Provide alternate access from 5th Ward to mitigate any loss of access. Evaluate options to extend Bringhurst across I-10 to enhance connectivity across I-10. Providing an additional crossing of IH-10 between Gregg St and Hirsch St would be very beneficial, given the potential Midway East River development of the KBR site and Lovett Homes development on MDI superfund site in the East End.	The exit ramp to Jensen St. is not being removed, it would be relocated to the west to coincide with the existing exit to Rothwell St. TxDOT has coordinated with local stakeholders including Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority, East Bayou Civic Club, Greater Northside Management District, and others regarding local access for the area. Proposed access improvement include grade-separating Rothwell St. and Providence St. under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jensen Dr. and Main St. would no longer cross the tracks at-grade. Extending Bringhurst St. would require significant raising of the I-10 mainlane profile, which would impact the proposed entrance and exit ramps between Waco St. and Gregg St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Evaluate options to maintain Polk Street Connection across I-69 / I-45 Coordinate with the City, adjoining management entities to evaluate design options to bring I-45 Main Lane ramps and I-45 to I-69 N ramps down below grade between Polk and Rusk. Maintain critical Polk Street connection (Adjust Polk alignment and grades as needed). This proposal eliminates crossings for Dallas, Lamar, McKinney (similar to today). o This change would reduce the size of the proposed Park Cap by several blocks (from 10+ blocks to 7) to a more manageable size. For reference, Klyde Warren is about 5 acres, the east side park cap as proposed is nearly 30 acres. o The potential park area as currently conceived is as big as 15 Market Square Parks or 2.5 Discovery Greens. That is a lot of park space to program and maintain. Some of the space should be envisioned with the potential to be developed with walkable one to two story buildings, potentially as a home for the businesses displaced in East Downtown. Freeway support structure should be designed with this in mind. For example you could relocate all the bars and restaurant along St. Emanuel demoed by the freeway widening to location on top of the cap creating an instant destination linking the convention center and stadiums. Would be similar to the bar/meeting space that is on top of Klyde Warren and provide revenue to support maintenance.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Polk Street pedestrian and bicycle connection is a critical connection to Downtown. The Lamar Street separated bike lane is proposed to be extended along Polk Street to connect East Downtown and other East End neighborhoods to Downtown, Main Street Rail and Buffalo Bayou as part of TIGER Grant. In any scenario, maintaining this pedestrian-bicycle connection is vital for residents and businesses in the area.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** The loss of Downtown to East End/East Downtown connectivity at Polk and Runnels also impacts METRO service from the East End to Downtown. Routes 40, 41, 48 will need to find separate routes for eastbound and westbound trips. This will increase complexity, impact reliability for customers, and potentially incur service costs for METRO. Keeping Polk open would mitigate some of these issues and is recommended.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Proposed Lamar St at St. Emanuel intersection is difficult to see on the schematic but seems awkward with difficult geometry. Keeping Polk open (with related ramp changes) would address connectivity issues and eliminate need for this funky design.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of the Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Connect Leeland to a Leeland/Bell one-way pair as it is currently. This will require redesign of the freeway off-ramp connected to Bell, which seems achievable. If Polk connection is eliminated, TxDOT should identify funds for grade separation of Leeland at the West Belt Subdivision rail lines so that major east west connection exists without barrier between Eastwood and downtown.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. Design constraints related to reconnecting I-45 in the capped area between Lamar St. and Commerce St. to connect with existing I-45 to the south necessitated the closure of Polk St. over the highways. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. The Polk St. exit from I-69 southbound is constrained structurally and cannot be revised to allow for the one-way pair. This was evaluated during the design process. The grade separation of Leeland St. at the West Belt Subdivision rail line has been evaluated by Gulf Coast Rail District and would impact many adjacent properties. This option was also evaluated during the NHHIP design process, with the same conclusion; therefore, it is not included in the NHHIP.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Maintain Walker Street crossing between St. Emanuel and Hamilton as an extension of Columbia Tap trail to west side of SB frontage road (instead of as a street crossing) then bring trail south to Polk St. along the back of the convention center.	Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Ensure Buffalo Bayou trails can connect to East End/Fifth Ward though detention area and freeway crossings. This is critical connection for the East End and must be excellent.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership during final design regarding accommodating trails to/from Buffalo Bayou.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Consider making more bridges and related traffic control two-way (e.g., Leeland, Commerce). This should be paired with consideration of more two-way streets in downtown. At the proposed box/beam structure behind the GRB, Rusk, Capital, Leeland, and Commerce Street connectivity travel is diminished between downtown and southeast Houston.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the COH to optimize the local street network in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. The proposed project would add a continuous southbound street adjacent to the highway between Commerce St. and Leeland St., which would restore the east-west connectivity of four streets that were previously cut off when the GRB was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and would improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). The COH is evaluating the overall local street network including possible conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets and is responsible for determining the operation (one-way or two-way) of city streets.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Southeast Houston is a historically under resourced area and an area that relies on bikes to safely travel throughout the city. Crossings at these points need to be designed with wide sidewalks and high comfort bike lanes complete with physical barriers, green paint, signage, and a continuation of the Bike Plan's programmed projects to build these streets out as dedicated on-street bicycle lanes. In addition, consider sustaining the connection on Polk Street as it connects to the Harrisburg and Columbia Tap trails.	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. Per coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** This realigned segment of I-10 and I-45 has significant impact on existing businesses and could benefit by improving the connectivity in this area, which is already hampered by freight rail lines and the Bayou. Coordinate with the City and UPRR on the potential to realign the freight main along the passenger main to remove existing freight crossings through Downtown.	TxDOT has previously coordinated with HB&T, BNSF, and UPRR railroad representatives, and they desire to maintain their current operations and rail locations. Please note the project will accomplish some nearby grade separations. After coordinating with local stakeholders, TxDOT determined to grade-separate Rothwell Street and Providence Street under the UPRR and HB&T railroads, so that eastbound and westbound traffic between Jenson Drive and Main Street will no longer cross the tracks at-grade.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** Integrate connection to link area north of UPRR on the north side of the post office site to Downtown. This could potentially be incorporated into Downtown Connector, Bagby, Washington Avenue extension design.	TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** Plan for the extension of San Jacinto Street to Fulton including potential grade separation at the UP Passenger Main crossing which is hugely impactful to drivers and transit in this area. This extension could help mitigate the impacts along the north side of Downtown.	TxDOT coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the City of Houston to accommodate the City's future expansion of San Jacinto Street. Support columns for the elevated I-10 main and express lanes and I-45 main lanes will be positioned to accommodate the northward extension of San Jacinto Street. The proposed design would maintain connectivity between Northside and the Central Business District. All of the existing streets connecting the Northside to Downtown would remain and accommodations would be made for a future San Jacinto St. connection. Improvements also include railroad underpasses at McKee St. and Jensen Dr. The proposed design would minimize impacts in the historic warehouse district.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** Provide improved version of existing pedestrian and bicycle bridge crossings of freeway east of Elysian and link to a new north-south trail connecting to Near Northside.	The existing crossing would be replaced as part of the NHHIP. TxDOT evaluated options for a new bridge, including possibly constructing it under Elysian St., as suggested by others. However, this is not possible because it would not meet vertical clearance requirements with the reconstructed Providence and Rothwell streets. The revised schematic shows the proposed location of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge just west of the BNSF rail crossing. This location will provide improved pedestrian connectivity compared to the existing conditions.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** The schematic drawings do not define street network under the freeway segment of IH-10 north of Downtown. This area is designated "Excess ROW" and has significant potential to transform the warehouse district area. Coordinate with the City and Downtown District on the alignment of roadway network to ensure circulation in this area.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP, including the area noted. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** Consider abandoning Conti Street between McKee and Frontage Road. Space could be abandoned and reallocated to development space. Also evaluate the option to clean up transition from Lyons to McKee to make smoother and more legible. McKee and Hardy streets provide pedestrian bicycle connectivity between Buffalo Bayou and the Northside neighborhood. Ensure bridges across I-10 are designed to incorporate safe and high comfort bike facilities.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects. TxDOT has agreed to follow the requirements of the COH Bike Plan. There will be a pedestrian/bicycle connection across I-10 at Hardy St. and McKee St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** Links to Downtown should support high-quality, fast, reliable connections to major activity centers or the northwest transit center. The loss of the existing downtown connector tied into Franklin, should be re-evaluated to see if it could be better used as part of high capacity transit network or as an alignment for a light rail extension.	The connector cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10. The connector would be replaced with a dedicated bus lane along I-10.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** Coordinate with City, METRO and TCP to explore High Capacity Transit connection to northwest Transit Center and proposed High Speed Trail Terminal. The existing I-10 corridor west of Segment 3 could be planned to include the extension of METRO's purple and green light rail lines. The current North Houston Highway Improvement Project plans do not consider this connectivity, and in fact, would preclude it, since the plans call for the demolition of the HOV ramp.	TxDOT has coordinated with METRO; METRO is evaluating potential options for BRT connections from the Northwest Transit Center and proposed High Speed Rail Terminal to Downtown. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design of the NHHIP. The existing downtown connector would be relocated approximately 1/4 mile east of the current connector. The proposed project would provide a dedicated bus lane to/from Downtown to replace the operations of the existing downtown connector. The replacement of the HOV ramp with the I-10 express lanes does not preclude METRO's extension of the purple and green light rail lines.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Connectivity and Multimodal Consideration, Segment 3, West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated** While the planned project will remove the I-45 main lanes from the west side of downtown, the planned "downtown connectors," their ramps and related surface streets will have significant impacts on Buffalo Bayou, Sam Houston Park, Fourth Ward and Midtown. With the assistance of the Downtown District, community representatives from the surrounding area have achieved consensus on modifications we are asking TxDOT to make to its plans from Buffalo Bayou to Pierce Street during its FEIS phase:	Responses to referenced comments are below.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Buffalo Bayou and Sam Houston Park** Sam Houston Park is Houston's most historic park, and Buffalo Bayou is Houston's greatest natural resource. The project should protect and even benefit both important civic assets.	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project would significantly reduce the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Buffalo Bayou and Sam Houston Park** Configure NB cloverleaf and SB ramps to and from Allen Parkway to allow for a cleaner bridge design over Allen Parkway and Buffalo Bayou.	During the schematic phase, TxDOT updated the cloverleaf design to provide a better connection over Allen Parkway to the northbound downtown connector and updated the southbound ramp to Allen Parkway to provide a better connection to Allen Parkway and Houston Avenue.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Buffalo Bayou and Sam Houston Park** The design of both bridges over Buffalo Bayou (elevated connectors and surface street) should minimize bridge piers and be carefully coordinated with design features of the park and bayou.	During this schematic phase, the bridges over Buffalo Bayou and the other bayous in the project area were designed to minimize piers within the floodway. Additional coordination regarding design features will occur during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Buffalo Bayou and Sam Houston Park** Our groups are inclined to support a proposal for a "signature bridge" over the park and Buffalo Bayou (pending design details)	During detailed design, TxDOT will consider options for a signature bridge over the park and Buffalo Bayou.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Downtown Connectors South of Buffalo Bayou** In many areas, the project is converting overhead freeway lanes to below-grade except here where a freeway underpass is being replaced with an overpass at West Dallas.	TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Downtown Connectors South of Buffalo Bayou** With "low profile" bridge structures (thin slabs) and minimal re-grading, current standards can be met and still allow the elevated connectors to pass over Allen Parkway and then go below West Dallas as the I-45 main lanes do today.	TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Downtown Connectors South of Buffalo Bayou** Continue the downtown connectors below grade south of Andrews.	TxDOT has revised the design in the area from West Dallas St. to Andrews St. The revision includes placing downtown connectors below-grade, under West Dallas St. and Andrews St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Downtown Connectors South of Buffalo Bayou** Include a direct pedestrian connection and gateway at Andrews Street from downtown to Fourth Ward.	TxDOT is accommodating pedestrian/bicycle access within the project limits between Andrews St. and St. Joseph Parkway, on the west side of the downtown connectors. In addition, an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection along Andrews St. would be accommodated.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Downtown Connectors South of Buffalo Bayou** Shift all roadways within the existing right-of-way to open up more space on the Fourth Ward side for a linear green space and high-comfort trail (see below).	The design was revised to provide space for a shared-use path.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Downtown Connectors South of Buffalo Bayou** Include the possibility of a small cap park on the north side of Andrews as part of the Fourth Ward Gateway.	A freeway cap over the Downtown Connectors between West Dallas and Andrews was studied by TxDOT and coordinated with the COH and HDMD. It was determined that this cap would not allow for the southbound exit ramp from the Downtown Connectors to St Joseph/Bagby to be maintained and was decided not to include in the schematic. The profile of the Downtown Connectors was revised to allow for the reconnection of Andrews Street with a pedestrian bridge.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Surface Streets** Reconnecting with Complete Streets communities that were split apart by the freeway is a critical component of the project scope.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network and modifications to the local street network would be COH projects. The profile of the Downtown Connectors was revised to allow for the reconnection of Andrews Street with a pedestrian bridge.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Surface Streets** Provide direct connections from Walker and McKinney to Houston Avenue (terminate two-way north-south surface street at this direct connection on north side of bayou).	TxDOT evaluated this in coordination with the COH and stakeholders and it was determined that a connection between Walker St./McKinney St. and Houston Ave. is not feasible due to vertical restrictions associated with the Downtown Connectors and Buffalo Bayou. Termination of the two-way north-south surface street north of the bayou would adversely impact local connectivity.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Surface Streets** Eliminate the Walker Street roadway to Allen Parkway that bisects Sam Houston Park.	TxDOT met with the COH and maintaining a Walker St. connection to Allen Parkway was requested. At this time, no change to the project design is proposed. TxDOT is open to discussing this connection further with the COH.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Surface Streets** Reduce the two-way surface street north of Allen Parkway by one lane in each direction.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network and modifications to the local street network would be COH projects. The profile of the Downtown Connectors was revised to allow for the reconnection of Andrews Street with a pedestrian bridge.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Surface Streets** Reduce Heiner Street to two lanes (three lanes once the Bagby ramp merges with Heiner Street) to accommodate the green space and high-comfort trail (see below)	In response to requests from stakeholders, TxDOT revised the design to provide additional space for a shared-use path along Heiner Street between Bagby and Dallas Street. The path itself will be constructed on this additional space by organizations other than TxDOT. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the construction of this path.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Surface Streets** Extend the NB Pease Street to West Dallas over the depressed downtown connectors to access Allen Parkway.	TxDOT coordinated with COH and it was determined that the requested street connection over the depressed downtown connectors is not necessary and would create a complex intersection at West Dallas/Allen Parkway. Access from Pease St. to Allen Parkway would be provided via the northbound surface street.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Surface Streets** As an Option to #5, consider extending the two-way surface street north of Allen Parkway along Heiner Street to St. Joseph Parkway to improve the legibility of the street network.	The proposed two-way surface street between West Dallas and Allen Parkway is intended to connect Pease Street to Allen Parkway. Extending the two-way surface street between West Dallas and St. Joseph would not provide enough room to accommodate your request for green space (Comment 72) and would be a repetitive connection of Pease Street to Allen Parkway. TxDOT was, however, able to extend the one-way southbound movement of this two-way surface street to connect with St. Joseph to improve street network connectivity.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Multi-Modal Trails and Green Space** Multi-modal connections between the area's high-density urban populations and Buffalo Bayou is a critical component of the project scope.	The proposed NHHIP provides the opportunity for innovative open space opportunities. For instance, TxDOT coordinated with the Houston Downtown Management District (HDMD) on their "Plan Downtown" efforts that engaged many of the Coalition members to develop the Green Loop. TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership and other stakeholders to accommodate plans for trails, where feasible.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Multi-Modal Trails and Green Space** Along the west side of the right-of-way from Pierce to Allen Parkway, provide a high-comfort multi-modal trail from Midtown, south downtown and Fourth Ward to Buffalo Bayou.	The proposed NHHIP provides the opportunity for innovative open space opportunities. For instance, TxDOT coordinated with the Houston Downtown Management District (HDMD) on their "Plan Downtown" efforts that engaged many of the Coalition members to develop the Green Loop. TxDOT has coordinated with and will continue to coordinate with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership and other stakeholders to accommodate plans for trails, where feasible.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Multi-Modal Trails and Green Space** It is critical that the at-grade Allen Parkway crossing be designed for pedestrian and cycling safety.	Safety is TxDOT's highest priority and thus was one of the primary Purpose and Need criteria used to analyze the alternatives for NHHIP. TxDOT coordinated with the COH and other stakeholders regarding the design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing Allen Parkway.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Multi-Modal Trails and Green Space** Provide a safe connection at Andrews Street from this high-comfort trail into the green space between the downtown connectors and then to Pierce Street (and possibly the Pierce Sky Park).	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and stakeholders regarding the project and agree this coordination has resulted in many positive enhancements to the design presented in the DEIS. For example, TxDOT redesigned the Downtown connectors to be below grade at Andrews St. to allow for a pedestrian/bicyclist connection between Fourth Ward and Downtown. TxDOT will continue to work with these groups throughout future phases of the project to address community concerns.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Multi-Modal Trails and Green Space** Preserve the option for the Pierce Sky Park from Andrews Street to Pierce Street, including a transition to the high-comfort trail accessing Buffalo Bayou.	The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown would be removed. The portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Multi-Modal Trails and Green Space** Include gateways to Fourth Ward/Freedmen's Town at Andrews Street and West Dallas Street.	TxDOT would coordinate during detailed design to accommodate gateways proposed and funded by local entities.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Other Comments** Review need/potential to maintain IH-10 HOV Connector near Amtrak Station coordinating with Metro's upcoming planning to address express transit connectivity from downtown to NW transit center. Maintenance as a transit only facility could have significant value. If the existing IH-10 Connector is removed as currently proposed, Washington Avenue should be connected to the Post Office site. Ideally the connector could be maintained and designed to allow the Washington Avenue connection, and incorporate a transit stop to serve post office redevelopment.	The connector cannot be maintained due to conflicts with the reconfigured I-10 and Downtown Connector. Through coordination with METRO, the IH-10 HOV connector would be replaced with a dedicated bus/HOV lane along the eastbound I-10 Express Lanes so that buses and HOV access directly to Smith Street. TxDOT studied a connection from the Downtown Connectors to Washington Ave and Memorial Blvds, but a safe connection will not work as the Downtown Connectors need to remain elevated above the UPRR rail line and thus TxDOT could not make a ramp meet minimum design criteria.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Other Comments** Coordinate with the City of Houston, and adjoining communities and management districts on the opportunity to along the Pierce Elevated between Downtown and Midtown to ensure the preservation of multimodal opportunities to connect East Downtown, to Buffalo Bayou Park.	The portion of the Pierce Elevated between Brazos St. and I-69 is no longer needed by TxDOT for a transportation use and could be redeveloped by others to include open space and multimodal connections. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** This project represents a once in a lifetime opportunity, and the details which impact how people safely get around need to be fully thought out. This requires careful planning and a greater level of detail than has been provided by the current schematics. Focus on well thought out design of safe intersections, sidewalks and bikeways, transit stops, frontage roads, and connections have the potential to greatly enhance mobility options. Failure to do so would be a huge detriment to the project. Elements like wide outside lanes for bicyclists, which are likely to be eliminated as guidance from the next AASHTO bikeway design guide, should not be included in this project. The design needs to be forward looking and incorporate best practices for safe multimodal streets. Transit, including how the NHHIP can be designed to support faster transit trips between major activity centers and destinations, should be much more prominently considered in the plan. This should include rail expansion opportunities as well as the potential for an optimized express bus network.	TxDOT agrees that this project represents a huge opportunity that will not come around again soon. Therefore, TxDOT took extra care to ensure all interested and potentially affected parties were engaged in this project from the early stages. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. The proposed MaX lanes would provide 2-way, 24x7 operation. The MaX lanes would have a flexible footprint for HOV, bus and rubber-tired high-capacity transit (e.g., Bus Rapid Transit [BRT]), and automated and connected vehicles (AV/CV). TxDOT has and will continue to work with METRO regarding accommodating light rail within the Segment 1 footprint. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** Ensure bridge widths throughout the project include sufficient space for quality sidewalks and high comfort bikeways as called for in City of Houston standards and guidelines, and not be designed to match existing cross-section or old standards. Ensure all bridges across the freeway and street crossings under the freeway provide for a minimum 6' unobstructed sidewalks. Where appropriate wider sidewalks should be provided since there is limited buffer between the vehicular lanes and the pedestrian.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and METRO regarding the design of the city streets that parallel and cross the proposed NHHIP. This coordination resulted in an agreement between TxDOT and the COH to apply a Pedestrian Realm to the cross street bridges in Segment 3. This Pedestrian Realm includes at least a 6 foot sidewalk, a 5 foot bike lane, and a 5 foot buffer behind the curb. For Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will also be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements the same or similar to Segment 3. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, in coordination with the COH. In areas where vehicular traffic turning movements do not warrant them, the dedicated sweeping turn lanes shown in the schematic will be removed. Some have already been removed from the version shown at the public hearing and others will be reconsidered during detailed design when more granular intersection traffic analysis is conducted.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** All lanes on city streets and frontage roads should comply with City of Houston's 11' lane standards and encourage appropriate travel speeds and safe travel. Having different lane width for different roads create inconsistent driver experience. 12' lanes are freeway lane standards and not local streets. They encourage excessive speeds through urban area where higher speeds are out of context and unsafe. It is also recommended that the local street network and the frontage road be designed with target/design speed not to exceed 30 mph, especially in the urban areas.	TxDOT will evaluate the application of 11' lanes on a case-by-case basis, taking in to account factors including: safety, facility type, geometry, connecting facilities, design speed, traffic volume, lane usage by vehicle type, etc. TxDOT will coordinate with the COH, Harris County, METRO, and other agencies during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** Define which intersections are proposed with traffic signals and all-way stop control. It is impossible to truly assess whether the design supports safe walkability, bikeability, and transit use without this information. Traffic control recommendations should be developed with multi-modal safety and connections in mind.	Intersection signalizations, multi-modal connections, and traffic control measures will be determined during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** Entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered. Stops (and access to stops) must be designed to ADA and METRO standards with room for shelters to support high quality transit experience.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** Of the bicycle features proposed, a clear design criterion with the safety of bicyclists in mind is not apparent. The City of Houston has committed to building only high comfort bicycle lanes and facilities through the recently adopted Bike Plan. A high comfort bicycle lane minimizes people's interaction with high volume, high speed traffic, and requires more separation and protection as these traffic characteristics increase. Design standards for bicyclists and pedestrians need to be set to reflect the Houston Bike Plan's high comfort commitment. Design bikeways for people of All Ages and Abilities in line with the high-comfort bikeway guidelines set out in Houston Bike Plan. Protected bikeways or side paths set behind the curb should be designed for all bike connections. Bike lanes should be 6' wide minimum. 14' wide outside lanes designed as shared bicycle facilities are unacceptable and should not be included in this project. Intersections should be designed for safe crossing to accommodate bikeways and sidewalks. Along frontage roads, the bikeways constructed in this project need to sustain a high level of comfort for both motorists and cyclists to create a clear and safe space for both parties to travel with no room for misinterpretation. The proposed bicycle lanes along the outside of the frontage roads do not provide adequate protection for cyclists and create more opportunity for bicycle/motorist collisions. Instead, it is recommended any bikeway associated with these roadways be completely separated from vehicular traffic, be positioned behind the outermost curb, be at least 6 feet wide and separated from pedestrian traffic.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate. The schematic design has established the proposed ROW footprint to accommodate the multimodal functions of the I-45 corridor, including vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Specific details of the design, such as bicycle/pedestrian treatments and signalization at intersections, will be further developed during detailed design with consideration for all modes of travel. While the schematics show wide outside shared-use lanes, TxDOT is aware of AASHTO bikeway guidelines and is currently evaluating alternative options for dedicated bike facilities along the frontage roads.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** An intersection is the most likely place for a vehicle-bicycle collision. A protected intersection (or Dutch Junction) for bicyclists and pedestrians is recommended and makes travel considerably safer for all parties. This design includes small islands as buffers from right-turning motorists. Green paint is then used to direct the cyclist from one protected lane to the next in a circular fashion moving counter-clockwise. College Station, TX has already completed a similar design and the protected intersection in the Energy Corridor in Houston is planned to be implemented in the fall. It is recommended that TxDOT use such safer intersection design treatments and consider design guidance from NACTO in the design of intersections.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** Multiple streets have been shown with sweeping, large radius turns. Several of these match the existing roadway curb lines which may have been designed at a different time for different uses. This project should take the opportunity to minimize these issues, especially in areas where large numbers of people walking can be expected around Downtown and Buffalo Bayou. Sweeping right turns, not limited to Sabine Street and the IH-69 exit to Main Street, need to be avoided. This design makes it difficult for both the motorist and the cyclist to anticipate a potential collision.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT is working 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** It is not clear if local street network and intersections have been analyzed in any way. Given the impact of the project on adjoining communities and the City, coordinate with the City and included this analysis in the plan and FEIS analysis. If not, it is a serious oversight to understand the proposed plan impacts.	Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with COH regarding specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** In general, creating excess unproductive space should be avoided in street design (e.g., small triangles of isolated land) unless there is clear plan to address the use of the space (e.g. public art projects).	Comment noted. TxDOT will continue to engage agencies, entities, and organizations during detailed design and construction.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** Consider all detention areas and how to make these attractive and usable green spaces.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** The City of Houston has adopted a Complete Streets policy to ensure streets are constructed for all users of the system. The City's Infrastructure Design Manual also requires streets should be built using a Context Sensitive Design guidelines as those recommended in the ITE - Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach and NACTO – Urban Street Design Guide, and others. Since the project location is within the dense urban core of the Houston, especially Segments 1 and 2 any future engineering design should meet these guidelines. Segment 3 should be designed to General Urban context guidelines.	Since Segment 3 has not had traditional frontage roads but instead has a typical street network crossing the freeways with typical city blocks that are signalized, the COH design standards will be used for street design. With respect to Segments 1 & 2, the intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees with the Coalition that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates. Segment 1 is an area that has heavily retail/commercial uses; driveways are frequent and signalized intersections are widely spaced. The frontage roads do not function as local streets but instead function as a transition from a high-speed freeway to arterials and local streets. For these reasons, low speed local street design standards cannot be used and TxDOT must follow the design standards of frontage roads. The intersections will be pedestrian-friendly and include bicycle design elements as per the COH Bike Pan. 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. Radius turns will be further evaluated and reduced where appropriate.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** While the freeways are designed to FHWA and AASHTO design guidelines; all frontage roads, adjoining local streets and intersection should be designed consistent with the City's Context Sensitive design guidelines.	TxDOT coordinated with COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing NHHIP. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. TxDOT notes that the policy states that not all streets are identical, and that the policy should take into consideration the function of the road. TxDOT will continue to work with the City and its executive order, but the solutions to promote multiple modes of transportation will be different for different contexts.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design** It is important to ensure that all freeway overpasses are designed with lighting to ensure safety of all user of the roadway. Coordinate with the City, adjacent community, and management entities for identify opportunity for peacemaking improvements under the freeway.	Lighting design is part of the final design process. TxDOT plans to coordinate with outside groups and organizations to seek input during detailed design. Safety is always a primary concern and is considered at all stages.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 1** Evaluate how the Airline, Victoria Drive and Northbound I-45 Intersection would operate safely and legibly to people traveling through any mode of travel. Existing configuration should be improved to ensure safety for all users of the roadway.	Due to the complexity and severe skew of the intersection, the existing configuration is the optimal configuration for safely maintaining access to all movements. TxDOT evaluated simplifying the intersection in several ways, one of which would be removing the right turn lane on WB Airline Drive that lines vehicles up with Victoria Drive. Removing this lane would force vehicles to turn right at the intersection, and then a quick left onto Victoria. This movement would not be safe or intuitive. TxDOT also evaluated removing the connection from Airline to Victoria, but this change did not provide enough benefit to justify the negative impact to community access of the area. 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.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 1** Clarify plan for Werner Street in northeast corner of Tidwell intersection with I-45.	Werner St. is proposed to connect to Tidwell St. on the south side to maintain the access that exists today. The existing connection to Tidwell St. on the north side would be removed, but access would still be provided to Tidwell St. via the I-45 southbound frontage road. East of I-45, Werner St. would terminate at a cul-de-sac, but the frontage road would still be able to be accessed from Witcher Ln.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 1** All intersection should also be designed with special care for safe, comfortable crossings for pedestrians. Most arterials crossing I-45 are on METRO's bus network, have significant nearby boardings and will require safe crossings to serve stops for people traveling in both directions. Additionally, development adjacent to I-45 should be safely accessible for people walking. In particular, the intersection of Shepherd and I-45 is directly adjacent to the N. Shepherd Park & Ride. This intersection should be assessed to ensure that is safely traversable by people walking.	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, including 11-foot-wide lanes and designated bike lanes on cross-streets. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 1** N. Shepherd Transit Center would be logical extension for METRO Red Line. We encourage consideration of how that connection could be made and to consider that in design so as to not preclude options. For example, consider making West Little York and Parker crossing spans wide enough as these would be potential point for light rail to cross I-45 to reach N. Shepherd.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO regarding the potential of extending the Red Line north along or within the proposed I-45 footprint.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 1** Most intersections in Segment 1 are proposed with suburban intersection design considerations. This segment falls within an urban area and all intersections should be designed to improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. To this end, an intersection design that incorporates a free flow right turn lane with a pedestrian island creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians since many drivers do not yield to pedestrians at such intersections. Additionally, several intersections have dedicated right turn lanes. Ensure the traffic counts warrant dedicated right turns. 5-6 lane/multi-lane frontage roads are daunting for pedestrians to cross. Coordinate with City of Houston on all intersection designs.	Safety of pedestrians and bicycles is a primary consideration in the design of NHHIP. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH regarding the design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP and to incorporate the COH Bike Plan and desired bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on city streets. The intersection designs will be further refined during detailed design, including evaluation of dedicated and free flow right turns.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 1** Ensure adequate clearance across Halls Bayou to allow for adequate natural drainage conveyance, and a pedestrian and bicycle trail along the bayou.	All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. TxDOT will coordinate with COH during detailed design to accommodate an alternate route across I-45 in this area, if the proposed trail crossing proves to be not feasible.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 1** Provide dedicated left turn lane at the proposed Blue Bell Interchange.	Since this comment was submitted, the design has been revised and a dedicated left turn lane has been added for both eastbound and westbound movements. The schematic has been revised accordingly.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 1** Justify the need for 5-lane frontage road for portion I-45 between West Road Blue Bell Road, a minor collector street.	The southbound I-45 exit ramp provides access to both the new Blue Bell Road overpass and SH 249. The projected volumes using this ramp requires 2-lanes versus the typical 1-lane. The 5-lane frontage road is a combination of the 2-lane exit ramp and the 3-lane frontage road. Two of the frontage road lanes drop at SH 249 and returns to 3-lanes south of SH 249.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 2** The proposed extension of frontage roads under IH-610 at I-45 interchange are beneficial. These roadways and intersections should be designed to also allow safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings as there is not another crossing for approximately ½ mile in either direction. The large radius turn lanes are not typically supportive of safe, comfortable crossings at these locations.	Safety is TxDOT's highest priority and thus was one of the primary Purpose and Need criteria used to analyze the alternatives for NHHIP. Per the TxDOT Design Manual, TxDOT follows AASHTO criteria for bicycle facility design. However, for this project, TxDOT looked at a range of bicycle facility guidance including NACTO. 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. The Final EIS includes details on these proposed pedestrian realms. 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.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 2** Entire design should be reviewed to ensure optimized bus stop locations have been considered and stops (and access to stops) would be designed to ADA and METRO standards to support high quality transit experience. For Segment 2, this is most critical for the Cavalcade St. bridge crossing and the operation of the existing 44 Acres Homes which travels on a section of Main St and Houston Avenue impacted by the NHHIP project	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction to optimize transit accessibility and minimize disruptions to transit service. Bus stops and access to bus stops will meet ADA and METRO standards.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 2** Justify the need for proposed multi-lane frontage road along northbound I-45 between Quitman and N. Main. A single lane north of Quitman is expanded to 4 lanes at N. Main Street creating significant impact on adjacent properties. Additionally, this creates a design that encourages high speed adjacent to the proposed park deck.	The proposed multi-lane frontage road between Quitman St. and North St. is a series of ramps handling multiple traffic movements to and from the highway, with no driveway access. This segment is constrained by a historic property. From North St. to N. Main St., it becomes a frontage road with a sidewalk. The four lanes are needed to handle projected traffic volumes from Quitman St. and the northbound I-45 exit to N. Main St. making left, right and through movements at N. Main St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 2** Add safe pedestrian crossings, and bike lanes, to cross, and continue east, on Calvacade (has existing bike lanes), Patton, and Cottage St-Searle Dr. These are to have access to the red line train stops at Calvacade and Moody Park, as well as shops, the MD Anderson YMCA, the new park (see below), and neighbors	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the 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. The design of the Cottage Street crossing includes accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians and the U-Turns at Cottage Street were removed from the schematic design to promote safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings per coordination with the adjacent neighborhoods.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 2** Add shade trees along sidewalks and bike lanes on Calvacade, Patton, and Cottage St – Searle Dr.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 2** Ensure a location to post a Welcome to Brook Smith/Montie Beach sign at the I-45 and N. Main intersection	Comment noted. TxDOT will engage with agencies, entities, and organizations regarding aesthetic enhancements during detailed design and construction.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 2** Ensure the design maintains safe multi-modal accessibility across the I-45 and I-610 interchange.	One of the primary benefits of the project is that TxDOT is able to incorporate frontage roads through the I-45/I-610 interchange that do not exist today. This will allow for bike/pedestrian traffic to safely pass through the interchange versus having to use the indirect routes of using the city street grid system (Fulton, Crosstimbers, Airline, and Cavalcade).

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 2** Reconfigure the design of the local network to the new frontage road along I-610 and I-45 on the northeast side of the interchange. Create two-way T-intersection instead of the proposed one way connection to Reid Road. Evaluate the option to extend Melbourne Street to I-45 northbound frontage road	The schematic was revised to reflect two-way operation between Reid Road and Melbourne Street; additionally, Melbourne Street connects to the proposed NB frontage road.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Ensure Wheeler Bridge is designed to accommodate University Corridor LRT, 4-lanes vehicular and pedestrian accommodations. Current proposal does not take into account the proposed high capacity transit along Wheeler Street.	The Wheeler Street typical section was revised to include 4 vehicular lanes and a 15-foot wide Pedestrian Realm. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO during detailed design and construction. Additional information from METRO regarding future plans for the University LRT would be needed to evaluate whether this proposal could be accommodated.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Consider widening Almeda bridge to allow simple buffer buildings (See example of I-670 in Columbus, OH). This would reduce view of freeway and make a more seamless commercial corridor experience on this important roadway.	TxDOT will evaluate the feasibility of widening Almeda Rd. to add buffer buildings, but any option to widen the bridge and any improvements would need to be paid for by others.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Justify why Caroline Street warrant 4-lanes with dedicated left turn lane at Wheeler Street. Maintain the current 4-lane configuration with wide median across I-69 to maintain the existing character of Caroline Street.	Per coordination with the COH and request of local stakeholders, TxDOT revised the schematic to remove the widening of Caroline Street (thus retaining the existing median width) and removed the dedicated left turn lanes.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Area south of Baldwin Park should be redesigned to more of a neighborhood context without sweeping high speed curves in streets. For example, Francis Street could be designed as a T- Intersection with Chenevert. This would allow block between Chenevert, Francis, Jackson and Stewart to be reassembled at full city block. This could be used for green space or redevelopment opportunities given the impact of the proposed project.	Comment noted. TxDOT will work with the COH during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Proposed access from Chenevert to the extension of Hamilton Street can be designed as a 2 lane local street and limit impacts on adjacent properties and would be a context sensitive design solution.	The design of this area was coordinated closely with the COH and local stakeholders to reflect what is shown on the FEIS schematic. This includes connections between Chenevert and extended Hamilton Street that do not require Right of Way from adjacent properties along Berry Street. This configuration also retains access to the entrance ramp for SH 288 southbound mainlanes while limiting cut-through traffic.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Where frontage roads are proposed, such as between Midtown and Museum Park or between Downtown and the East End, it would be helpful to know which intersections would be proposed for signalization or all-way stop control. This will greatly impact people's ability to safely cross at these locations, especially those walking or biking. It would likely be beneficial if all of these are considered for either a signal or all-way stop control.	This is an important consideration for the project and was closely coordinated with the City and other stakeholders during this phase of development. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and other stakeholders regarding the final -design configurations and operations of City streets that intersect with the state system. Traffic signal warrant studies will be conducted during the upcoming final design phase.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** Ensure Wheeler Transit Center can function effectively for all users with this project. Current Schematic does not show exit point for Transit Center driveway. This project presents opportunity to rethink operations.	With the planned highway caps, the NHHIP project offers a unique opportunity to enhance and expand the Wheeler Transit Center. TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with METRO, the COH and other interested stakeholders regarding their planned improvements. METRO consultants are studying the overall transit operations to optimize the NHHIP configuration, including connectivity for transfer buses to access Fannin Street from the enhanced Wheeler Transit Center.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, South: US 59/I-69** The design of the street network near Wheeler Transit Center should be optimized to maximize TOD opportunity. Main goal would be to minimize train/roadway conflicts (e.g., train does not cross streets in the middle of intersections) while maximizing transit operations and TOD potential. Design should be developed to accommodate future two-way express bus service on I-69/US 59 with particular focus on Spur 527. Direct or expedited HOV connections to Wheeler TC should also be explored.	See response to Comment 120. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with METRO regarding the planned University Line BRT (included in MetroNext referendum) and two-way express bus service along I-69/US 59 throughout the final design phase and through our ongoing I-69/US 59 Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Tuam Street is a local street and does not warrant 4 lane redesign as 2 lanes with left turn lane and dedicated bike lanes.	Based on discussions with the COH, the number of lanes on the proposed Tuam Street bridge will match the existing lanes on each side of the bridge. TxDOT has also added a 17-ft Pedestrian Realm on each side to safely accommodate bike/ped traffic across the bridge. This is reflected in the FEIS schematic.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Re-evaluate the need for 5 lanes on McGowen Street. Two lanes with dedicated left turn lane and bike lanes may be adequate based on the existing and projected capacity.	Based on discussions with the COH, the number of lanes on the proposed McGowen Street bridge will match the existing lanes on each side of the bridge. TxDOT has also added a 17-ft Pedestrian Realm on each side to safely accommodate bike/ped traffic across the bridge. This is reflected in the FEIS schematic.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Revise the design of Hamilton and McGowen Street to remove free flowing right turn lane.	TxDOT analyzed this free flow right turn and found the projected turning movements and traffic mix do not warrant including it. The schematic has been revised to remove this free flow right turn.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Propose Chartres Street at McGowen Street should be redesigned to limit ROW taking from the new residential development in Third Ward.	In response to public comment, TxDOT has revised the schematic to reflect reconstruction of the frontage road cross section to match existing conditions. No additional ROW will be taken from the residential development located south of McGowen Street.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Redesign Webster Street and Hamilton Street intersection as a T -intersection to improve pedestrian accessibility along Hamilton .	TxDOT will work with the COH to optimize pedestrian accessibility at the noted location.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Light new bridges along I-69 in a manner similar to those in Montrose along I-69.	Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. This will be further explored during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** The project appears to take out HPD's South Central command station. How is this impact being mitigated and have alternate location been identified to relocate the facility in the area?	TxDOT is coordinating with the COH and HPD to determine a suitable location for a replacement facility.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Include bike lanes and wide sidewalks on Elgin, Tuam and McGowen bridges. Light new bridges in a manner similar to those in Montrose along I-69.	17-foot Pedestrian Realms have been added to all three noted bridges. This includes a 7-ft sidewalk, 5-ft bike lane, and a 5-ft buffer behind the back of curb. Safety lighting would be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting as provided on the arch bridges between Kirby Dr. and Montrose Blvd. could be provided under agreements with local entities. This will be further explored during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Southbound Hamilton at McGowen and northbound Chartres at Elgin should be designed without sweeping right turn lane	TxDOT analyzed these free flow right turns and found the projected turning movements and traffic mix do not warrant including it. The schematic has been revised to remove these free flow right turns.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** When reconstructing Green/Purple crossing of I-69/I-45 trench between East End and downtown, design larger radii turns to support faster train operation speeds. Improve signal operations for rail crossing at St. Emanuel and design Hamilton crossing to work effectively. Coordinate with the City of Houston and METRO and potential for dedicated transit lanes on Capital and Rusk as well as rail connection through proposed cap park.	TxDOT coordinated with METRO regarding the operations and construction of these lines. METRO did not propose any changes to the existing configuration of the lines, however TxDOT will continue to coordinate with them during detailed design.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Ensure potential bottle necks are evaluated in the design process o Could I-45 to I-69N to I-10 ramp be separated to eliminate some of the likely weaving though that section? I-45 N to I-69 N connection could occur in vicinity of Runnels. This has potential to reduce weaving through that area overall. o I-69 S south of merges seven southbound lanes (2 from Hamilton/Webster, 4 from I-69 S main lanes, 1 from I-45N) in 6 lanes, which drop to 4 lanes once two lanes are peeled off to local streets on south end of midtown. This seems like it will end up as a major bottle next similar to existing I-69 NB at the Spur. Don't really have a solution but seems like it will be challenge at day one of opening.	Removing bottlenecks was one of the primary considerations to address the mobility and safety Purpose and Need goals. As part of the NEPA process, TxDOT analyzed numerous engineering alternatives that would address the project purpose and need. The focus was to increase both freeway and local street mobility and reduce crashes while minimizing impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. Of course, with I-45 being a primary hurricane evacuation route, keeping this facility open during extreme events was also a key factor in the alternatives analysis process. For Segments 1 and 2, the need was to determine how to best integrate the 2-way, 24/7 managed lanes (now named MaX Lanes). Segment 3 (the downtown freeway system) required a different approach. The MaX lanes take you into downtown, but through the comprehensive traffic study, TxDOT found that over 50% of the traffic on each interstate still desired to go through downtown. The primary focus for improvements in Segment 3 was removing weaving sections where drivers have to change lanes one or more times to make a freeway to freeway connection or to get to their exit ramp. This was particularly challenging for NHHIP with four freeways converging downtown; I-45, I-10, and I-69 (former US 59) and SH 288 and the planned Hardy Toll Road southern extension. So, to determine the most effective alternative configurations, TxDOT started with an extensive traffic study to determine the crash and congestion hot spots where we needed to focus. What the traffic modeling effort told us: 1) The traffic volumes for each interstate is projected to be over 250,000 vehicles per day (VPD), with interchanges at I-45/I-10, I-10/I-69, I-69/I-45, and I-69/SH 288 having to pass over 500,000 VPD. 2) Over 50% of the traffic on each interstate (I-45, I-10, and I-69) desired to pass through downtown. 3) The existing I-45/I-69 Interchange area was not able to handle 50% of the traffic in/out of downtown in the current configuration (even with a widened Pierce Elevated). 4) The segment of I-69 between I-45 and SH 288 was the primary cause of the daily gridlock around downtown because of a complicated series of weaving sections and a combination of elevated and depressed freeway sections. Therefore, to solve the crash, connectivity and congestion issues, TxDOT had to provide drivers the option of going through or to downtown, while also providing enough advance notice to make the commitment and avoid what happens today, i.e., drivers making last minute decisions to exit or change lanes. TxDOT studied elevated, depressed, underground tunnels and combinations of all three. The only alternative that had a significant impact was to convert I-69 to 100% depressed between Commerce St and Spur 527 and to shift I-45 from the current alignment along Pierce Elevated to be coincident with I-10 on the north side of town and I-69 on the west side of town. This configuration allowed us to separate downtown-destined traffic from through-traffic and drastically eliminate weaving sections (i.e., bottlenecks). TxDOT's analysis shows this configuration would reduce crashes by at least 30% (over 50% on I-69), increase reliability, and allow drivers to go around downtown at close to current posted speeds (55 MPH) versus the No Build alternative projected speed of 30 MPH. Traffic modeling and analysis conducted for this project indicates that the proposed design/configuration is the best solution for achieving the project's mobility goals.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written		
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** In the area, north of Minute Maid Park, the operations of the proposed southbound frontage road and existing Hamilton appears problematic. Having two parallel one-way street traveling the same direction and located 100' apart seems like a recipe for conflicting queues and confusing operation for motorists both on these streets and crossing them. There is significant potential for wrong way turns from crossing streets as drivers are used to the alternative pattern of one-way street Downtown. Consider consolidation of these streets or revisions to ramp access to Downtown.	The layout of the City street system was closely coordinated with the City of Houston and other stakeholders. Signage will be designed and installed to indicate and manage traffic flow from all streets.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Ensure underpass at Commerce/Navigation proposed by GCFRD can be constructed with acceptable and safe grades/visibility for all modes of traffic.	The NHHIP design has been revised to better accommodate the proposed Commerce/Navigation underpass design that is a Gulf Coast Rail District/City of Houston project. The NHHIP design revision includes shifting St. Emanuel St. closer to I-69 which improves the grades/visibility for all modes of traffic that the City will allow in the future underpass and also allows the St. Emanuel St./Franklin St. connection to function in both the existing or reconstructed Commerce/Navigation underpass configuration should it move forward.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** The intersection of Franklin and St. Emanuel frontage road seems poorly thought out given existing grades, typical travel speeds, and sight distance, should the full underpass mentioned above not come to fruition.	The NHHIP design has been revised to accommodate the proposed Commerce/Navigation underpass project by GCRD and the City of Houston by shifting the location of St. Emanuel closer to I-69. Even in the absence of construction of the Commerce/Navigation underpass, St. Emanuel will be constructed to meet TxDOT design criteria.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Ensure rail underpasses are built with drainage improvement to avoid flooding.	All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Ensure at grade crossing of railroads is avoided in the proposed design for enhance freight and vehicular circulation and safety.	The project goals were to remove as many at-grade railroad crossings as possible to improve safety and capacity. The project creates no new at-grade crossings and replaces four (4) existing at-grade crossings with grade separations.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Design the proposed detention basin north of Runnels as a wet bottom basin that is publicly accessible gateway feature from the bayou trail system.	A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, East: I-69, I-45, SH 288** Include landscaping and noise mitigation along widened freeway adjacent to Fifth Ward, East Downtown, East Downtown, Downtown, First Ward, Third Ward and Midtown.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project and are not accounted for in the analysis included in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** Reconstruct Hogan, Quitman, McKee and Hardy bridges with safe pedestrian and bike friendly crossings and sidewalks.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, North: I-45, I-10** Ensure the design of Providence and Rothwell accommodates pedestrian and bicycle users.	TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. In joint work sessions about integrating the City of Houston Bike Plan into NHHIP's schematic design, TxDOT and the city agreed that all street crossings in Segment 3 would have a pedestrian realm. Ranging 12 to 17 feet in width, this feature includes a wide sidewalk, bicycle lane, and a buffer zone. TxDOT will include a similar design for city streets in other areas of the proposed project.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated** Sabine Street at Allen Parkway should be shown as T-intersection without sweeping right turn design. These are not appropriate for the context, given walking and biking crossings and desired travel speeds along Buffalo Bayou Park.	Sabine Street at Allen Parkway has been revised to reflect a T-intersection without sweeping right turns.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated** The removal of the existing freeway and the proposed configuration of Downtown Connector will have significant impact on Buffalo Bayou Park and Sam Houston Park. Coordinate on design and identifying opportunities to enhance the parks, with City of Houston, Buffalo Bayou Park, Downtown District and HCFCD is critical to minimize impact on our parks, bayous and its users.	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project also significantly reduces the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT will coordinate with stakeholders during detailed design to identify opportunities to enhance open spaces and amenities along the bayous.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated** Minimize the number of piers supporting the downtown connector bridges over Buffalo Bayou.	Bridges over Buffalo Bayou would be designed to minimize piers within the bayou. Additional coordination regarding design features will occur during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated** Realignment of I-45 along Pierce Elevated creates a unique opportunity to connect adjoining neighborhoods like East Downtown, Third Ward, Midtown, Downtown, and Fourth Ward with a unique urban space. We encourage the City, Midtown District, Downtown District, and other adjacent neighborhoods to develop the best solution that would meet the goals of the City and our neighborhoods. We look forward to these partners to work with TxDOT over the next few years to discuss options along this corridor since this is the last phase of the NHHIP Segment 3 project.	TxDOT has and will continue to coordinate with the COH and stakeholders regarding the project and agree this coordination has resulted in many positive enhancements to the design presented in the DEIS. For example, TxDOT redesigned the Downtown connectors to be below grade at Andrews St. to allow for a pedestrian/bicyclist connection between Fourth Ward and Downtown. TxDOT will continue to work with these groups throughout future phases of the project to address community concerns.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated** Design and locate the downtown connectors to preserve the option of retaining some of the existing freeway bridge structures, similar to the Pierce Sky Park concept, where possible.	As noted in the response to Comment 142, the project significantly reduces the highway footprint between Dallas Street and Houston Avenue in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown cannot be left in place as it conflicts with the proposed design. However, the portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment by others. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Design, Segment 3, West: Downtown Connector, Pierce Elevated** Evaluate the opportunity to create a deck park or green belt extension between W. Gray and St. Joseph to allow for the opportunity to extend greenway along the Pierce Elevated, connecting Buffalo Bayou, Midtown and Downtown to Third Ward and East Downtown.	As noted in the response to Comment 142, the project significantly reduces the highway footprint between Dallas Street and Houston Avenue in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou. The existing elevated I-45 roadway along the west and south sides of Downtown cannot be left in place as it conflicts with the proposed design. However, the portion of I-45 (Pierce Elevated) between Brazos Street and US 59/I-69 could be left in place for future use and redevelopment by others. TxDOT will coordinate with COH regarding disposition of that portion of the Pierce Elevated.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces** The proposed project has a significant impact on parks, open space and recreation areas in the Houston Region. The project should identify opportunities to limit this impact and mitigate any impact proposed.	The NHHIP Study Team evaluated numerous alternatives for the proposed project to avoid or minimize impacts to parks and other recreation resources. TxDOT is committed to preserving existing and future park areas, trails, and bike paths as much as possible. After publication of the Draft EIS, the design of the proposed project was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park. The In the instance of any permanent or temporary modifications to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, TxDOT will work with the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, and other agencies and organizations to provide the same level of connectivity as the existing conditions.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 1** Coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Little White Oak Bayou between I-610 and East Parker Road and Shepherd. Develop the detention basin between I-610 and Crosstimbers as a wet bottom basin and publicly-accessible green space tied the bikeway along the bayou. Install a trash mitigation system that will collect both heavy debris and floating debris.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. Wet bottom detention basins will be considered if a partner entity agrees to maintain them.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 1** Coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Halls Bayou along I-45.	TxDOT will coordinate with the COH and the Houston Parks Board to consider proposed plans for parks and other recreation areas along bayous in the project area, and accommodate such plans, if feasible.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 2** Little White Oak Bayou represents a prime opportunity to extend open space connectivity north from White Oak Bayou Greenway to Woodlands Park, Moody Parks and beyond up to Halls Bayou. It also connects neighborhoods like Near Northside, Independence Heights and Acres Homes. This connection between Acres Homes and downtown would benefit many of the underserved communities directly impacted by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. Through most of Segment 2 the project follows the course of the Little White Oak Bayou. It is imperative that the project fully embrace the ecological values and open space potential offered by Little White Oak Bayou.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 2** Improved greenspace and pedestrian accessibility to Woodland Park along Little White Oak Bayou east of I-45.	The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 2** In 1914 Woodland Park was a 26 acre park in a neighborhood which included the two communities of Woodland Heights and Near Northside. In 1959, TxDOT acquired one third of the park (8.5 acres) to construct I-45 just to the north of downtown. The remaining 17.5 acres of I-45 Woodland Park is now situated entirely to the west of I-45 within the Woodland Heights. Because of I-45, Near Northside residents no longer have access to this park except via the North Street Bridge. Improve greenspace along Little White Oak Bayou east of I-45, with hike and bike trails connecting to Moody Park. This will provide Near Northside residents with access to greenspace and Little White Oak Bayou.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create greenways or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 2** Connectivity from Woodland Park to the Little White Oak Bayou east of I-45. This could be through an improved channel conduit under I-45 that would provide a safe walking and biking path along the bayou connecting Woodland Park on the west of I-45 to the hike and bike path along Little White Oak Bayou on the east side of I-45.	The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision due to flooding considerations downstream. TxDOT will not be able to discuss this with HCFCD until there is a more detailed drainage study that shows flood elevations; the study will be completed in the detailed design phase.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 2** Connectivity of public parks, HPARD's "String of Pearls", can be achieved by connecting Woodland Park to Moody Park along Little White Oak Bayou. Coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Little White Oak.	TxDOT will coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for open space along Little White Oak Bayou. For example, the proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT also proposes an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 3** The White Oak Bayou Greenway is part of Bayou Greenways 2020, a $220 million public/ private investment by the City of Houston to provide continuous linear parks and recreation areas, with hike/bike trails, along 150 miles of Houston's major waterways. The White Oak Bayou Greenway extends over 15 miles from the city limits to UH Downtown where a federally funded TIGER project, currently under construction, is connecting White Oak Bayou Greenway to Buffalo Bayou Park. The DEIS does not reflect the impact on White Oak Bayou greenway which clearly serves an open space and recreation area with the project. TxDOT should address this issue and work with the stakeholders to mitigate the impact on the White Oak Bayou Greenway.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to maintain existing open space and replace affected open space by creating new open space where feasible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. Impacts to parks, open spaces along the bayous, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some resources are likely unavoidable. The proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou and the existing hike/bike trail would remain. The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The impact would be primarily aerial (bridges over the open space), with some columns to support the bridges. The primary use of the White Oak Bayou greenway in the area of the NHHIP is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 3** Sam Houston Park is one of Houston's most important historical destinations, featuring some of the oldest structures in the city. The proposed one-way connection from Walker/McKinney loop street should be removed since it separates Sam Houston Park from Buffalo Bayou. This roadway cuts through the original Sam Houston Park, which originally extended to Buffalo Bayou. This is also the primary biking and jogging route from downtown to the bayou and creates a very dangerous crossing point on a heavily-used route.	TxDOT studied historic resources in accordance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. TxDOT met with the COH and maintaining a Walker St. connection to Allen Parkway was requested. At this time, no change to the project design is proposed. TxDOT is open to discussing this connection further with the COH.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 3** Sabine Promenade/Buffalo Bayou Park area has undergone a nearly $90 million enhancement. TxDOT's should design roadways in a context sensitive manner to ensure accessibility and safety of people walking and biking.	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.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Parks and Open Spaces, Segment 3** Lighting improvement is needed under the ramps at Lyons Avenue and Gregg Street. These Improvements should be coordinated by TIRZ 18 and the Houston Arts Alliance.	Safety lighting will be provided as part of the project. Aesthetic lighting could be provided under agreements with local entities.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Coordination & Process** This project will be transformative, for the region and City TxDOT closely coordinates with the City of Houston, METRO and other entities such as Management Districts, TIRZs to make the project as strong as possible. This means thinking beyond the direct right-of-way of the project to understand opportunities and impacts on street, bikeway, greenway, and transit networks. It also means working to tie communities together, not separating them further with ever wider freeways serving as barriers.	TxDOT has closely coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the noted entities as well as numerous other stakeholder groups and neighborhoods. Public involvement and community outreach will continue throughout the life of the project. TxDOT will to continue to engage the public beyond the Final EIS and throughout the design and construction.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Coordination & Process** The project impact facilities managed by multiple agencies, entities and organization. While TxDOT has engaged these organizations on planning level concepts, additional coordination warranted ensuring the design drawings and details are coordinate with these agencies, entities and organization. Develop a process for coordination to ensure major issues are resolved early in the design phase of the project. This could be achieved through workshop for design level discussion and decision for the proposed project.	TxDOT will continue to engage agencies, entities, and organizations during detailed design and construction. Additionally, TxDOT contacted (or attempted to contact) representatives of community facilities that would be directly or indirectly affected. TxDOT contacted these representatives by phone and in writing, sending questionnaires to solicit input on their concerns. TxDOT also conducted four rounds of public meetings for the Draft EIS and held a public hearing to receive input from the communities. Public involvement and community outreach will continue throughout the life of the project. TxDOT will to continue to engage the public beyond the Final EIS and throughout the design and construction.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Coordination & Process** Several stakeholders have submitted recommendations that have potential to significantly improve connectivity but have not been reflected in current plans. Plans state that these are "subject to change". Clarify to the public the process to consider these changes.	TxDOT conducted more than 200 stakeholder meetings with individual organizations to review design plans and the Power Point presentations given at the public meetings, and the public hearing included discussion of design changes resulting from public input. The design has been revised to reflect several recommendations from stakeholders. The revised schematics were posted on the project website, and the proposed revisions are addressed in the FEIS. Additionally, the Community Impact Assessment discuss design changes and how the design changes corresponded to community input. Public involvement and community outreach will continue throughout the life of the project. TxDOT will to continue to engage the public beyond the Final EIS and throughout the design and construction.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Coordination & Process** Ensure coordination with the City and other organization to ensure safe pedestrian bicycle access for trails along Buffalo Bayou and White Oak Bayou.	Trails that would be temporarily or permanently affected will be replaced or relocated, with details developed during final design and in coordination with appropriate entities. TxDOT will maintain existing trail access during construction.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Coordination & Process** Ensure coordination with local business being impacted during the construction phase of the projects to identify opportunities to limit impact to businesses.	Access to adjacent properties will be evaluated during detailed design and will be maintained during construction. The project would include acceleration strategies to minimize the duration of construction. The contractor will be required to coordinate with impacted businesses to minimize disruptions during construction.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Economic Development** A project of this magnitude has significant impact on potential development, both positively and negatively. It will also impact the City's tax base through acquisition of valuable land in the City's urban core. The design should be optimized to support high quality development opportunities that are beneficial to the City of Houston and the surrounding communities. To pretend this is solely a mobility project and to overlook the development impacts would be huge missed opportunity. TxDOT and its partners should work to identify and incorporate development opportunities into the project in the initial design, especially in areas where the project eliminates significant existing tax base.	TxDOT has coordinated with the COH, management districts, and Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones to accommodate their redevelopment plans and will continue to coordinate during detailed design and construction. TxDOT has and will continue to seek out opportunities to engage stakeholders along the corridor to leverage and optimize the design effort and funding specific to this project to promote coordination and collaboration to result in positive added value to the implementation to the project.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Economic Development** Segment 1 has significant impact, approximately 212 acres, proposed widening of the project. TxDOT should identify other options and meaningfully engage the neighborhoods to limit this impact on the community.	TxDOT developed a comprehensive public/stakeholder outreach program and conducted/attended meetings with elected officials, neighborhood associations, management districts, and others during project development. The project design has been developed in consideration of the input received to minimize impacts within the study area. TxDOT will continue to evaluate opportunities to refine and minimize impacts during detailed design.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment** In general noise and environmental impacts should be mitigated proactively as a part of the project. Plan should designate where noise walls are proposed to mitigate neighborhood impacts. Reduce road noise with grooved pavement and slower speed limits especially in the densely-populated and historic areas.	A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, including for many areas of the neighborhoods noted in the comment, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. Final decisions regarding noise barriers will be made with community input, as required by law. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise and decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment** Roadway alignments and the project scope should allow for street trees and pedestrian realm designed to urban standards. Add landscaping along freeway lanes and frontage roads plus noise walls to mitigate for increased traffic from wider freeway. Develop a landscape plan and coordinate with the City and stakeholders along the corridor to reduce visual impacts along the corridor.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. Local street connections were studied by TxDOT and their consultants in coordination with the COH. The proposed project design resulted from extensive coordination and public input. TxDOT coordinated with COH regarding specific design of the city street network adjacent to and crossing the NHHIP. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH to optimize the local street network. Modifications to the local network would be City projects. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors in the mentioned neighborhoods is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise and decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment** The NHHIP project will have a significant impact on Houston neighborhoods and businesses. Provide a landscape plan for the project where landscape screening will be provided along the project to screen the freeway and also help mitigate the air quality and noise impact from the freeway while improving aesthetics.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment** Waterways affected by the project are already listed as impaired waters. TxDOT should model the runoff and stormwater discharges into Buffalo Bayou, White Oak and, Halls and Little White Oak in order to meet state requirements that prohibit the addition of any pollutant load into impaired waters and focus instead on improving those waters through the additional application of more rigorous best management practices for stormwater and runoff. Similarly, TxDOT should adopt and disclose the best management practices and plans that will be adopted, including source controls, to avoid further discharge of trash into these waterways.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan is required for every project and therefore will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures would be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 1** All alternatives would result in traffic noise impacts. The current DEIS does not adequately address mitigation.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. The analysis complies with FHWA regulations. The analysis identified potential locations of noise barriers based on predicted noise impacts, and evaluation of feasibility (noise reduction that can be achieved) and cost effectiveness. The final decision to implement proposed noise barriers would be made during detailed design with input from benefitted property owners and residents. Other forms of mitigation were considered and the application of noise barriers was determined to be the most effective. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise and decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 2** Ensure all neighborhoods with noise impacts, irrespective of existing conditions, are mitigated appropriately with options such as noise/sound wall including the southeast corner of I-610 and I-45 adjacent to Delaney Street.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. The analysis complies with FHWA regulations. The analysis identified potential locations of noise barriers based on predicted noise impacts, and evaluation of feasibility (noise reduction that can be achieved) and cost effectiveness. The final decision to implement proposed noise barriers would be made during detailed design with input from benefitted property owners and residents. Other forms of mitigation were considered and the application of noise barriers was determined to be the most effective. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise and decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 2** Provide for noise mitigation along the eastern border of Woodland Park. There is constant din of freeway noise is part of the fabric of a Woodland Park visit. With an added upper deck, above grade, the noise will be even more oppressive and incessant. Provide state-of-the-art sound mitigation with an additional shielding of tall trees and vegetation.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents anticipated noise impacts to Woodland Park as a result of the project. A noise barrier is proposed at Woodland Park. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise and decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 2** The TxDOT plan proposes to increase the amount of flow of Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 via a larger culvert or channel will result in hydrologic changes within the LWOB channel in Woodland Park. Increased water flow upstream, at the I-45 culvert, will add increased flooding pressure and erosion downstream within the park.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD.

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554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 2** Erosion can be mitigated with careful planting of appropriate vegetation particularly along the steep banks of the Little White Oak Bayou channel to prevent collapse and further instability due to increased flood water pressure.	Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. TxDOT will coordinate with HCFCD regarding vegetation replacements or enhancements for areas of the bayous directly affected by the project.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 2** Little White Oak Bayou continues to be one of the top 10 polluted waterways in the greater Houston area. The bayou suffers from freeway pollution from both run-off and litter. It makes a small meander on the east side of I-45. Current TxDOT plans include detention basins on the east side of the freeway along the Little White Oak Bayou channel. Currently most of the channel is not accessible and is tremendously polluted with dissolved pollutants, heavy trash within the channel, and floating debris of cups and plastic bags, much of this coming from the freeway.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 2** Create detention ponds that are open and unfenced, planted with native plants which filter dissolved pollutants from freeway run-off.	Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 2** Install a trash mitigation system that will collect both heavy debris and floating debris. There are several locations along Little White Oak Bayou where this could be installed and maintained. Ideally it would be located upstream of both Moody Park and Woodland Park.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan would be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 3** The proposed realignment of the freeway near Hardy Yards will have significantly larger noise and visual impact on the Hardy Yards area. The current DEIS does not adequately address mitigation along this area.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report demonstrates no predicted traffic noise impacts at the existing residential development in the Hardy Yards area as a result of the proposed project. Per FHWA and TxDOT noise policy, impacts are not evaluated and noise mitigation is not proposed for currently undeveloped areas. TxDOT will design bridges in consideration of visual aesthetics, including views from the Near Northside super neighborhood and surrounding areas, including Hardy Yards.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 3** Include landscaping and noise mitigation along widened freeway adjacent to Third Ward and Midtown.	TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. The analysis complies with FHWA regulations. The analysis identified potential locations of noise barriers based on predicted noise impacts, and evaluation of feasibility (noise reduction that can be achieved) and cost effectiveness. The final decision to implement proposed noise barriers would be made during detailed design with input from benefitted property owners and residents. The Traffic Noise Technical Report discusses proposed noise barriers and mitigation for the mentioned neighborhoods. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on non-elevated main lanes and frontage roads, which creates shallow grooves in the roadway surface running lengthwise and decreases noise compared to transverse tining. However, since FHWA does not currently consider pavement as a formal noise abatement measure, potential noise reduction from tined pavement is not quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. Such reduction would be in addition to the noise mitigation quantified in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 3** Impacts of run-off on Buffalo Bayou west and northeast of downtown. Provide wet bottom detention where detention is being proposed along this section.	TxDOT could build the detention pond south of Patton Street where a truck stop is currently located with a wet bottom; however, TxDOT would need a partner to maintain the pond and any other amenities that may be added. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 3** Ensure detention ponds that are open and unfenced, planted with native plants which filter dissolved pollutants from freeway run-off.	Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Noise & Environment, Segment 3** Install a trash mitigation system that will collect both heavy debris and floating debris.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan would be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
554	Coalition of Organizations	7/27/2017	Written	**Historic** The project segment between 610 and I-10 impacts several historic neighborhoods. Three designated historic districts are located along I-45 south of North Main Street. The project's affect on the National Register-listed Near Northside Historic District on the east side of I-45 must be addressed as part of the review process along with potential impacts on two city-designated historic districts on the west side of I-45: Germantown and Woodland Heights. Both of the city-designated districts are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. The Brooke Smith Addition on the west side of I-45 and the north side North Main Street is also potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. The project's potential impact on historic resources in the First Ward, on the west side of I-45 south of I-10, should also be considered, particularly the National Register-listed Jefferson Davis Hospital (1925).	TxDOT has designed the project to minimize impacts to neighborhoods along IH 45 between IH 610 and IH 10, and is taking into account the historic properties in the project's APE. The project would remove a noncontributing garage in the Near Northside Historic District but would not directly impact any contributing resources in Near Northside. No new ROW will be acquired from the NRHP-eligible Germantown Historic District. The project would have no adverse effect to historic properties in the NRHP-eligible Brooke Smith Addition. The Woodland Heights district and Jefferson Davis Hospital are located outside the project APE. NRHP-eligible boundaries for a previously identified historic district in the First Ward do not extend northward into the project APE. Technical studies to complete effect determinations are currently underway. TxDOT will consult with the Texas SHPO regarding determinations of effect.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**The following comments were submitted by Irvine & Connor in support of the Coalition Letter** *footnote 1: The Coalition Letter includes participation by: Air Alliance Houston, Avenue CDC, Bayou City Waterkeeper, BikeHouston, Buffalo Bayou Partnership, Eastwood Civic Association, Freedmen's Town Preservation Committee, Friends of Woodland Park, Galveston Bay Foundation, Germantown Historic District, Greater Heights Super Neighborhood 15, Heritage Society, Hermann Park Conservancy, Houston Parks Board, I-45 Coalition, LINK Houston, Montie Beach Civic Club, Museum Super Neighborhood 66, Scenic Houston, Trees for Houston, Washington Avenue Coalition/Memorial Park Super Neighborhood 22, White Oak Bayou Association, and Woodland Heights Civil Association.*	No response needed.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	The I-45 corridor is a central transportation artery for the Houston area, used by residents and seen by visitors, often in their first trip to the downtown area from the airport. The North Houston Highway Improvement Project offers an opportunity to solidify values that are important to Houstonians and to Texans: the aesthetic values of Texas highways; careful integration of transportation corridors with communities; sensitivity to environmental resources; management of flood plains; and preservation and enhancement of park space used by all. A project of the magnitude of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project, which is expected to shape the transportation landscape of North Houston and the downtown area for decades, must be designed for the 21st century, mindful that it will have an impact on Houston for generations. Mitigation for unavoidable impacts will be critical to the project's success. Community engagement—direct dialogue between TxDOT and community members—will help ensure that impacts are avoided where possible, and that all appropriate and practicable mitigation is implemented for unavoidable impacts.	During development of the proposed NHHIP, TxDOT worked to develop a project that minimizes adverse impacts to neighborhoods, parks, other community facilities, and the bayous; provides positive impacts where possible; and improves highway mobility and safety in the area. TxDOT reviewed the comments on the proposed project and Draft EIS, and conducted additional stakeholder engagement to better understand the potential project impacts. As a result of community and stakeholder input, design changes have been incorporated that avoid and minimize impacts, and mitigation is provided to offset unavoidable impacts, as documented in the Final EIS.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**A. PROCEDURAL OR GENERAL ISSUES** **1. Because the DEIS has failed to provide sufficient analysis on a number of key issues, additional NEPA documentation—such as another DEIS or supplemental EIS—is necessary before the Final EIS is developed and published.** There are a number of substantive deficiencies in the DEIS that need to be addressed before the FEIS is generated. There must be adequate opportunity for public review and comment in these areas. The DEIS makes clear that TxDOT is deferring various substantive aspects until the FEIS. Even if further public comment is allowed after the FEIS is issued, those comments would have much less impact on the agency decision and selection of project configuration. For those reasons, the public must have further opportunity to participate on important substantive issues before the FEIS is generated and published. These important issues include:	The Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. The Draft EIS, by nature, is a preliminary analysis based on best available information at the time. TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for a minimum of 30 days. Additionally, TxDOT will provide another 30-day comment period once the Final EIS is published. Comments received on the Final EIS will be considered in the same deliberate manner as all other comments received on the Draft EIS and the technical reports. TxDOT will, where feasible, make changes to the project design based on these comments.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	A. PROCEDURAL OR GENERAL ISSUES; 1. (cont) •Parks (TxDOT has overlooked a variety of public resources and not addressed mitigation for key Houston parks and recreational areas); • Noise (only a qualitative analysis has been conducted; and only barriers have been discussed as mitigation); • Visual (the DEIS greatly understates impacts, calling visual sensitivity in all segments "low"; and relegates the mitigation phase of the visual impact assessment to five bullet points); • Community and EJ issues (EJ analysis is inadequate and mitigation must be developed and publicly vetted); • Air quality (the quantitative analysis has been postponed to the FEIS); • Drainage (how bayou impacts will be addressed has not yet been disclosed). "The broad dissemination of information mandated by NEPA permits the public and other government agencies to react to the effects of a proposed action at a meaningful time." Marsh v. Oregon Nat. Res. Council, 490 U.S. 360, 371 (1989). We are concerned that if the substantive deficiencies related to various aspects of the project are not corrected until, and released with, the FEIS, then the public will have insufficient time and opportunity to provide meaningful feedback to TxDOT. For this reason, TxDOT needs to release supplementary information on key aspects of the project (listed above and throughout this letter) before issuing the FEIS.	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**A. PROCEDURAL OR GENERAL ISSUES** **2. We strongly recommend that TxDOT meet with key stakeholders over the coming months to receive feedback directly from community groups with specific concerns about the project.** The impacts of the proposed project will be extremely disruptive to various residential areas, commercial corridors and districts, park users, and the general travelling public. TxDOT has already been in discussion with some stakeholders. We strongly suggest and recommend that TxDOT engage in dialogue with a wide variety of stakeholders. As is evident in the Coalition Letter, community groups are coming together to understand collective concerns about the project and to discuss ideas for improvement. We believe that stakeholders are willing to and interested in meeting with TxDOT representatives in order to give constructive feedback on project concerns. If TxDOT so elected, we believe that community groups would be willing to form one or more "ad-hoc committees" to organize the various voices on different issues and project areas. Most importantly, TxDOT needs to engage in direct community dialogue to understand community concerns and to ensure project success.	During development of the proposed NHHIP, TxDOT worked to develop a project that minimizes adverse impacts to neighborhoods, parks, other community facilities, and the bayous; provides positive impacts where possible; and improves highway mobility and safety in the area. TxDOT reviewed the comments on the proposed project and Draft EIS, and conducted additional stakeholder engagement to better understand the potential project impacts. As a result of community and stakeholder input, design changes have been incorporated that avoid and minimize impacts, and mitigation is provided to offset unavoidable impacts, as documented in the Final EIS. The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments. TxDOT contacted (or attempted to contact) representatives of community facilities that would be directly or indirectly affected. TxDOT contacted these representatives by phone and in writing, sending questionnaires to solicit input on their concerns. TxDOT also met with representatives to discuss concerns, TxDOT's property acquisition process and relocation assistance program, and mitigation to minimize unavoidable adverse impacts. TxDOT will continue to engage agencies, entities, and organizations during detailed design and construction. Additionally, TxDOT contacted (or attempted to contact) representatives of community facilities that would be directly or indirectly affected. TxDOT contacted these representatives by phone and in writing, sending questionnaires to solicit input on their concerns. TxDOT also conducted four rounds of public meetings for the Draft EIS and held a public hearing to receive input from the communities. Public involvement and community outreach will continue throughout the life of the project. TxDOT will to continue to engage the public beyond the Final EIS and throughout the design and construction.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**A. PROCEDURAL OR GENERAL ISSUES** **3. NEPA policy counsels for a "systematic interdisciplinary approach" for the development of a proposed action; TxDOT should not view the North Houston Highway Improvement Project as a single purpose project only to ameliorate transportation deficiencies.** The Federal Highway Administration has promulgated regulations implementing NEPA policy and procedure. Among them, the regulations provide that "[p]ublic involvement and a systematic interdisciplinary approach be essential parts of the development process for proposed actions." 23 C.F.R. § 771.105. Similarly, the "alternative courses of action [should] be evaluated and decisions be made in the best overall public interest based upon a *balanced consideration* of the need for safe and efficient transportation; of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the proposed transportation improvement; and of national, State, and local environmental protection goals." 23 C.F.R. § 771.105. The regulations are particularly relevant to the proposed TxDOT project. At this stage, because of TxDOT's failure to include detailed information on mitigation measures for noise impacts, visual impacts, socio-economic impacts, park impacts, and other issues—the project does not currently appear to demonstrate a "balanced consideration" of the variety of social and environmental concerns at play. We hope this can be rectified in advance of the FEIS. We believe that avoiding impacts where possible, and appropriate and practicable mitigation, is a key to ensuring that this project reflects a "systematic interdisciplinary approach." As TxDOT continues its review, we urge you to consider the issues raised in this letter, as well as in **Attachment A-1,** which specifies impacts and recommendations for mitigation by Segment.	The purpose of the proposed NHHIP is aligned with TxDOT's responsibility to deliver a safe, reliable, and integrated transportation system that enables the movement of people and goods. The project development process has been systematic and interdisciplinary. During development of the proposed NHHIP, TxDOT worked to develop a project that minimizes adverse impacts to neighborhoods, parks, other community facilities, and the bayous; provides positive impacts where possible; and improves highway mobility and safety in the area. TxDOT reviewed the comments on the proposed project and Draft EIS, and conducted additional stakeholder engagement to better understand the potential project impacts. As a result of community and stakeholder input, design changes have been incorporated that avoid and minimize impacts, and mitigation is provided to offset unavoidable impacts, as documented in the Final EIS. The Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. The Draft EIS, by nature, is a preliminary analysis based on best available information at the time. TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for a minimum of 30 days. Additionally, TxDOT will provide another 30-day comment period once the Final EIS is published. Note: Responses to comments in Attachment A-1 (coalition comments) are in a separate table.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F)** **1. TxDOT must follow Section 4(f)'s requirements.** TxDOT has assumed the Secretary of Transportation's responsibilities to protect parks and other special land uses under Section 4(f). See Memorandum of Understanding Between the Federal Highway Administration and TxDOT, § 3.2.1 (Dec. 16, 2014) (assuming responsibilities for compliance with Section 4(f)). Chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code imposes similar but independent duties on TxDOT to protect parks and recreational lands. See Tex. Parks & Wildlife Code § 26.001. Under Section 4(f), TXDOT may not spend federal funds on highway projects that will use property occupied by public parks or recreational areas, except in limited circumstances and only after meeting specific criteria. See Citizens to Preserve Overton Park, Inc. v. Volpe, 401 U.S. 402, 411 (1971) (Section 4(f) is "a plain and explicit bar to the use of federal funds for construction ofhighways through parks—only the most unusual situations are exempted."). Specifically, unless TxDOT, with the agreement of local officials, determines the use of a Section 4(f)-protected property will have only a "de minimis" impact, TxDOT first must determine that no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative exists. 23 U.S.C. § 138(a); 49 U.S.C.§ 303(c); 23 C.F.R. § 774.3(a)(1); see also Tex. Parks & Wildlife Code § 26.001(a)(1). If no feasible and prudent alternative exists, Section 4(f) requires TxDOT to select the alternative that will cause "the least overall harm," 23 C.F.R. § 774.3(c)(1), and engage in "all possible planning" to minimize harm to the park or recreation area resulting from the proposed use. 23 C.F.R. §774.3(a)(2). In the DEIS, TxDOT does not comply with Section 4(f)'s strict requirements. We urge TxDOT to engage in further review and correct these deficiencies, which are outlined in greater detail below. At a minimum, TxDOT then should issue a supplemental DEIS and/or Section 4(f) evaluation and allow the public the opportunity for further comment.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. There is accordingly no need for TxDOT to prepare a supplemental Draft EIS. As a separate matter, TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project's website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for 30 days. The Final EIS includes an updated analysis of economic impacts. While the Draft EIS described how NHHIP would result in a loss of tax revenue to local taxing jurisdictions, it also observed that the displaced residences and businesses likely will relocate in the same taxing jurisdictions. Moreover, the highway construction itself, and increased visibility and improved access as a result of the project, will bring positive economic impacts too. The Community Impact Assessment Technical Report has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect mitigation for impacts.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F)** **2. The DEIS improperly engages in "preliminary" analyses and leaves for later resolution important aspects of impacts on 4(f) resources.** Federal regulations make clear that the alternatives analysis under Section 4(f) "is the heart of the environmental impact statement," 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14, and TxDOT's own guidance materials recognize that Section 4(f) "requir[es] substantial planning and coordination efforts" before the NEPA process begins: Poor planning and a lack of collaboration among subject matter experts, design engineers, [officials with jurisdiction], and regulatory authorities often can cause a delay in the environmental review process. Before the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process even begins, there are steps that can be taken to begin identifying and considering potential Section 4(f) issues. These early steps can reduce the risk of Section 4(f) related delays that commonly occur later during project development. TxDOT Environmental Handbook, U.S Department of Transportation Act: Section 4(f), § 4.0 (May 2015) ("TxDOT 4(f) Handbook") (emphasis added). "Determinations and findings regarding the outcome of Section 4(f) compliance efforts are typically included in the NEPA document…" Id. § 14.2.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The Draft EIS reports on the assessment of impacts to Section 4(f) resources and reports on the status of studies and required coordination. In the Draft EIS, TxDOT disclosed the intent to make de minimis impact determinations for impacts to parks, and to prepare an individual Section 4(f) evaluation for impacts to historic properties. Some related excerpts from the Draft EIS include: - Although a recommended Build Alternative is presented, selection of the final preferred Build Alternative would not be made until after the public comment period is completed, comments on the Draft EIS are received and considered, agency coordination is completed, the individual Section 4(f) evaluation is completed, and the environmental impacts are fully evaluated. - TxDOT is coordinating the determination of adverse impacts to historic resources with Texas Historical Commission (THC) and other consulting parties. An individual Section 4(f) evaluation will be prepared for all properties that would be adversely affected by the Recommended Alternative. As part of the coordination process, including public involvement per Chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code and Section 106 of the NHPA, mitigation requirements, if any, will be determined and will be reported in the Final EIS and individual Section 4(f) evaluation. The notifications for, and information presented at, the May 2017 public hearing disclosed and provided notice of the proposed project's impacts to parks and historic properties in accordance with regulations. TxDOT continued to coordinate with the COH, the THC (SHPO), and consulting parties during preparation of the Final EIS and individual Section 4(f) evaluation. The Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. The Draft EIS, by nature, is a preliminary analysis based on best available information at the time. TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters (including the Coalition) have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for a minimum of 30 days. Additionally, TxDOT will provide another 30-day comment period once the Final EIS is published.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 2. (cont) Despite TxDOT's appreciating Section 4(f)'s mandatory nature, importance, and complexity, TxDOT's DEIS reflects only a preliminary and cursory effort to comply with Section 4(f)'s processes. For example, TXDOT's guidance materials identify "four paths to compliance" with Section 4(f), as well as ten steps TxDOT must follow. TxDOT 4(f) Handbook §§ 2.2, 3.0. From the face of the DEIS, however, it appears that TXDOT has not yet selected any of four paths and has followed only two of the ten steps. As further illustration, FHWA's Policy Paper instructs that with respect to Section 4(f) properties, the overseeing agency has three options: (1) prepare a de minimis impact determination; (2) apply a programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation; or (3) prepare an individual Section 4(f) evaluation. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty Project Development and Environmental Review, Section 4(f) Policy Paper, § at 3.3 (July 20, 2012) ("Policy Paper"). TxDOT has not selected any one of these options.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 2. (cont) Further, the DEIS repeatedly defers key decisions relating to the Section 4(f) process to the Final EIS. For example, in § 3.18.2.1, the DEIS defers making any determinations of even de minimis impacts on Section 4(f) resources and includes an undefined "some day" commitment to follow through on this aspect of its duties: TxDOT will inform the official(s) with jurisdiction over the property of the intent to make a de minimis impact determination and then provide an opportunity for public review and comment. A final de minimis impact determination will be made after consideration of public comments and written concurrence from the official with jurisdiction that the project will not adversely affect the activities, features, or attributes that make the property eligible for Section 4(f) protection. For historic resources, consultation regarding Section 4(f) use will be completed with SHPO. TxDOT cannot comply with Section 4(f) by deferring its review to very late in the environmental review process. To correct its deficiencies and avoid violating Section 4(f), TxDOT must complete its analysis under Section 4(f), issue a supplemental DEIS or Section 4(f) evaluation, and allow the public the opportunity to comment.	

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F)** **3. Under Section 4(f), TxDOT must account for impacts to bayou greenways and bike trails.** Section 4(f) imposes clear duties on TxDOT not to use federal funds to construct highways that affect parks except in the "most unusual situations." Citizens to Preserve Overton Park, Inc. v. Volpe, 401 U.S. 402 (1971). The Federal Highway Administration has made clear that the term "public park" encompasses a broad range of parks and recreational areas and may include private land used for public purposes. See Policy Paper, at § 3.1, 24-25. Specifically, the FHWA has advised that for each candidate property, overseeing authorities like TxDOT must "determine on a case-by-case basis whether the particular property should be considered publicly owned and, thus, if Section 4(f) applies." Policy Paper, at § 3.1. More specifically, the FHWA expressly recognized that private property may deserve Section 4(f) protection if, for example, "a governmental body has a permanent proprietary interest in the land (such as a permanent easement, or in some circumstances, a long-term lease)." Id.	The analysis in the Draft EIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. With respect to 4(f) resources, the Final EIS abides by relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and FHWA 4(f) guidelines. Impacts to open space and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some open space areas are likely unavoidable. The function of the Greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the "greenway" area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the noted open space is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH. The bikeways surrounding NHHIP are part of the local transportation system and function primarily for transportation, which exempts them from Section 4(f) status. TxDOT has taken reasonable measures to maintain the connectivity of these bike paths. While impacts on some resources are likely unavoidable, TxDOT will implement measures to mitigate these impacts the open areas along the bayou "greenways" in the project area, as described in the FEIS. Similarly, the open spaces along the bayous do not qualify as Section 4(f) resources because the primary use of the property along the bayous is for drainage and flood control. While individuals may use these properties for recreation, this use is secondary and incidental and does not subject these areas to Section 4(f) status. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT is working with the COH to identify highway cap areas that would serve to create even more open space.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 3. (cont) This inquiry turns on the specific facts of each park. To illustrate, in evaluating whether private property subject to an easement deserves Section 4(f) protection, the FHWA has instructed that the overseeing agency must consider factors, such as: • the views of the official(s) with jurisdiction • the purpose of the easement, the term of the easement • the degree of public access to the property • how the property is to be managed and by whom • what parties obtained the easement (public agency or non-public group), termination clauses, and what restrictions the easement places on the property owner's use of the easement area.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 3. (cont) Id. at 24 (Answer to Question 1(B)). Similarly, the FHWA instructs with respect to private land leased by a governmental body: Generally, under a long term lease to a governmental body, such land may be considered to be "publicly owned" land and if the property is being managed by the governmental body as a significant public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge then a use of the property will be subject to the requirements of Section 4(f). Such lease agreements should be examined on a case-by-case basis with consideration of such factors as the term of the lease, the understanding of the parties to the lease, the existence of a cancellation clause, and how long the lease has been in place.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 3. (cont) Id. at 25 (Answer to Question 1(C)). The DEIS § 3.1.1.1 recognizes potential impacts to parks that are alongside White Oak and Little White Oak greenways, but does not include the greenways themselves in its analysis. Importantly, they function as public parks and recreation areas, and TxDOT must evaluate and mitigate their impacts under Section 4(f).	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F); 3.** **a. Contrary to the DEIS's suggestion, White Oak Bayou Greenway falls within Section 4(f)'s scope.** The White Oak Bayou Greenway is part of Bayou Greenways 2020, a $220 million public/private investment by the City of Houston to provide continuous linear parks and recreation areas, with hike/bike trails, along 150 miles of Houston's major waterways. It is decidedly public in nature and demands consideration under Section 4(f). *2* Several documents confirm the public, recreational nature of the White Oak Bayou Greenway. Most straightforward, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department's publicly available inventory of parks and recreation areas lists the White Oak Bayou Greenway as one of the parks under its jurisdiction. Attachment B-1 (Houston Parks and Recreation Department's Inventory). *footnote 2: Over its 150 miles, Bayou Greenways 2020 covers lands under multiple ownerships including those of the Harris County Flood Control District, City of Houston Right of Way, UPRR, BSNFRR, CenterPoint and TxDOT itself in addition to City of Houston parks and land acquired under Bayou Greenways 2020, which are being added to the City's inventory of parks. Through some of the federal transportation grants obtained as part of the City bond match, TxDOT itself is implementing segments of Bayou Greenways 2020 along Hunting Bayou and within Herman, McGregor, and Mason Parks. These multiple ownerships do not undermine the conclusion that the Bayou Greenways are public parks deserving Section 4(f) protection in light of the significant other facts showing the greenways' public nature.*	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. White Oak Parkway is listed in the Houston Parks and Recreation Department's Inventory (your Attachment B-1) and is included in the COH 2015 Parks Master Plan. White Oak Bayou Greenway is not listed in the COH parks inventory, nor is it shown as a park in the 2015 Master Plan. Both documents show the size of White Oak Parkway as 23.20 acres, and the Master Plan and other COH park maps show that the park does not include the areas along White Oak Bayou within the proposed NHHIP project area. TxDOT is aware that the Houston Parks Board desires to include areas along White Oak Bayou in the project vicinity as part of the White Oak Bayou Greenway. Our review of property ownership, conducted during preliminary engineering and environmental studies, indicates land in the area (including the location of the existing trail) is owned by TxDOT, various railroads, HCFCD, COH, and others, and HCFCD has easements throughout much of the area. The bikeways and open spaces along the bayous are not subject to Section 4(f) status because the primary uses of these areas are not for recreational purposes. Even so, efforts have been made to maintain bike paths and existing open spaces. Per an interlocal agreement between the COH and HCFCD, COH's use of property for which HCFCD has drainage easements (such as trails along White Oak Bayou) is intended to be temporary in nature. Neither the HCFCD nor COH intend to designate any part of the trail as a park, recreation area, scientific area, wildlife refuge, or historic site for any purpose, or to dedicate any part of the trail as a park for any purpose. Impacts to open space, recreational areas, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some resources are likely unavoidable. The function of the Greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the "greenway" area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the noted open space is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH. Miscellaneous aesthetic improvements along Heights Bike Trail between Taylor Street and Main Street will be provided (coordinated by TxDOT with Houston Parks Board and other entities). Impacts to parks, open spaces along the bayous, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some non-Section 4(f) resources are likely unavoidable. The proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou and the existing hike/bike trail would remain. The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The impact would be primarily aerial (bridges over the open space), with some columns to support the bridges. The function of the White Oak Bayou greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the greenway area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the White Oak Bayou greenway in the area of the NHHIP is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH. Aesthetic improvements along Heights Bike Trail between Taylor Street and Main Street will be provided (coordinated by TxDOT with Houston Parks Board and other entities). Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 3.a. (cont) Further, on November 6, 2012 by a 68% majority, Houston voters passed a $166 million bond referendum to fund city parks. Of those funds, $100 million were earmarked for Bayou Greenways 2020 to create 150 miles of linear parks with hike-and-bike trails along Houston's major waterways. The $100 million in public bond funding is being matched with $120 million in both federally-funded transportation grants and private funding, all with the aim of maintaining the greenways as public recreational spaces. Local TIRZ and management districts also have contributed city funds.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 3.a. (cont) As even more evidence of the public nature of the bayou greenways, the agreements passed pursuant to the November 2012 bond all are premised on the greenways' public, recreational nature. For instance, on July 3, 2013, the City of Houston and the Houston Parks Board LGC, Inc. codified the implementation of Bayou Greenways 2020 in the Interlocal Agreement for Bayou Greenways 2020. See Attachment B-2 (Interlocal Agreement for Bayou Greenways 2020 (July 3, 2013)). Under the "Findings" in Section 1.1, the Interlocal Agreement contemplates transforming the bayou greenways, including White Oak Bayou Greenway, into an extensive network of "parkland, trails and natural areas along the major bayous" for the "health and welfare of the citizens of Houston," 1.3 million of whom "live within 1.5 miles of one or more of the nine (9) major bayous within the City limits." Id. § 1.1. The Findings make clear that upon their completion, "all Bayou Greenways within the City limits will be open to the public" for a range of recreational activities. Id. (emphasis added). In the Interlocal Agreement, the City specifically acknowledged these facts to be "true and correct for all purposes." Id. § 1.2.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 3.a. (cont) Other aspects of the Interlocal Agreement confirm the public and recreational nature of the greenways. For example, under the agreement, the Director of the City of Houston's Parks and Recreation Department retains approval authority over all designs for Bayou Greenways 2020, and additional lands acquired under Bayou Greenways 2020 must comply with the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department's standards for parkland acquisition. See, e.g., id. § 2.4(A)(i), (ii) (conceptual development of park is "subject to the approval" of the Department and giving Department discretion to determine parcels are "essential" to the greenways' purpose); id. § 3.2 (requiring Department right to review financial commitments).	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 3.a. (cont) Similarly, on October 24, 2013, the City of Houston executed a "Bayou Greenways 2020 Economic Development Agreement" with the Houston Parks Board, Inc. The Economic Development Agreement comprehensively outlines the management of the Bayou Greenways 2020 and confirms the public nature of the parks and recreational areas that comprise the Bayou Greenways. See Attachment B-3 (Bayou Greenways 2020 Economic Development Agreement (Oct. 24, 2013)). The Recitals in the Economic Development Agreement confirm the public, recreational nature of Bayou Greenways. For example, the Recitals acknowledge: • The Greenways are a "public/private project with the purpose of creating an integrated system of connected linear parks with walking, running and bicycle trails along the nine (9) major bayous within the City limits" • The Greenways are specifically intended to "promote the health and welfare of the citizens of Houston and its surrounding areas by linking the City's existing stretches of linear parks, trails and larger traditional parks with new greenways" • The City's contribution of funds toward the project acknowledging the "public purposes" that would be served by developing the bayou greenways	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 3.a. (cont) Other aspects of the Economic Development Agreement confirm the public, recreational nature of the greenways. For instance, in Article IV, Section G of the Economic Development Agreement, the City retains a management role over key aspects of the park by retaining "the exclusive right to conduct, or to book or permit charity walks, foot races, bicycle tours, or other public and private events in the Greenway segments." The Bayou Greenways are operated, funded, and fully intended to function as public parks and recreational areas. It cannot be disputed that the Bayou Greenways, including White Oak Bayou Greenway, require consideration under Section 4(f).	

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F); 3.** **b. TxDOT must account for impacts to White Oak Bayou Greenway** The North Houston Highway Improvement Project directly impacts and conflicts with the City of Houston's comprehensive parks initiative under Bayou Greenways 2020. For example, the exhibits attached to the Interlocal Agreement contemplate a continuous Greenway along White Oak Bayou from the City limits to White Oak's confluence at Buffalo Bayou in the heart of downtown. Existing segments of the Greenway included a long stretch along TC Jester Parkway and the stretch closer to downtown where the North Houston Highway Improvement Project proposes some seven new overpasses crossing the Greenway. The impacts to the White Oak Bayou Greenway are illustrated in maps contained on pages 1-9 and 11 of Attachment B-4. New projects along White Oak Bayou executed under Bayou Greenways 2020 include the federally-funded TIGER 3 segment that links the existing Greenway upstream of downtown to Buffalo Bayou Park together with other community links along that existing stretch at UH Downtown's campus on the north side of White Oak Bayou and the Leonel Castillo Community Center. As it nears completion, the White Oak Bayou Greenway will extend over 15 miles from the City limits to Buffalo Bayou Park as part of the City's integrated park system—but the North Houston Highway Improvement Project may affect these goals. For instance, the segment directly impacted by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project is fully integral to that system. Currently, the 1,100 feet of White Oak Bayou Greenway from the current I-45 overpass at UH Downtown west to Hogg Park are completely open to the sky and the bayou except for small under crossings at the railroad bridge and Hogan Street. The linear park features wildflowers and a hike-and-bike trail maintained by the Houston Parks Board. It offers amazing views of downtown for most of its length. Yet the DEIS does not account for any impacts to this visual resource or to the greenway itself. The North Houston Highway Improvement Project undoubtedly will significantly alter the current sense of open space on the White Oak Bayou Greenway because the project will extend seven new highway over-passes above the Greenway's widest stretch. The new overpasses not only would create an overwhelming new visual intrusion onto the landscape, it also will cause significant noise impacts. Moreover, additional lanes parallel to the bayou encroach further into the south side of the Greenway to the point where they impose on the bayou itself. The DEIS appears to suggest that if the project maintains just the existing hike-and-bike trail, no impact results. That ignores the impact to the Greenway and open space itself of which the hike-and-bike trail is just a component. The project eliminates that open space. While some freeway will be removed by the project, Houston Parks Board estimates a net decrease of 18 acres of open space in the area of the project between UH Downtown and Hogg Park. That open space will be lost forever. Because the DEIS fails to identify the impact, it fails to offer alternatives or mitigation to minimize that impact as required. These impacts are illustrative. By failing to assess impacts to the White Oak Bayou Greenway, TxDOT has shirked its duties under Section 4(f). TxDOT must consider these impacts and, at a minimum, prepare a supplemental DEIS or Section 4(f) evaluation with the input from stakeholders, including the undersigned, and allow the opportunity for further public comment.	Impacts to open space, recreational areas, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are discussed in the Final EIS. Adverse impacts on some non-Section 4(f) resources are unavoidable. The function of the Greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the "greenway" area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the noted open space is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH. Per the interlocal agreement between the COH and HCFCD, COH's use of property for which HCFCD has drainage easements (such as trails along White Oak Bayou) is intended to be temporary in nature. Neither the HCFCD nor COH intend to designate any part of the trail as a park, recreation area, scientific area, wildlife refuge, or historic site for any purpose, or to dedicate any part of the trail as a park for any purpose. The bikeways and open spaces along the bayous are not subject to Section 4(f) status because the primary uses of these areas are not for recreational purposes. Even so, efforts have been made to maintain bike paths and existing open spaces. The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The primary use of the open space area along the bayou is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the Harris County Flood Control District and the City of Houston. Miscellaneous aesthetic improvements along Heights Bike Trail between Taylor Street and Main Street will be provided (coordinated by TxDOT with Houston Parks Board and other entities). Visual impacts were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. The view from the University of Houston Downtown to central Downtown would improve because the existing elevated highways would be realigned north of the campus. The portion of the White Oak Bayou Greenway in the areas near Hogg Park and Freed Art and Nature Park have direct views to the Downtown skyline. Construction of the proposed project would require several rows of columns and elevated structures that would impair the existing views of Downtown and sense of open space. TxDOT will design bridges in consideration of visual aesthetics, including views from these areas, the Near Northside super neighborhood, and other surrounding areas. Landscape plantings and re-vegetation will be per TxDOT's Green Ribbon Landscape Improvement Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents potential noise impacts from the proposed project at White Oak Park, a portion of the White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail near Freed Art & Nature Park, Hogg Park, and Leonel Castillo Community Center. At the community center and Hogg Park, there would not be a noise impact and noise levels are predicted to decrease with the proposed project. At White Oak Park and the trail at White Oak Bayou Greenway, noise impacts are predicted. Noise barriers would not be feasible and reasonable and, therefore, are not proposed for incorporation into the proposed project. TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. The determination of, and impacts to, Section 4(f) properties have been addressed in accordance with applicable regulations. The Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. The Draft EIS, by nature, is a preliminary analysis based on best available information at the time. TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters (including the Coalition) have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for a minimum of 30 days.

Comment Number	Commenter Name	Date Received	Source	Comment Topic	Response
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F); 3.** **c. TxDOT must account for impacts to Little White Oak Bayou Greenway** The DEIS recognizes that "The city's long-term bikeway vision plan includes future bike paths along Halls Bayou and Little White Oak Bayou (City of Houston 2016a). Long-term vision bikeway projects support the city's goal of providing citywide access; however, these projects do not have dedicated funding or an established implementation schedule." DEIS § 3.2.1.4. This statement improperly construes the nature of and minimizes impacts to Little White Oak Bayou, which is in the process of being developed as a public park resource. Local organizations and government already have invested significant funds and time into Little White Oak Bayou for this purpose. For instance, the Houston Endowment has given an $800,000 grant to explore open space opportunities and connectivity for the Bayou Greenways, referred to as Beyond the Bayous. That exploration has identified Little White Oak Bayou as an important regional connector. More fundamentally, work on Beyond the Bayous showed that freeways, major arterials, and rail roads pose serious barriers to successfully establishing connectivity between parks and communities. Little White Oak Bayou also sits between Acres Homes and the Near Northside, two neighborhoods targeted by Mayor Turner as part of his Complete Communities revitalization initiative. Both currently are isolated by I-45. A further grant from Houston Endowment will allow the Houston Parks Board to supplement the Mayor's and City Planning's work by focusing on open space and connectivity opportunities within those particular communities. Planning I-45 to recognize and accommodate Little White Bayou as a valued open space system is key to realizing those opportunities and preventing further isolation of communities. The I-45 expansion project will remove and/or impair greenspace that now de facto serves the community as a place of respite and even as an active park with informal trails. Houston has active plans to take that acreage and make it a greenway park. Because the DEIS neglects to include Little White Oak Bayou Greenway in its Section 4(f) analysis, the DEIS does not discuss this impact. The final EIS, if not a supplemental DEIS or Section 4(f) analysis, should address acreage of open land lost on Little White Oak, both to be covered and impaired. Little White Oak Bayou represents a prime opportunity to extend open space connectivity north from White Oak Bayou Greenway to Woodland and Moody Parks and beyond up to Halls Bayou and ultimately Acres Homes. This connection between Acres Homes and downtown would benefit many of the underserved communities directly affected by the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. Through most of Segment 2 the project follows the course of the Little White Oak Bayou. The 20 lanes of the new I-45 will eliminate 10 acres of open space along Little White Oak Bayou. It is imperative that the project fully embrace the ecological values and open space potential offered by Little White Oak Bayou. The DEIS must be supplemented with specific design features to preserve this potential. The DEIS suggests that lack of immediate funding for some of these related projects relieves the North Houston project from addressing or mitigating impacts it creates. That is not consistent with the spirit or the letter of the law. TxDOT must engage in "all possible planning" to minimize harm to the park. 23 C.F.R. § 774.3(a)(2). Moreover, the project has an obligation to fit within larger identified Houston land use initiatives, not become another single purpose barrier to larger land use schemes. This is consistent with NEPA's directive for a "systematic interdisciplinary approach." The impacts to the Little White Oak Bayou Greenway are illustrated in maps contained on pages 12-14 of Attachment B-4.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to replace affected open space by creating new open space where possible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. The proposed project would reduce some open space along the bayous, but visibility and open space in those areas would also be improved where highway overpasses are eliminated. Per an interlocal agreement between the COH and HCFCD, COH's use of property for which HCFCD has drainage easements (such as trails along White Oak Bayou) is intended to be temporary in nature. Neither the HCFCD nor COH intend to designate any part of the trail as a park, recreation area, scientific area, wildlife refuge, or historic site for any purpose, or to dedicate any part of the trail as a park for any purpose. In meeting with the Houston Parks Board, TxDOT understands there is a vision to extend trails along Little White Oak Bayou. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F); 3.** **d. The DEIS improperly excludes bike paths and trails in Segment 3 from Section 4(f) consideration.** Section 4(f) applies to bike paths and trails that function primarily for recreation. See Policy Paper at 48 (Answer to Question 15A) ("Section 4(f) would apply to a publicly owned, shared use path or similar facility (or portion thereof) designated or functioning primarily for recreation…"). This is true even if the paths and trails are on privately owned land "if an existing public easement permits public access for recreational purposes." Policy Paper at 49-50 (Answer to Question 15D). TxDOT should make "every reasonable effort . . . to maintain the continuity of existing and designated trails." Id. Rather than examine the use to which affected bike paths and trails are put, the DEIS quickly and incorrectly disposes of Section 4(f) consideration for bikeways and trails which are used as important recreational resources. DEIS § 3.18.1.1 ("Bikeways and trails within the project area function primarily for transportation purposes, and therefore, are not subject to Section 4(f)."). Publicly available information contradicts this conclusion. For instance, the Houston Bikeway Program's website shows the recreational nature of bikeways and trails along the Bayou Greenways and does not characterize these paths as serving exclusive transportation purposes. See, e.g., City of Houston Bikeway Program, Current Projects, https://www.houstonbikeways.org/current-projects (last visited July 26, 2017). Further, the Houston Bike Plan, which was approved by the City Council on March 22, 2017, and which is acknowledged in passing references in the DEIS also acknowledges the multifaceted role bikeways in Houston play. TxDOT cannot shirk its duties under Section 4(f) by ignoring the clear recreational purpose of many bikeways and trails within the project area. TxDOT must account for impacts to the bikeways and trails used for recreational or mixed-use purposes in a Supplemental DEIS or Section 4(f) evaluation.	The project abides by relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. TxDOT recognizes that bike paths and trails in the project area are used for both transportation and recreation purposes. However, the primary designated use of these bike paths is for transportation. Incidental recreational use does not qualify a resource for Section 4(f) status. In regards to determining a primary purpose of trails along White Oak Bayou, one reference is "Houston Regional Bike/Ped Connections to Transit" (BPCT), prepared by the COH and included with its application for TIGER IV grants for shared-use paths, sidewalks and on-street bikeways, including 3 paths along and/or connecting to White Oak Bayou. This document states (underlines added): *"For pedestrians and cyclists, bayou linear parks provide the opportunity to develop hundreds of miles of shared-use paths running along the banks of the bayous and under already existing bridges. The opportunity to develop more than 300 miles of shared-use paths along the bayous as transportation corridors for cyclists, pedestrians and public transit users is a vision embraced by the city, the Greater Houston Partnership, surrounding cities, unincorporated areas, and more than 60 nonprofit groups. ... The BPCT completes 7.5 miles of shared-use paths, but far more importantly, by filling key gaps, it connects the existing system of shared-use bayou paths with each other and with residents, employment centers and other significant destinations. ... With TIGER IV projects, the shared use paths will total 18.5 connected miles along Brays and 20.4 connected miles along Buffalo Bayou and White Oak Bayou.* *The six transportation infrastructure projects contained in the BPCT include shared-use path gap closures, bike/ped bridges, a shared-use path extension, an electric shuttle path, direct links to bus and light rail stations, and pedestrian and bikeway connections from shared-use paths to public transit and other destinations."* The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F);** **4. The DEIS acknowledges that some parks fall within Section 4(f)'s scope but does not account for their impacts.** In some cases, the DEIS properly categorizes parks as falling within Section 4(f)'s scope but underestimates the impact of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project on those parks. In light of this oversight, TxDOT should reevaluate the impact of the project on the following parks and prepare a supplemental DEIS or 4(f) evaluation. The DEIS identifies less than an acre of impacts to City of Houston parks. It dismisses that impact as related to marginal greenspace rather than the "use of facilities." By contrast, the total loss of open space in city parks may in fact approximate 3.27 acres. In a letter to the City of Houston's Parks and Recreation Department dated February 24, 2017, TxDOT is seeking a "de minimis" certification from the City of Houston for these impacts. The City of Houston, to date, has not concurred with this conclusion. The coalition, which this comment letter backs, would not support such a conclusion. As with the Bayou Greenways, the DEIS dismisses the impact to green space and open space as non-existent if the project does not impact other features of the park.	The analysis in the Draft EIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The design of the preferred alternative was modified to avoid acquisition of property from Linear Park and Freed Art & Nature Park and a de minimis determination from the COH is not needed. The project complies with the relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for a minimum of 30 days. Additionally, TxDOT will provide another 30-day comment period once the Final EIS is published. Comments received on the Final EIS will be considered in the same deliberate manner as all other comments received on the Draft EIS and the technical reports. TxDOT will, where feasible, make changes to the project design based on these comments.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 4. (cont) The DEIS also ignores the noise and visual impact to all of these parks. See DEIS § 3.6 (failing to account for noise impacts to parks); DEIS, App'x L, at § 4.3.2 (claiming, without support, the project will improve views for "the majority of viewer groups.").	The Draft EIS included a preliminary evaluation of noise and visual impacts. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. An addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report was prepared. Both documents are included in the Final EIS. Where practicable, mitigation to improve the visual and aesthetic qualities of the project area would include the following features, among others: - Landscape plantings and re-vegetation per TxDOT's Green Ribbon Landscape Improvement Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. - Noise barriers which are integrated into the context of the surrounding environment. - Treatment of the side surfaces and columns of the project using façade materials of varying texture, color, etc. - Miscellaneous aesthetic improvements along Heights Bike Trail between Taylor Street and Main Street will be provided (coordinated by TxDOT with City of Houston, Houston Parks Board and other entities). - Conduct the design of bridges in the area of the Near Northside neighborhood as a collaboration between the Greater Northside Management District and TxDOT. - Conduct the design of bridges over Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou as a collaboration between the management districts or neighborhood groups and TxDOT. The determination of, and impacts to, Section 4(f) properties were addressed in accordance with the regulations. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents potential noise impacts to parks and proposed mitigation.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F) 4. (cont) Woodland Park Although currently below grade at Woodland Park, I-45's constant din of freeway noise is already part of the fabric of a Woodland Park visit. With an added upper deck, above grade, the noise will be even more oppressive and incessant.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents anticipated noise impacts to Woodland Park as a result of the project. A noise barrier is proposed at Woodland Park. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F) 4. (cont) Sabine Promenade/Buffalo Bayou Park In recent years, the Sabine Promenade/Buffalo Bayou Park area has undergone a nearly $90 million enhancement. TxDOT's plan for this area is not appropriate since it encourages faster turn movements in a location where people should be driving slowly to be aware of people walking and biking. In addition, given the visibility of downtown from Buffalo Bayou, standard TXDOT freeway standards are not appropriate. The impacts to the Buffalo Bayou Greenway and related parks are illustrated in a map contained on page 10 of Attachment B-4.	The freeway in this area is being replaced with Downtown Connector and ramps providing access to the city street network. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. 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. This coordination work will necessarily take into consideration the City's executive order on Complete Streets, which in turn promotes safe, accessible and convenient use by motorists, public transit riders, pedestrians, people of all abilities and bicyclists. The proposed project includes the addition of\ bicycle/pedestrian realms along the 44 Downtown streets that cross the freeways, including a 15–17 foot wide pedestrian realm that will create a buffer between the bicycle/pedestrian traffic and the vehicular traffic.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F) 4. (cont) Sam Houston Park Sam Houston Park is one of Houston's most important historical destinations, featuring the oldest building on its original construction site in Houston and the oldest surviving building in Harris County. Sam Houston Park is also a State Archaeological Landmark and contains four buildings designated as Registered Texas Historic Landmarks. One of these buildings is also registered under the NRHP. The DEIS fails to mention the visual and noise impact to this showcase of Houston's heritage. The DEIS fails to disclose whether or not these properties are registered under the NRHP, and whether the Texas SHPO has or has not concurred with the effects of the project.	TxDOT understands that Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou are important resources and has developed the proposed NHHIP in consideration of these constraints. The proposed project would not directly impact the park, and would continue to bridge over Buffalo Bayou. The project would significantly reduce the highway footprint in the area of Sam Houston Park and Buffalo Bayou, creating opportunities for additional open space. TxDOT has documented Sam Houston Park and historic-age buildings and structures within the park boundaries. The park itself is not NRHP-eligible. The NRHP-listed and Registered Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL)-designated boundaries for the Kellum-Noble House are limited to the immediate vicinity of the house. The Texas SHPO agreed that the proposed project would have no adverse effect to the Kellum-Noble House. Study results are documented in the Final Historical Resources Survey Report (September 2019). Traffic noise was modeled at parks near the proposed project; results are documented in the Traffic Noise Technical Report. At Sam Houston Park, noise levels are predicted to decrease by 3 decibels at approximately the center of the park as a result of the proposed project.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F) 4. (cont) Other Parks In the DEIS, TxDOT contemplates acquiring land from Freed Art and Nature Park, Linear Park, and trails along White Oak and Buffalo Bayous, yet contends that there will be no impact on the park facilities. Apart from offering no explanation for this statement, the DEIS does not account for the loss of that park land. To comply with Section 4(f), TxDOT must, at a minimum, fully evaluate impacts to these Section 4(f) resources and allow public comment on a Supplemental DEIS or Section 4(f) evaluation.	The analysis in the Draft EIS was preliminary and based on best available information at the time. Through the project development process, and based on the comments received on the Draft EIS and information developed gathered subsequent to its release, the Final EIS and its supporting materials contain additional information and analysis for parks, open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways, and hike and bike trails. Efforts have been made to maintain existing open space along existing and proposed bayou greenways and proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The project complies with the relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F)** **5. We strongly dispute TxDOT's characterization that Segments 2 and 3 will impact less than 1 acre of parkland and believe the true impact is closer to 27 acres. The DEIS must account for the full scope of impacts on Section 4(f) resources.** The DEIS estimates that the preferred alternatives for Segments 2 and 3 collectively will affect only 0.82 acres of park land. DEIS, App'x F, at Table 5-6. This is a gross underestimate. Using TxDOT's May 2017 Schematic to estimate bayou greenway and parks impacts, Houston will lose approximately 27 acres of current open space. As noted above, these impacts are not disclosed or contemplated in the DEIS. The following tables estimate the park and recreation area impacts of the proposed project *(See pg. 13 of letter for tables).* TxDOT should prepare a supplemental DEIS or Section 4(f) evaluation to properly account for and then mitigate for all impacts to these Section 4(f) resources.	Impacts to open space, recreational areas, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are discussed in the Final EIS. The design of the preferred alternative was modified to avoid acquisition of property from any park and a de minimis determination from COH is not needed. Adverse impacts on some non-Section 4(f) resources are unavoidable. The function of the Greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the "greenway" area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the noted open space is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH. Per the interlocal agreement between the COH and HCFCD, COH's use of property for which HCFCD has drainage easements (such as trails along White Oak Bayou) is intended to be temporary in nature. Neither the HCFCD nor COH intend to designate any part of the trail as a park, recreation area, scientific area, wildlife refuge, or historic site for any purpose, or to dedicate any part of the trail as a park for any purpose. The bikeways and open spaces along the bayous are not subject to Section 4(f) status because the primary uses of these areas are not for recreational purposes. Even so, efforts have been made to maintain bike paths and existing open spaces.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F)** **6. The DEIS favors options with maximum impact on parks without engaging in "all possible planning" to mitigate harm.** Federal regulations require TxDOT to choose the alternative that "[c]auses the least overall harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose" by balancing several factors: • The ability to mitigate adverse impacts to each Section 4(f) property (including any measures that result in benefits to the property); • The relative severity of the remaining harm, after mitigation, to the protected activities, attributes, or features that qualify each Section 4(f) property for protection; • The relative significance of each Section 4(f) property; • The views of the official(s) with jurisdiction over each Section 4(f) property; • The degree to which each alternative meets the purpose and need for the project; • After reasonable mitigation, the magnitude of any adverse impacts to resources not protected by Section 4(f); and • Substantial differences in costs among the alternatives. 23 C.F.R. § 774.3(c)(1)(i)-(vii)	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The Proposed Recommended Alternative identified in the Draft EIS had less impact to park land than other alternatives, and the project design for the Preferred Alternative identified in the Final EIS was revised to avoid park land. Impacts to open space, recreational areas, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are discussed in the Final EIS. Adverse impacts on some non-Section 4(f) resources are unavoidable. The function of the While Oak Greenway will not change because the proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou, and the "greenway" area and existing hike/bike trail would remain. The primary use of the noted open space is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH. Per the interlocal agreement between the COH and HCFCD, COH's use of property for which HCFCD has drainage easements (such as trails along White Oak Bayou) is intended to be temporary in nature. Neither the HCFCD nor COH intend to designate any part of the trail as a park, recreation area, scientific area, wildlife refuge, or historic site for any purpose, or to dedicate any part of the trail as a park for any purpose. The bikeways and open spaces along the bayous are not subject to Section 4(f) status because the primary uses of these areas are not for recreational purposes. Even so, efforts have been made to maintain bike paths and existing open spaces. The Draft EIS included a preliminary community impact analysis based on a preliminary schematic that documented the evaluation of potential impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives to neighborhoods and parks. Part of the environmental process is to collect information and feedback from the community in order to develop the best possible project. Because of the preliminary nature of the information available at the time of the Draft EIS, some of the specific details had not yet been refined. The Final EIS includes an updated community impact analysis with additional information regarding community outreach and coordination. The updated community impact analysis describes impacts, and the opportunities to avoid, minimize, or compensate for those impacts. The analysis concludes that TxDOT may successfully avoid and minimize many of the impacts to community resources. There is no instance where TxDOT "transfers" a commitment so that a third party must carry it out; however it may be necessary for TxDOT to seek partnerships for actions outside the jurisdiction or purview of the Department. In these instances, TxDOT would still hold ultimate responsibility for fulfillment of any mitigation or commitments.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F): 6. (cont) An alternative selected as a result of this analysis "must include all possible planning, as defined in §774.17, to minimize harm to Section 4(f) property." 23 C.F.R. § 774.3(c)(2). "All possible planning" means identifying, as part of a Section 4(f) evaluation, "all reasonable measures . . . to minimize harm or mitigate for adverse impacts and effects." Mitigation efforts generally may include: • Avoiding an impact altogether; • Minimizing the impact by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action; • Minimizing the impact by modifying the design or design goals; • Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the resource; • Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance activities; • Replacing land or facilities of comparable value and function; or • Monetary compensation to enhance the remaining property or to mitigate the adverse impacts of the project in other ways.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. (cont) In evaluating the reasonableness of a mitigation measure, TxDOT must "consider the preservation purpose of the statute," along with the following factors: (i) The views of the official(s) with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) property; (ii) Whether the cost of the measures is a reasonable public expenditure in light of the adverse impacts of the project on the Section 4(f) property and the benefits of the measure to the property, in accordance with §771.105(d) of this chapter; and (iii) Any impacts or benefits of the measures to communities or environmental resources outside of the Section 4(f) property….	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. (cont) In the DEIS, TxDOT has not made any effort to address the factors above or to mitigate for lost park space. To illustrate, in the Community Impact Assessment Technical Report, attached as Appendix F to the DEIS, there is no mention of mitigation for the portions of parks and recreational areas lands that will be taken. See DEIS, App'x F, at § 7. It cannot be disputed that the proposed project will have a significant impact on parks, open space, and recreation areas. To account for these impacts, TxDOT should adopt the following mitigation measures in a supplemental DEIS or Section 4(f) evaluation(s): *Footnote 3: Attachment A-1 contains a fill list of segment-by-segment impacts and recommendations for mitigation.*	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F): 6. Segment 1 • Coordinate with the COH and Houston Parks Board for ways to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Little White Oak Bayou between I-610 and East Parker Road and Shepherd. Develop the detention basin between I-610 and Crosstimbers as a wet bottom basin and publicly-accessible green space tied the bikeway along the bayou. Install a trash mitigation system that will collect both heavy debris and floating debris. • Coordinate with COH and Houston Parks Board for ways to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Halls Bayou along I-45	TxDOT has coordinated with the City (including Mayor Turner, city council members, and city departments) during development of the NHHIP. The COH is an EIS Participating Agency and TxDOT held five group meetings for participating agencies at key project milestones. In addition, TxDOT and the NHHIP Study Team have attended dozens of coordination meetings with City representatives to discuss the City's desires and concerns related to the project. TxDOT is coordinating with COH, including consideration of the Mayor's goals as described in the Complete Communities initiative. The Mayor has appointed a committee to oversee the potential designs and funding options for uses for the open space areas in Segment 3 and TxDOT will consider its recommendations. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with the COH and the Houston Parks Board to consider proposed plans for parks and other recreation areas along bayous in the project area, and accommodate such plans, if feasible, including in the areas of Little White Oak Bayou and Halls Bayou. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be designated as parks as their primary use is for drainage and flood mitigation. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. Wet bottom detention basins will be considered if a partner entity agrees to maintain them.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. Segment 2 • Little White Oak Bayou: This bayou section is an important piece of the expanding high-comfort bicycle network that provides connectivity from outside the N Loop 610, under I-45 away from traffic, and into downtown making further east and west connections through Buffalo Bayou. Acknowledgement of this bayou as a necessary connector for bicyclists, pedestrians, and naturalists is unaddressed in this design and the crossings (Hogan/Crockett, Houston, Quitman/White Oak Dr., Main St, Patton, Cottage etc.). Allowing full access to Little White Oak Bayou requires the space to be maintained and carefully designed with high comfort bicycle and pedestrian crossings. Surrounding neighborhoods are historically under-served and connections via bicycle and on foot are measurably significant. The project should replace the existing culvert north of Patton Street with a bridge span designed to allow trails on both sides of the bayou. At I-610, a safe route along the bayou should be included (could suggest replacing this culvert, also or high comfort bike lane at signalized frontage road intersections). The new trail should connect to the existing bike trail along Little White Oak Bayou between Enid and Cavalcade, on the west side of I-45 and to a new park at the retention pond areas on the east side of I-45 (where Love's Truck stop is currently), and on to Moody Park/Woodland Park/White Oak Bayou trail. Mitigate for loss of green space along the bayou in this area and replace the existing trail with an equivalent trail.	Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open space or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. Each of these openings under I-45 would allow for trail connections between neighborhoods in Near Northside and Greater Heights. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610 to allow for a trail along the bayou between Independence Heights and Greater Heights. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. TxDOT will accommodate existing and future bikeways along city streets as shown on the COH Bike Plan. TxDOT notes that it will follow law and policy to incorporate safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities into the project. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with COH on its plans for walking and bicycling facilities. TxDOT will accommodate those plans, if feasible, but COH will be responsible for operation and maintenance. TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. 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.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F): 6. Segment 2 (cont) • Improve greenspace and pedestrian accessibility to Woodland Park along Little White Oak Bayou east of I-45. • In 1914 Woodland Park was a 26 acre park in a neighborhood which included the two communities of Woodland Heights and Near Northside. In 1959, TXDOT acquired one third of the park (8.5 acres) to construct I-45 just to the north of downtown. The remaining 17.5 acres of I-45 Woodland Park is now situated entirely to the west of I-45 within the Woodland Heights. Because of I-45, Near Northside residents no longer have access to this park except via the North Street Bridge. TxDOT should improve greenspace along Little White Oak Bayou east of I-45, with hike and bike trails connecting to Moody Park. This will provide Near Northside residents with access to greenspace and Little White Oak Bayou.	The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening will be coordinated with HCFCD, taking in to account upstream and downstream impacts. TxDOT will continue to work with HCFCD on these elements during detailed design. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails, if feasible, and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create greenways or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. Segment 2 (cont) • Provide for noise mitigation along the eastern border of Woodland Park. There already is a constant din of freeway noise at the park, and adding an upper deck above grade, the noise will become even more oppressive and incessant. TxDOT should provide state-of the-art sound mitigation, as described elsewhere in these comments, with an additional shielding of tall trees and vegetation.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents anticipated noise impacts to Woodland Park as a result of the project. A noise barrier is proposed at Woodland Park. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. Segment 2 (cont) • Improve connectivity from Woodland Park to the Little White Oak Bayou east of I-45. This could be through an improved channel conduit under I-45 that would provide a safe walking and biking path along the bayou connecting Woodland Park on the west of I-45 to the hike and bike path along Little White Oak Bayou on the east side of I-45.	The proposed opening at the Little White Oak Bayou crossing of I-45 south of North St. provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision since this could result in impacts downstream. TxDOT will propose an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-610. The size of the opening would be HCFCD's decision due to flooding considerations downstream. TxDOT will not be able to discuss this with HCFCD until there is a more detailed drainage study that shows flood elevations; the study will be completed in the detailed design phase.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. Segment 2 (cont) • Improve connectivity of public parks, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department's "String of Pearls", which can be achieved by connecting Woodland Park to Moody Park along Little White Oak Bayou. Coordinate with City of Houston and Houston Parks Board for opportunities to develop opportunities for parks and open space along Little White Oak.	TxDOT has coordinated with COH and Houston Parks Board regarding their plans for trails along Little White Oak Bayou. To accommodate their plans for a future trail in this area, TxDOT's proposes an opening under I-45 at Little White Oak Bayou south of North St. that provides an opportunity for a trail to connect Woodland Park and Moody Park, which does not exist today. TxDOT also proposes an opening conducive to bicycle/pedestrian crossings at Little White Oak Bayou under I-45 just north of Patton St. During detailed design, TxDOT will continue to coordinate with COH, Houston Parks Board, and other entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area. TxDOT will accommodate plans by others, if feasible.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. Segment 3 • The White Oak Bayou Greenway is part of Bayou Greenways 2020, a $220 million public/ private investment by the City of Houston to provide continuous linear parks and recreation areas, with hike/bike trails, along 150 miles of Houston's major waterways. The White Oak Bayou Greenway extends over 15 miles from the city limits to UH Downtown where a federally funded TIGER project, currently under construction, is connecting White Oak Bayou Greenway to Buffalo Bayou Park. The DEIS does not reflect the impact on White Oak Bayou greenway which clearly serves an open space and recreation area with the project. TxDOT should address this issue and work with the stakeholders to mitigate the impact on the White Oak Bayou Greenway.	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT is making an effort to maintain existing open space and replace affected open space by creating new open space where feasible. Proposed detention areas are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The proposed project considers trails, and will accommodate or replace existing trails and allow for planned future trails. During detailed design, TxDOT will coordinate with entities who desire to create open spaces or develop trails and connections in the proposed project area, and will accommodate plans by others, if feasible. Impacts to parks, open spaces along the bayous, and other resources were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on some non-Section 4(f) resources are likely unavoidable. The proposed project would bridge over White Oak Bayou and the existing hike/bike trail would remain. The realignment of I-10 and I-45 on the north side of Downtown would bridge over White Oak Bayou and reduce approximately 18 acres of open space area (of which approximately 10 acres are within existing TxDOT right-of-way) between I-45 and the eastern boundary of the Heights Bike Trail at White Oak Bayou. The impact would be primarily aerial (bridges over the open space), with some columns to support the bridges. The primary use of the White Oak Bayou greenway in the area of the NHHIP is for drainage and flood control, per an interlocal agreement between the HCFCD and the COH, and so does not qualify for Section 4(f) status. To reduce the visual impact to views from the White Oak Bayou Greenway and nearby areas, during detailed design TxDOT will: - Design bridges in consideration of visual aesthetics. - Design bridges in the area of the Near Northside neighborhood as a collaboration between the Greater Northside Management District and TxDOT. - Minimize the number of support columns for elevated roadways and optimize open space by aligning substructure for multiple roadways, where feasible. - Evaluate the use of the proposed storm water detention areas in the area as potential green spaces with opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated section of the roadways in this area. - Coordinate with the community to integrate aesthetic enhancements in the project design. - Install landscape plantings and re-vegetation per TxDOT's Green Ribbon Landscape Improvement Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. Segment 3 (cont) • Sam Houston Park is one of Houston's most important historical destinations, featuring some of the oldest structures in the city. The proposed one-way connection from Walker/McKinney loop street should be removed since it separates Sam Houston Park from Buffalo Bayou. This roadway cuts through the original Sam Houston Park, which originally extended to Buffalo Bayou. This is also the primary biking and jogging route from downtown to the bayou and creates a very dangerous crossing point on a heavily-used route.	TxDOT studied historic resources in accordance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. TxDOT met with the COH and maintaining a Walker St. connection to Allen Parkway was requested. At this time, no change to the project design is proposed. TxDOT is open to discussing this connection further with the COH.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 6. Segment 3 (cont) • Sabine Promenade/Buffalo Bayou Park area has undergone a nearly $90 million enhancement. TxDOT's should design roadways in a context sensitive manner to ensure accessibility and safety of people walking and biking.	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. TxDOT has taken reasonable efforts to maintain the connectivity of bike paths. TxDOT has implemented measures to mitigate any impacts to bike paths. These measures are described in the Section 4(f) Statement).
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**B. SECTION 4(F); 7.** **7. Without funding or any clear plans, the proposed deck parks are an inappropriate mitigation measure.** The DEIS repeatedly refers to two potential deck parks but leaves the responsibility for funding these parks to unnamed third parties. While it is possible the deck parks could be a valuable addition to Houston's green space, without full funding, the deck park proposal has no mitigation value because it is speculative and would improperly shift the cost from the proponent of the project to the affected community. As a general matter, it will be difficult to raise private and public money for deck parks if TxDOT is permitted to destroy the open spaces unlocked by the Bayou Greenways Initiative. Further, the deck parks discussed in the DEIS only may be designed if the capping greenspace is designed to account for the weight of the parks. These designs must be created and paid for as part of the highway project, or TxDOT's suggestion of decking is meaningless. With respect to the deck park proposed for downtown, the costs will be significant. The size of this park currently is projected to cover 30 acres. By comparison, Klyde Warren Park in Dallas covers only five acres yet cost over $100,000,000. Projecting similar costs for Houston, the downtown deck park could cost more than $500 million. To reduce this cost and incorporate it into its project, TxDOT should reduce the size of the proposed park by several blocks (from 10+ blocks to 7) to a more manageable size.	The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. This provides an opportunity to develop more open space to mitigate impacts to non-4(f) resources along the bayou. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design. The Mayor has appointed a committee to oversee the potential designs and funding options for uses for the open space areas in Segment 3 and TxDOT will consider its recommendations. TxDOT is responsible for mitigation. The highway caps are not intended or proposed as mitigation though allow for enhancements (by others) to the project. Similarly, providing space for trails (by others) and considering wet bottom detention ponds are in response to stakeholder requests, though not proposed as mitigation for project impacts.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 7. (cont) With respect to the proposed deck park over I-45 near North Main, funding also is imperative. The original I-45 construction bisected one community into two. This has become a permanent separation resulting in different community cultures on either side of the freeway. There are constant efforts to reunite the communities but the swath of freeway that separates them remains a physical barrier. TxDOT should commit to funding and building this deck park. In addition, its function as a park and community connection is seriously compromised by a design using three lanes of feeder road separating the proposed park from the communities on each side. The proposed deck must be redesigned and fully funded to make it a physical reattachment point, reuniting the divided communities.	TxDOT continues to consider the issue of community connectivity. For example, the Community Impact Assessment Technical Report evaluates the potential effects of the proposed project on the community and its quality of life. Among other topics, the technical report addresses neighborhoods and community cohesion, mobility, and environmental justice. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in this area and support a future open space option. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design. TxDOT acknowledges that Segment 2 does not have concentrated retail development as is typical for frontage roads in the Houston area. Accordingly, TxDOT agrees that it should reexamine the number of frontage road lanes, and consider reducing the frontage road lanes by one in each direction. This change could be made only if it is consistent with the regional transportation plan and the FHWA determines the plan is consistent with air quality attainment standards. The results of the re-examination of frontage road lanes during detailed design will be shared with H-GAC for their consideration in plan updates.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	B. SECTION 4(F); 7. (cont) TxDOT should evaluate proper mitigation measures, incorporate these measures into supplemental NEPA documentation, and allow the public another opportunity to comment.	The Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. The Draft EIS, by nature, is a preliminary analysis based on best available information at the time. TxDOT notes that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters (including the Coalition) have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, TxDOT decided to make available on the project website the draft technical reports as they became available and to accept comments on them for a minimum of 30 days.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**C. NOISE IMPACTS** We retained an acoustic engineer to aid in our noise comments; accordingly, where noted below, some of these comments reflect input from a sound expert. See Attachment C-1 (CSTI Acoustics, Memorandum No. M-1029-0 (July 21, 2017)). **1. Under clear law, the FHWA will not provide funding for a project unless "feasible and reasonable noise abatement measures are incorporated into the plans." In the DEIS, TxDOT has not yet achieved this fundamental requirement.**	Comment noted.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 1. (cont) The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1970 addresses the abatement of highway traffic noise. This Act mandates FHWA to develop highway traffic noise standards, 23 U.S.C. § 109, which the agency has done at 23 C.F.R. Part 772. The law provides that FHWA not approve the plans for a Federal-aid highway project unless the project includes adequate highway traffic noise abatement measures to implement the appropriate noise level standards. Specifically, "FHWA will not approve project plans and specifications unless feasible and reasonable noise abatement measures are incorporated into the plans and specifications to reduce the noise impact on existing activities, developed lands, or undeveloped lands for which development is permitted." 23 C.F.R.§ 772.13. Under 23 C.F.R. Part 772, the regulations contain a number of requirements for TxDOT during its planning stages: (1) identification of highway traffic noise impacts; (2) examination of potential abatement measures; (3) the incorporation of reasonable and feasible highway traffic noise abatement measures into the highway project; (4) coordination with local officials to provide helpful information on compatible land use planning and control; and (5) identification and incorporation of necessary measures to abate construction noise. See Federal Highway Administration, Highway Traffic Noise: Analysis and Abatement Guide, FHWA-HEP-10-025 (2011) ("FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Guide"). *4 FOOTNOTE 4: Available at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/noise/regulations_and_guidance/analysis_and_abatement_guidance/revguidance.pdf.*	The Draft EIS included a preliminary evaluation of noise impacts. An updated Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. This report was prepared in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011), FHWA's Reasonable Cost Proposal for 2018 Noise Policy (2017), and applicable FHWA regulations, including 23 CFR Part 772. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. The final decision to implement proposed noise barriers would be made during detailed design with input from benefitted property owners and residents, as required by 23 CFR Part 772. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 1. (cont) Here, TxDOT has determined that the project will create noise impacts to a variety of receptors, such as residential areas, parks, churches and schools. DEIS at 3-43, 3-44. When the state agency determines that a project will create noise impacts, "noise abatement shall be considered and evaluated for feasibility and reasonableness." Crabb v. U.S. Fed. Highway Admin., 2015 WL 1033235, at *7 (S.D. Tex. Mar. 9, 2015) (citing 23 C.F.R. 772.13(a)). The abatement measures listed in § 772.13 are to be considered. Sierra Club v. Fed. Highway Admin, 715 F. Supp. 2d 721, 741 (S.D. Tex. 2010). The Federal Highway Administration has provided detailed guidelines for what constitutes feasible and reasonable noise abatement. Feasibility is determined by, among other factors: topography; access requirements for driveways, ramps, etc.; the presence of local cross streets; drainage; utilities; maintenance; and noise reduction (acoustic feasibility). See FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Guide at 38. Reasonableness is evaluated by, among other factors: the viewpoints of the impacted residents and property owners in determining the reasonableness of abatement, and available technologies, "but the primary consideration is to provide abatement for impacted noise sensitive land uses." Id. None of these factors for feasibility and reasonableness appears in the DEIS.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 1. (cont) Instead, TxDOT has only conducted a "qualitative" evaluation. Further, this qualitative evaluation is only for a single type of noise abatement measure, namely, noise barriers. With language that highlights the lack of analysis, the DEIS calls them "potential feasible and reasonable traffic noise barriers." See DEIS, App'x I ("Traffic Noise Technical Report"), at Tables 10–12 (emphasis added). The criteria for a noise barrier being feasible and reasonable can be determined only as part of a quantitative analysis. See Attachment C-1 at 1. Further, it is important to note that there is no analysis of other potential mitigation measures at all—which also must be reviewed for reasonableness and feasibility. This is a fundamental requirement of a noise analysis under federal law, and the agency has not undertaken it or given the public the opportunity to review it. See Crabb v. U.S. Fed. Highway Admin., 2015 WL 1033235, at *7 (stating that, "as the regulations make clear, if the state agency determines at the first stage of a § 772 analysis that noise impacts will occur, then the agency must consider abatement measures").	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>**C. NOISE IMPACTS**</u> **2. The DEIS' conclusion that "all alternatives would result in traffic noise impacts [and] noise barriers could reduce noise in many locations" provides insufficient detail for public review. We disagree with TxDOT's proposal to wait until the FEIS to disclose its recommended solutions. Supplemental NEPA documentation is warranted to give the public an opportunity to comment.** For each segment of the project, the DEIS concludes that "all alternatives would result in traffic noise impacts [and] noise barriers could reduce noise in many locations." DEIS, at ES-15, 18, 21. Specifically, the DEIS states that "[r]esidential noise receivers located throughout the study area are anticipated to experience noise impacts under the absolute criterion . . . for all of the proposed build alternatives." DEIS at 3-43; App'x I at 41. And "traffic noise impacts [will result] at other land use areas including parks, churches, and schools." Id.	An updated Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Draft Traffic Noise Technical Report was posted on the NHHIP website and available at the TxDOT Houston District office for public comment from February 15, 2019 to March 17, 2019. This report was prepared in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011), FHWA's Reasonable Cost Proposal for 2018 Noise Policy (2017), and applicable FHWA regulations, including 23 CFR Part 772. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. The final decision to implement proposed noise barriers would be made during detailed design with input from benefitted property owners and residents, as required by 23 CFR Part 772. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>C. NOISE IMPACTS; 2. (cont)</u> As stated, the DEIS concedes that it has only conducted a "qualitative" evaluation of the "potential for feasible and reasonable traffic noise barriers." DEIS at 3-44. It states further that a "quantitative examination of the potential mitigation measures and specific proposed mitigation details (i.e., noise barrier dimensions, cost, etc.) would be determined and proposed for the preferred alternative during preparation of the Final EIS." Id. at 3-45; App'x I at 42. This approach is problematic.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>C. NOISE IMPACTS; 2. (cont)</u> First, a qualitative evaluation provides insufficient information to the public on the agency's review. As stated, the criteria for a barrier being feasible and reasonable can be determined only as part of a quantitative analysis. See Attachment C-1 at 1. We hired an acoustic engineer to review the noise technical report provided in the DEIS, and his review was necessarily limited by the lack of quantitative information. If the quantitative analysis is first provided in the Final EIS, as TxDOT proposes, then there will be little or no opportunity for TxDOT to make revisions based on community feedback. Id. This could be alleviated with a supplement to the Traffic Noise Technical Report issued prior to the FEIS. See id. Second, the noise analysis thus far is only for noise barriers – which may not be feasible in certain locations where necessary breaks in the barriers would reduce their effectiveness. Other noise mitigation techniques must be investigated, and the public must have an opportunity to comment on proposed mitigation.	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**C. NOISE IMPACTS** **3. There are other mitigation techniques that TxDOT has not considered among "reasonable and feasible" abatement measures.** TxDOT has only discussed noise barriers in the DEIS. While noise barriers may be an effective noise mitigation measure, they are not the only technique available. It is important that other techniques exist, because these other techniques may be more feasible and reasonable to implement in certain areas of the proposed project or may supplement a barrier in a particularly noisy area.	Traffic noise abatement measures can be in many forms and may include traffic control measures, alteration of vertical or horizontal alignment, acquisition of buffering land, noise insulation of NAC category D, and/or construction of traffic noise barriers. The updated Traffic Noise Technical Report included in the Final EIS considers various forms of mitigation, in accordance with TxDOT and FHWA policies and regulations. Due to limitations on TxDOT's ability to acquire right-of-way for mitigation or to mitigate sites off of State Right-of-Way, the most common form of abatement is the construction of noise barriers. During detailed design, TxDOT will conduct noise workshops with the adjacent property owners to explain proposed barriers and design options, as required by 23 CFR Part 772. Proposed noise barriers must be approved by majority vote of affected property owners. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 3. (cont) There are at least two key alternatives to constructing typical noise barriers. First is that transparent noise barriers can be used, when there are concerns that a noise barrier would block view of commercial properties. See Attachment C-1 at 2. A second alternative is implementing quiet pavement. Id. The DEIS has not considered quiet pavement, for which there are a number of options such as longitudinal tining and porous asphalt.Id. Various techniques have been studied by a variety of different agencies. See, e.g., Attachments C-2 and C-3 (studies on "Grooving and Grinding" and "Next Generation Concrete Surface").	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 3. (cont) Given a recent TxDOT project utilizing noise reducing pavement (http://www.my290.com/85-construction/385), which was favorably received by residents and commuters, TxDOT should consider using quiet pavement for this project. Next Generation Concrete Surface (NGCS), the material used in the U.S. 290 project, used 'longitudinal grooving' to both reduce tire/pavement noise and increase friction. This alternative is not only noise-reducing, but also safer. NCGS's success along Loop 610 encouraged TxDOT to begin a similar project on the I-10 Katy Freeway.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 3. (cont) The current recommended route for the NHHIP, particularly along Segment 1 and 2, runs adjacent—or close to—many parks, schools and residential areas. Noise barriers are most effective when placed directly in front of potentially affected locations. Noise reducing pavement, on the other hand, reduces sound at the source. Due to the high number of schools and parks that are within a couple blocks of the new proposed ROW, quiet pavements would be the best abatement measure to keep noise impacts low for these locations. In short, TxDOT needs to consider quiet pavement techniques – of which there are a variety – in addition to noise barriers.	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**C. NOISE IMPACTS** **4. The Technical Report does not provide any discussion of barriers between the mainlanes and feeder roads, or on elevated MaX lanes.** Our expert has identified that the Technical Report does not discuss barriers in certain possible project locations, which could have a positive benefit on noise mitigation, depending upon what alternative is selected. See Attachment C-1 at 2. As context, Section 5.0 of the Traffic Noise Technical Report states: • Traffic noise barriers would be located along the outside of the frontage road/ROW where barriers could be continuous, without gaps for driveways or streets. • Traffic noise barriers could also be located in between mainlanes and frontage roads.	An updated Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. This report was prepared in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011), FHWA's Reasonable Cost Proposal for 2018 Noise Policy (2017), and applicable FHWA regulations, including 23 CFR Part 772. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. Receivers and noise mitigation are considered at properties directly adjacent to the proposed project right of way per TxDOT Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise. A noise barrier must be able to reduce noise level at greater than 50% of impacted, first row receivers by at least 5 dBA and must be able to reduce the noise level at least one impacted, first row receiver by at least 7 dBA. Tested noise barriers that met both acoustic reduction criteria and that were cost effective were proposed in the Noise Tech Report. In the Traffic Noise Technical Report for the FEIS, traffic noise barriers are not proposed between mainlanes and frontage roads or on structures for elevated lanes. Placing a noise barrier between the mainlanes and frontage road would not shield adjacent receivers from frontage road traffic, limiting the barrier's effectiveness and ability to meet the acoustic reduction criteria. Noise barriers on structures such as bridges are often limited to due to structural weight limits, wind load, and other safe engineering requirements. Adjustments to noise barrier locations, such as placement along mainlanes, may occur during final design, if reasonable and feasible. In addition to noise barriers, TxDOT is providing the opportunity for adjacent property owners in environmental justice areas to receive noise mitigation that did not otherwise qualify under TxDOT's noise guidelines or FHWA criteria. These walls could also serve as visual barriers should the adjacent property owners want a visual screen between the property and the highway. These walls are described as "aesthetic walls". TxDOT is proposing this mitigation to further offset adverse effects in environmental areas. These walls are proposed where they would be effective for noise mitigation (reduce traffic noise levels by at least 3 dB(A) and provided in locations in the TxDOT right -of-way where they would not restrict access to the property, not impede drainage, and otherwise be constructible). Tentative locations are being proposed as shown in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. These locations may change during final design of the facility. Ultimately, the decision whether to construct proposed aesthetic walls will be decided by a vote of the adjacent property owners, following procedures similar to that of traditional noise barriers. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally -tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 4. (cont) However, as discussed by our expert, the Traffic Noise Technical Report does not provide any discussion of barriers between the mainlanes and feeder roads. See Attachment C-1 at 2. Although such barriers are not always as effective as barriers at the edge of the ROW, barriers at this location can still be very effective, blocking noise from 14 of the 16 total lanes of traffic in Segment 2, where there are only two lanes of frontage road. Id.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 4. (cont) Additionally, our expert notes that, in instances where the MaX lanes are elevated, those lanes could also be treated with a moderate-height barrier at the edge of the elevated structure. Id. This possible location of a barrier should specifically be considered since noise from elevated roads without barriers can penetrate further into nearby neighborhoods as it readily propagates over first-row buildings. As the road structure must be designed to support the barrier load, this type of treatment is very difficult to retrofit later.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 4. (cont) In areas where the mainlanes are depressed, a moderate-height barrier along the edge of the depressed lanes may be especially effective and will not affect visibility of commercial uses, which is already partially or totally eliminated due to the depression.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 4. (cont) The issue of access is being used to prevent consideration of noise barriers in areas with mixed commercial and residential uses. A barrier on elevated MaX lanes and between the frontage road and mainlanes would provide noise reduction while still allowing access along the frontage road.	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**C. NOISE IMPACTS** **5. With regard to residential neighborhoods, the DEIS has given no consideration of noise barriers for mixed adjacent blocks, which is particularly problematic in the low-income communities.** In his review of the Technical Report, our noise expert identified that the DEIS has eliminated the possibility of noise barriers for certain areas even before the quantitative analysis has been initiated. Specifically, Section 5.0 of the Technical Report states that for adjacent blocks that are less than 50% residential, "abatement was not considered feasible and reasonable." Commercial property adjacent to frontage roads with access from other roads seems to be considered just like commercial property with direct access from the frontage road. See Attachment C-1 at 1. This elimination from consideration occurs even before the quantitative noise analysis. Id.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report included in the Draft EIS documents TxDOT's qualitative evaluation of noise abatement for the reasonable alternatives. All areas, including low-income communities, were evaluated equally. Based on the methodology and assumptions discussed in the report, noise impacts and potential traffic noise barriers were identified. The technical report stated that a quantitative examination of potential mitigation measures and specific proposed mitigation details for the project would be determined and proposed for the preferred alternative during preparation of the Final EIS. The quantitative analysis has been completed for the preferred alternative, and an updated Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. All areas, including low-income communities, were evaluated equally in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011), FHWA's Reasonable Cost Proposal for 2018 Noise Policy (2017), and applicable FHWA regulations, including 23 CFR Part 772. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. In addition to noise barriers, TxDOT is providing the opportunity for adjacent property owners in environmental justice areas to receive noise mitigation that did not otherwise qualify under TxDOT's noise guidelines or FHWA criteria. These walls could also serve as visual barriers should the adjacent property owners want a visual screen between the property and the highway. These walls are described as "aesthetic walls". TxDOT is proposing this mitigation to further offset adverse effects in environmental areas. These walls are proposed where they would be effective for noise mitigation (reduce traffic noise levels by at least 3 dB(A) and provided in locations in the TxDOT right-of-way where they would not restrict access to the property, not impede drainage, and otherwise be constructible. Tentative locations are being proposed as shown in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report. These locations may change during final design of the facility. Ultimately, the decision whether to construct the walls will be decided by a vote of the adjacent property owners, as required by federal noise impact regulations. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 5. (cont) Also, when TxDOT evaluated land use, it considered the "potential for commercial development," such that noise barriers were not considered for certain residential areas based on vacant land adjacent to the residences. See id. This method of eliminating residences from consideration for noise barriers is not discussed in TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise. Id.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 5. (cont) Often deed restriction are used in wealthier neighborhoods to homogenize land use, while poorer areas often have mixed uses and more vacant lots. Thus, TxDOT's method of eliminating the consideration of barriers for these mixed areas results in less consideration of noise reduction for poorer neighborhoods. Id.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**C. NOISE IMPACTS** **6. Park land is afforded strong protection under federal law, and also "exterior areas where frequent human use occurs" are entitled to "primary consideration" by the agency. TxDOT must consider effective noise mitigation measures in these park and public areas.** Park land was discussed above in the prior section. Under federal law, a highway project can constructively use park land if the project produces severe noise impacts within the park. Ware v. U.S. Fed. Highway Admin., 2016 WL 1244978, *4 (S.D. Tex. 2016) (citing 23 C.F.R. § 774.15(e)(1)). It is not clear from the DEIS how TxDOT is satisfying the protections in 23 C.F.R. § 774 for park land. Even if certain public areas are not classified as 4(f) park land: "In abating traffic noise impacts, a highway agency shall give primary consideration to exterior areas where frequent human use occurs." 23 C.F.R. § 772.13(b).	An updated Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors, including parks, is included in the Final EIS. This report was prepared in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011), FHWA's Reasonable Cost Proposal for 2018 Noise Policy (2017), and applicable FHWA regulations, including 23 CFR Part 772. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. Final decisions regarding noise barriers will be made with community input, as required by law. In compliance with TxDOT guidelines and FHWA regulations, noise impacts and mitigation were evaluated at adjacent parks, trails, and other recreation areas. The location at which noise was modeled at outdoor sites was the existing locations of frequent outdoor activity, or if no defined outdoor gathering area exists, at the center of a reasonable area of the land use. For example, noise was modeled at both the ball field and trail at Woodland Park. As there is not an existing trail along Little White Oak Bayou in the area noted, noise was not evaluated. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 6. (cont) When TxDOT evaluates mitigation measures, our expert recommends that the entire impacted area of the park should be considered when evaluating reasonableness and cost effectiveness. See Attachment C-1 at 3. While there is a methodology for the reasonableness review for residential areas due to the existence of "first row" or "second row" housing, with a park there is no similar physical infrastructure so the entire park parcel must be considered. Id.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 6. (cont) Additionally, our expert recommends that quiet pavement techniques should be used by TxDOT in the vicinity of park properties. Id. For example, large parks adjacent to the highway corridor typically extend from impacted to non-impacted areas. Id. But the so-called 'non impacted' parks or portions of large parks could still have sound levels that many would consider high, even if they do not exceed the TxDOT criteria. Id. Noise barriers provide the most benefit to the area of land behind the barriers. (Id.) Quiet pavement has a beneficial effect over a greater area, and will provide better benefits for parks that are both directly adjacent to and also those nearby the highway corridor. Id.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 6. (cont) Further, TxDOT has paid insufficient attention to Houston's bike paths, which qualify as either a park or "exterior areas where frequent human use occurs." 23 C.F.R. § 772.13(b). The Houston Bike Plan was adopted by City Council on March 22, 2017. It includes a bike path along Little White Oak Bayou extending from just north of I-10 to north of 610. The route is immediately adjacent to I-45 for much of the route, primarily on the west side of I-45. The bike path currently exists along segments of this route. As an example of TxDOT's insufficient attention to these critical park and bike areas is Site S1-R164, Little White Oak Trail. See Attachment C-1 at 3. It may represent the partially existing bikeway. However, the specific site selected for evaluation is set much further back from I-45 than most of the proposed path and has therefore been assessed as having no noise impact. Id. TxDOT must evaluate representative locations for park areas.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 6. (cont) Our expert observed that TxDOT has made assumptions about the future use of certain land, in order to minimize the amount of mitigation required. In some instances, for example, TxDOT assumed that the future use of vacant lots would become commercial (minimizing the amount of required noise mitigation), and then also TxDOT was unwilling to make assumptions about expected use of future bike paths, which would require TxDOT noise mitigation. The Bike Lane map was approved by Houston City Council, and is not speculative, so these land uses must be taken into account in TxDOT noise analysis.	TxDOT does not make assumptions or provide mitigation for undeveloped land. The primary purpose of a traffic noise analysis is to determine if a proposed highway project would result in noise impacts in existing, developed land use activity areas. To avoid noise impacts that may result from future development adjacent to a proposed highway project, a traffic noise analysis typically includes predicted noise impact contours for currently undeveloped areas. These impact contours are intended as a general guide to assist local planning officials and developers plan and construct new activity areas far enough from the roadway so that noise-sensitive land uses would not experience traffic noise impacts. This approach complies with FHWA standards per 23 CFR 772.11 (Analysis) and 23 CFR 772.5 (Definitions).

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS 7. We do not believe TxDOT has complied with 23 C.F.R. § 772.9 requiring the use of traffic characteristics that yield worst case assumptions. Specifically, 23 C.F.R. § 772.9 states: "In predicting noise levels and assessing noise impacts, traffic characteristics that would yield the worst traffic noise impact for the design year shall be used." As a result, as our expert points out, it is important to select representative sites that are truly representative or are conservative (i.e., have slightly higher levels than typical). See Attachment C-1 at 4. For example: • Site S1-R164, Little White Oak Trail, is located far back from I-45 behind commercial buildings and has no noise impact. However, this trail is actually much closer to I-45 and would have a noise impact just a few hundred yards further south. Our expert points out that TxDOT has not used worst case assumptions for speed. Id. For example: • In the modeling, a speed of 60 mph was used for the mainlanes. Based on current patterns, sound levels currently exceed this speed, and higher actual speeds are also expected in the future. Further, our expert points out that TxDOT has likely not used worst case assumptions for traffic capacity. Although TxDOT should not be expected to accurately predict the future, some adjusted (increased) noise assumptions on traffic speed and volume would be prudent. See id. For example: • Traffic capacity was based on current driving technology, but rapid advances in self-driving automobiles may bring substantial changes to traffic even before the planned highway is completed. One advantage of self-driving cars is the ability to reduce the spacing between vehicles, resulting in more vehicles per hour on each lane. This could result in increased noise. • Modified traffic patterns with more truck traffic at night could also result in greater noise impacts. We request that TxDOT re-visit its analysis with these considerations identified.	TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011) contains the TxDOT guidance on modeling roadway traffic noise. This guidance describes TxDOT's implementation of the FHWA's noise standards at 23 CFR Part 772, and was reviewed and concurred with by the FHWA. The guidance provides how to determine the "Design Hourly Volume", which is used to model a "worst case" scenario in design year noise levels. The posted speed limit for the project is used to determine noise levels. The proposed future speed limit for the project is currently 60 mph also. Traffic noise was modeled at the White Oak Trail and White Oak Park to evaluate potential impacts (receivers Seg3-I10-R2 and Seg3-I10-R6, respectively), as documented in the updated Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**C. NOISE IMPACTS** **8. While the Technical Report identifies some "potentially benefitted" sites in terms of noise impact, this characterization may be misleading.** The Traffic Noise Technical Report identifies locations where the proposed highway project will result in noise reduction, either due to roadway alignment or depression of the roadway. We appreciate that it may be useful to understand that there may be some noise benefits of the project; however, properties with noise levels that will exceed the noise criteria still must be considered for noise treatments when their existing sound levels are even higher above the noise criteria. See Attachment C-1 at 3-4. The figures in Appendix D of the Traffic Noise Technical Report show impacted sites in red but "potentially benefitted" sites in green, which fails to convey that many of these sites are in fact still impacted by noise over the criteria standard. Id. If they are above the noise standard, then mitigation is appropriate.	The Traffic Noise Technical Report included in the Draft EIS documents TxDOT's qualitative evaluation of noise abatement for the reasonable alternatives. Based on the methodology and assumptions discussed in the report, noise impacts and potential traffic noise barriers were identified for the reasonable alternatives. Because the analysis was qualitative, all impacted receivers were not individually evaluated for abatement. The technical report stated that a quantitative examination of potential mitigation measures and specific proposed mitigation details for the project would be determined and proposed for the preferred alternative during preparation of the Final EIS. The updated Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The analysis is for the Preferred Alternative for the proposed project. All receivers that are considered impacted, due to relative or absolute impact, were evaluated for mitigation, and both the existing and the future predicted noise levels were considered when determining the absolute impacts (see Section 3.1 in the technical report). The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. The receivers that are represented in green on the report exhibits are sites that are benefitted due to the application of mitigation in the form of a noise barrier. The receivers that area representative in red on the report exhibits are sites that would have noise impacts but noise barriers do not meet the criteria for inclusion in the project (see Section 3.3.1 and Exhibit 2 in the technical report). Any subsequent proposed project design changes may require a re-evaluation of the preliminary noise barrier proposal. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barrier will not be made until completion of the proposed project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally-tined pavement have not be quantified for this project, and would thus be in addition to reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**C. NOISE IMPACTS** **9. Portions of Section 3.6 are excerpted verbatim from TxDOT's document "Examples of Recommended Text for Documenting Traffic Noise Analysis", calling into question whether TxDOT has fulfilled its NEPA obligations to undertake a "hard look" at important aspects of its noise analysis.** It is apparent that TxDOT has cut and paste portions of Section 3.6 Noise from the TxDOT publication "Examples of Recommended Text for Documenting Traffic Noise Analysis."*5* That is, several portions within Section 3.6 are nothing more than form language, pre-drafted as "recommended text" for a noise analysis. It appears that TxDOT has pulled some of the form language from the publication's "Example 3: Typical Analysis - Impact with No Feasible and Reasonable Abatement" and/or "Example 4: Typical Analysis - Impact with Feasible and Reasonable Abatement" as well as from the example for undeveloped land. *FOOTNOTE 5: Available at http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/env/toolkit/730-01-ds.pdf.*	The Draft EIS included a preliminary evaluation of noise impacts. An updated Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. This report was prepared in accordance with TxDOT's Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011), FHWA's Reasonable Cost Proposal for 2018 Noise Policy (2017), and applicable FHWA regulations, including 23 CFR Part 772. The analysis of noise impacts and various forms of mitigation are considered as required, and TxDOT utilizes some standardized language in reporting for consistency across documents. Traffic noise abatement measures can be in many forms and may include traffic control measures, alteration of vertical or horizontal alignment, acquisition of buffering land, noise insulation of NAC category D, and/or construction of traffic noise barriers. The updated Traffic Noise Technical Report included in the Final EIS considers various forms of mitigation, in accordance with TxDOT and FHWA policies and regulations. Due to limitations on TxDOT's ability to acquire right-of-way for mitigation or to mitigate sites off of State Right-of-Way, the most common form of abatement is the construction of noise barriers. During detailed design, TxDOT will conduct noise workshops with the adjacent property owners to explain proposed barriers and design options, as required by 23 CFR Part 772. Proposed noise barriers must be approved by majority vote of the affected property owners. A Traffic Noise Technical Report with reasonable and feasible noise mitigation proposals for impacted receptors is included in the Final EIS. The Traffic Noise Technical Report documents the updated analysis of noise impacts and evaluates mitigation measures. It includes written descriptions of proposed noise barriers, and a table summarizing the proposed barrier descriptions. An exhibit displaying the locations of receptors and proposed barriers is also included. Final decisions regarding noise barriers will be made with community input, as required by law. Additionally, TxDOT plans to use longitudinal tining on all main lanes and frontage roads. Longitudinal tining creates shallow grooves in a roadway surface, running lengthwise, which decreases noise compared to transverse tining. Potential noise reductions from use of longitudinally -tined
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 9. (cont) Among the form language that was excerpted is the section on "noise abatement measures [that] were considered" including "traffic management, alternation of horizontal and/or vertical alignments, acquisitions of undeveloped property to act as a buffer zone, and the construction of noise walls." See DEIS at 3-44. This suggests that TxDOT did not undertake consideration of a range of sound mitigation techniques or best management practices available to address and reduce noise impacts for the specific I-45 project, beyond those excerpted from its form. TxDOT appears to have relied uncritically on a predetermined menu of considerations.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 9. (cont) To provide another example of form language that has been cut and pasted into the DEIS: "Noise associated with the construction of the project is difficult to predict. Heavy machinery, the major source of noise in construction, is constantly moving in unpredictable patterns . . . ." (DEIS 3-46). Thus, for construction noise impacts, again TxDOT has not undertaken a "hard look" at these impacts.	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	C. NOISE IMPACTS; 9. (cont) NEPA requires agencies to take a "hard look at environmental consequences" when making a decision. Sabine River Auth. v. U.S. Dept. of Interior, 951 F.2d 669, 676 (5th Cir. 1992) (citing Robertson v. Methow Valley Citizens Council, 490 U.S. 332 (1989)). Using form language from pre-drafted text raises the question of whether the requisite "hard look" has been done. While it may be appropriate to use form language as a starting point for an analysis, it cannot be used to limit a review of options available to an agency, particularly on key items like mitigation and abatement measures.	pavement have not be quantified for this project, and thus would be in addition to the reductions shown in the Traffic Noise Technical Report.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**D. VISUAL IMPACTS** **1. Federal law requires that "aesthetic values" are considered for a project's development, but TxDOT's visual impact analysis provides little substance on how the aesthetic values will ultimately be achieved.** NEPA was established, in part, to assure "safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings." 42 U.S.C. § 4331. Under federal law, final decisions on highway project development must be made in the overall public interest, taking into consideration a number of socio-economic, engineering, and environmental factors including aesthetic values. 23 U.S.C. § 109(h); see also 23 C.F.R. § 771.105. Federal guidelines recognize that "[c]ommunity acceptance of a proposed transportation project is frequently influenced by the extent of its visual impacts." See Federal Highway Administration, "Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Project," FHWA-HEP-15-029 (January 2015) ("FHWA Visual Impact Guidelines") at 1-1.*6* And further, research shows that "the view from the road is the basis for much of what we know about our everyday environment and for our mental image of our surroundings." Id. "Roads move more than people, goods, and services—they are extensions of a community's values and aesthetic preferences." Id. While there are many important aspects of highway design, the ultimate visual experience cannot be overstated. footnote 6: Available at www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/guidebook/documents/VIA_Guidelines_for_Highway_Projects.asp	The Draft EIS included an evaluation of visual impacts. The methodology explains how aesthetic values are determined. TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. The methodology of the visual impacts assessment follows the same process as described in Section 2 of the February 2017 Visual Impacts Assessment Technical Report. In addition, at the time the Draft EIS was prepared, there were no simulations (renderings) of the project alternatives from the location of parks and bicycle/pedestrian trails adjacent to or intersecting the proposed project area. To address the comments about visual impacts of the proposed project in the Segment 3 study area, TxDOT prepared four simulations from Key View Points (KVPs) within Landscape Unit 3. (see technical report). These simulations were assessed to provide an updated visual impact assessment for the Preferred Alternative in the area of Segment 3 of the NHHIP. Mitigation measures for specific locations will be determined during final design and construction. The Final EIS only provides the possible mitigation measures which may be implemented to minimize impacts. Aesthetic design is part of TxDOT's project development process and will be performed during detailed design, which is the final design stage of the project development process. Many of the elements that impact landscape and aesthetic design overlap into all parts of the final design process. Typically these areas include: •bridge design •lighting design •roadway design •hydraulics •environmental mitigation •landscaping TxDOT will consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site during detailed design, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. TxDOT is willing to enter into public-private partnerships for enhanced aesthetics.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 1. (cont) The DEIS discusses potential visual changes in the built environment based on the various project alternatives. The DEIS discusses existing conditions, viewer sensitivity, and impacts of the alternatives. But the DEIS discusses the "mitigation [for] visual and aesthetic qualities" in a mere handful of bullet points on one page, in the final section of the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report. DEIS, App'x L, at 5-1. According to TxDOT, "[w]here practicable, mitigation to improve the visual and aesthetic qualities of the project area would include" features such as landscape plantings per TxDOT's Green Ribbon Landscape Improvement Program; promoting roadside native wildflower planting programs; noise barriers; providing adequate signage and access to roadway facilities; and treatment of the side surfaces and columns of the project. This is the sum total of the DEIS discussion on achieving aesthetic values, and it contains a qualifier that TxDOT will only work towards mitigation for aesthetic values "where practicable."	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 1. (cont) The Mitigation phase of a visual impact assessment is among the most critical parts. According to the federal guidelines, the "purpose of the mitigation phase is to define the mitigation and enhancement efforts to be included in project design. This final phase of the VIA process is typically completed after a preferred alternative has been selected." See FHWA Visual Impact Guidelines, at 3-2. Here, TxDOT has identified the preferred alternative for each project segment. It is unclear why more has not been done on discussing the mitigation phase.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 1. (cont) Thus one of the most pivotal aspects of a Visual Impact Assessment has been reduced to five bullet points. NEPA demands more. The public cannot give meaningful feedback on visual impact mitigation for a highway project of such vast scope as the I-45 expansion, if the visual mitigation is nothing more than a handful of bullets. In advance of TxDOT's FEIS, the agency should provide a more detailed plan on how it plans to mitigate the visual impacts; what techniques will be used; and where mitigation will be implemented. We request an opportunity to view the proposed visual mitigation and an opportunity to comment on it, before the Final EIS.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**D. VISUAL IMPACTS** **2. There is a variety of best management practices available to TxDOT related to mitigation measures for visual impacts.** The FHWA's Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Project recognizes best practices on the topic. According to the Guidelines, the "goal of the VIA guidelines is to maintain or enhance existing visual quality. To achieve this, mitigation can act on the visual resources of the natural, cultural, or project environments or on the experience of viewers. Section 7.4 provides examples of mitigation, types of mitigation, and recommendations for developing effective mitigation." FHWA Visual Impact Guidelines at 7-1. Also, the National Cooperative Highway Research Program's framework for conducting VIAs would also be a useful tool for TxDOT to incorporate in a revised VIA. The report provides case studies on visual impacts analysis and is attached here. See Attachment D-1.	FHWA guidelines were referenced when preparing mitigation measures for the Final EIS. The NCHRP report was used as a guideline when developing the mitigation measures. Visual impacts were considered by TxDOT and are set forth in the Final EIS and supporting materials. Adverse impacts on the viewscape in some areas are likely unavoidable. There are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design, where feasible.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 2. (cont) Studies exist for achieving the integration of a noise barrier into the visual landscape.7 Since noise barriers will be necessary in certain locations, it will be important to integrate those barriers into the environment.	Comment noted and incorporated into the mitigation measures for the Final EIS.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**D. VISUAL IMPACTS** **3. We question, and request the reevaluation of, TxDOT's conclusion that "viewer sensitivity" in all three segment areas is "typically low."** The DEIS concludes that viewer sensitivity is "typically low" for all three segments. DEIS at 3-108; see also App'x L. As described in the VIA, "viewer sensitivity is the degree to which viewers are sensitive to changes in the visual character of visual resources." App'x L at 2-2. The Federal guidance document further explains: "The population affected by the proposed project is referred to as viewers . . . viewers are defined by their relationship to the proposed highway project and their visual preferences." FHWA Visual Impact Guidelines at 5-6.	There are several types of viewer groups: travelers and some workers and residential viewer groups do not have high sensitivity because their views are typically focused on adjacent cars and roads (travelers), the work within their office (workers), or their own property (residential). In many cases, residential viewer's viewsheds are limited due to vegetation and trees within their own property or adjacent properties. Additionally, the topography of the land is mostly flat and further limits the viewshed of the proposed project to those adjacent to the facility or with clear sight lines. The project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 3. (cont) There are several portions of Segment 1 and 2 where the proposed alternative will impact residential neighborhoods, schools, churches, cemeteries and other land uses that are not easily relocated. As the federal guidance document explains for residential neighbors, their "visual preferences tend toward a desire to maintain the existing landscape as it is—they settled where they are for a reason, including how their neighborhood looks." In light of this guidance, TxDOT has not adequately considered that for these land uses, their visual sensitivity to a massive new highway project can hardly be considered "low." Whether the preferred alternative is selected requiring the expansion of the highway to the west, or whether another alternative is selected requiring the expansion of the highway to the east, the expanded highway system will encroach on land that has never before been a neighbor to an interstate freeway. The loss of commercial frontage road means that some residential and community areas will be immediate adjacent neighbors to I-45.	enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be parks. Aesthetic design is part of TxDOT's project development process and will be performed during detailed design, which is the final design stage of the project development process. Many of the elements that impact landscape and aesthetic design overlap into all parts of the final design process. Typically these areas include: •bridge design •lighting design •roadway design •hydraulics •environmental mitigation TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design, where feasible.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 3. (cont) TxDOT acknowledges that "those closest to I-45 will have more exposure" (App'x L at 3-4, 3-5), but seems to forget that once land is condemned and commercial frontage development is lost, those closest to I-45 will have real visual impacts. To this end, we point TxDOT to the following viewers in Segment 1, and challenge the conclusion that these viewers would have "low" sensitivity to a massive highway project: • Hidden Valley and Northline Terrace, which are residential communities in close proximity to I-45, and north & south of 249 / West Mount Houston Road (in the vicinity of, and south of, Halls Bayou), and south of West Gulf Bank Road. Hidden Valley and Northline Terrace are approximately 90% minority communities, between 55-70% low income.*8* • Northern Independence Heights, which is west of I-45, east of Yale St, north of E Tidwell Rd; 87% minority and 57% low income. • Independence Heights, including Ventanas Garden and La Vista Villa Apartments, which are west of I-45, northeast of Little White Oak Bayou; 96% minority and 53% low income. • Unnamed Neighborhood that is east of I-45, south of Crosstimbers Rd, west of Fulton St. It is 95% minority; 64% low income. • Aldine 9th Grade School, Aldine Senior High School and Stovall Middle School, directly east and adjacent to I-45 with cross streets West Rd and Airline Dr. • Berean Baptish Church, east of I-45 and south of west road. • Adath Israel Cemetery, east of I-45. Depending upon whether the highway is expanded eastward or westward, the highway expansion will encroach on these communities. And with the loss of commercial property on what is now the frontage road, many residential communities will lose their visual barrier. By and large, these communities qualify as environmental justice communities, triggering additional obligations for TxDOT's review and consideration. *footnote 8: The data here was obtained from the EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN), available at https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen.*	TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. Residents would only be impacted if they were adjacent to the proposed project or had a clear sight line, which is not common. Due to the flat land, vegetation, and trees, it would be difficult for most residents to have a view of the proposed project in their viewshed. Students' attention is not typically focused outside the windows on the transportation infrastructure. As students, faculty, and staff move between buildings and the athletic facilities at Aldine HS, they would have a view of the proposed project; however, the proposed project would operate at the same height as the current facility. Additionally, the students participating in athletics would not be focused on the transportation infrastructure, but instead their particular activity. Similar to a school, those attending church are not focused on the transportation infrastructure outside the windows. There may be instances when the proposed project would be visible when moving between buildings, or to and from the parking lot; however, the duration of the view would not be so long to adversely impact visual quality. It would be difficult for those at Adath Israel Cemetery to have a view of the proposed project. There are several structures limiting the view facing towards the I-45 corridor. Additionally, the proposed project would remain at the same height as the existing facility. In addition to proposed noise barriers, aesthetic walls are proposed in certain locations along the project corridor. The walls will provide some noise reduction. Proposed aesthetic walls are shown in the Community Impact Assessment Technical Report. Any subsequent project design changes may require a re-evaluation of preliminary aesthetic wall proposals. Proposed aesthetic walls are preliminary and the final decision to build aesthetic walls will not be made until completion of the project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners adjacent to the proposed aesthetic walls.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 3. (cont) Similarly, we point TxDOT to the following viewers in Segment 2, and challenge the conclusion that these viewers would have "low" sensitivity to a massive highway project: • Southern Independence Heights neighborhood, which is west of I-45, north of 610, south of HB&T Railroad, east of N Main St. It is 99% minority; 58% low-income. • Unnamed Neighborhood, which is East of I-45, north of 610, south of HB&T Railroad, west of Irvington Blvd. It is 96% minority; 56% low-income. • Neighborhoods adjacent I-45, East of Little White Oak Bayou, west of Fulton St, north of Cavalcade St. It is 90% minority, 50% low-income. • Northern Woodland Heights, West of I-45, east of Airline Dr, north of W Patton St, south of Cavalcade St) It is 82% minority; 43% low-income Germantown Historic District, West of I-45, east of Houston Ave, north of Parkview St. • Independence Heights Park and Burrus Elementary School, west of I-45 • Roosevelt Elementary School, West of I-45 • Adath Emeth Cemetary, West of I-45 • Montie Beach Park, West of I-45 • Jefferson Elementary School, east of I-45 • Hollywood Cemetery, Holy Cross Cemetery and Moody Park East of I-45, adjacent to Little White Oak Bayou • Woodland Park, West of I-45 with cross streets Houston Ave and Parkview St Again, depending upon whether the highway is expanded eastward or westward, the highway expansion will encroach on these communities, and with the loss of commercial property on what is now the frontage road, the residential communities will lose their visual barrier.	The impacts of those closest to the proposed project were recognized and impacts will be mitigated during final design and construction. Residents would only be impacted if they were adjacent to the proposed project or had a clear sight line, which is not common. Due to the flat land, vegetation, and trees, it would be difficult for most residents to have a view of the proposed project in their viewshed. Students' attention is not typically focused outside the windows on the transportation infrastructure. Additionally, the students participating in athletics would not be focused on the transportation infrastructure, but instead their particular activity. Adath Emeth Cemetery is currently adjacent to I-610 and near the existing I-45/I610 interchange. The proposed project would not substantially change for visitors at the cemetery. It would be difficult for those at Montie Beach Park Jefferson Elementary School, Holy Cross Cemetery and Moody Park to have a view of the proposed project. There are several structures limiting the view facing towards the I-45 corridor. Additionally, the proposed project would remain at the same height as the existing facility. The view of the proposed project from Independence Heights Park, Burrus Elementary School, and Roosevelt Elementary School would be limited due to structures and vegetation between the facilities and the roadway project. The proposed project would remain at the same height as the existing facility in the area of Hollywood Cemetery. The proposed project will be visible from some areas of Woodland Park, as the existing I-45 and I-10 roadways are today.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 3. (cont) In Segment 3, there are both residential communities and extensive park systems, all users of land that typically would not have a "low" visual sensitivity; among them: • Residential areas, encompassed between Houston Ave, I-45. and 10 • Other residential areas, such as Clayton Homes, Kelsey Village Housing, and neighborhood surrounding Swiney Park • Parks alongside White Oak Bayou near the junction of I-45 and 10 • Freed Art & Nature Park • Hogg Park • Allen's Landing Memorial Park • Sam Houston Park • Tranquility Park • Sesquicentennial Park	The Draft EIS stated the viewer sensitivity is typically moderate in Segment 3. The viewer sensitivity range has been updated to low to moderately high, to include the sensitivity of recreational viewers with views of the elevated structures. TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. Additionally, there are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 3. (cont) The federal guidelines counsel that any visual analysis should "highlight[] especially those areas where the proposed project will alter the harmony of the natural environment." See FHWA Visual Impact Guidelines at 6-8. Certainly changes in the vicinity of these park lands will change the harmony of the natural environment, and TxDOT has not adequately recognized this. Accordingly, for all of these identified viewers in Segment 1, 2, and 3—residential neighborhoods, schools, park users, et al.—we believe their sensitivity would be more accurately characterized as "moderately high to high" and not "low."	The Draft EIS states visual quality will be degraded at those recreational facilities closest to the proposed project, or with a significant view of the elevated structures. TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. Many viewers will have limited views of the elevated structures due to vegetation and flat terrain. Additionally, the views of students and many residents is typically not focused on transportation infrastructure. Instead, students are focused on activities in the classroom, sports activity, etc. The view of residents not adjacent to the project would typically not include elevated transportation infrastructure, because the view is limited by vegetation or the height of nearby homes.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**D. VISUAL IMPACTS** **4. We question, and request the reevaluation of, TxDOT's conclusion that only "neutral visual impacts" in Segments 1 and 2 will result, and that the design alternatives do "not degrade the visual quality of the area" for those Segments.** The DEIS concludes that there will be "neutral visual impacts" for Segment 1 and 2, and that the design alternatives do "not degrade the visual quality of the area." DEIS at 3-109, ES-16 & ES29-19. No similar conclusion is given with respect to the preferred alternative for Segment 3, except that it would "provide the most beneficial visual impacts." DEIS at 3-110.	The Draft EIS stated the viewer sensitivity is typically moderate in Segment 3. The viewer sensitivity range has been updated to low to moderately high, to include the sensitivity of recreational viewers with views of the elevated structures. TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design. Additionally, there are opportunities for aesthetic enhancements under elevated sections of the highways, such as lighting and landscaping.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 4. (cont) While it is possible that the vantage of a driver on I-45 may experience "neutral" visual impacts along the stretch of the highway from the Beltway to Loop 610, it is impossible to make the same conclusion from the vantage of the residents, businesses, schoolchildren, or users of land that suddenly find themselves neighbors to such a significant highway system. These are very different viewer groups. As stated above, whether the preferred alternative is selected requiring the expansion of the highway to the west, or whether another alternative is selected requiring the expansion of the highway to the east, the expanded highway system will encroach on land that has never before been a neighbor to an interstate freeway. The loss of commercial frontage road means that some residential and community areas will be directly adjacent	The Draft EIS states visual quality will be degraded for those nearest to the proposed project. Some viewers may even have improved views, depending on mitigation; however, the majority of viewers would only have a neutral impact because their view of the project would be limited by vegetation, other structures, and the flat terrain.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 4. (cont) Examples of such land users was given above. TxDOT needs to take into consideration the visual impacts of an encroaching highway on residential and community areas such as schools, cemeteries or churches, and parks. Simply because a vehicle driver may or may not appreciate a new vista from a highway, does not mean the same is true for the members of the adjoining communities. We dispute, and request the reconsideration of, TxDOT's conclusion that only "neutral visual impacts" for Segment 1 and 2 will result.	The Draft EIS states visual quality will be degraded for those nearest to the proposed project. Some viewers may even have improved views, depending on mitigation; however, the majority of viewers would only have a neutral impact because their view of the project would be limited by vegetation, other structures, and the flat terrain.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>D. VISUAL IMPACTS</u> **5. TxDOT must ensure it has meaningful input from viewers and specifically on their visual preferences. To this end, community engagement, and additional photo simulations for the community, would better enable the public to provide feedback, particularly in areas of visual sensitivity.** Among the purposes of a VIA is to understand visual preferences of the community. The federal guidance document on Visual Impact Assessments makes clear that the "VIA is developed with input from the NEPA public involvement process to directly and accurately ascertain viewer preferences." FHWA Visual Impact Guidelines at D-2 (emphasis added). And, "since people are a key component of the [VIA] model, it is critical to know what the public actually values about their visual environment." Id. at 3-4. Thus one key purpose of a visual impact assessment is to create a dialogue with the public. Presumably, an outcome of the public's opportunity to comment on the DEIS is to provide initial feedback to TxDOT on some visual preferences, in terms of the alternatives that have been studied, and within the limits of information that has been provided. However, we believe that direct community dialogue would greatly assist TxDOT in understanding the community's concerns with visual impacts. As stated above in Section A-2, we believe that stakeholders are willing and interested in meeting with TxDOT representatives inorder to give constructive feedback on the proposed project design.	TxDOT has provided many opportunities for community input during development of the NHHIP. In addition to conducting public meetings, the public hearing, and receiving written comments, TxDOT met with individuals, communities, organizations, groups, and others, and will continue the dialogue during detailed design to consider additional input and opportunities for the project to provide a visually pleasing environment. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The methodology of the visual impacts assessment follows the same process as described in Section 2 of the February 2017 Visual Impacts Assessment Technical Report. In addition, at the time the Draft EIS was prepared, there were no simulations (renderings) of the project alternatives from the location of parks and bicycle/pedestrian trails adjacent to or intersecting the proposed project area. To address the comments about visual impacts of the proposed project in the Segment 3 study area, TxDOT prepared four simulations from Key View Points (KVPs) within Landscape Unit 3. (see technical report). These simulations were assessed to provide an updated visual impact assessment for the Preferred Alternative in the area of Segment 3 of the NHHIP. TxDOT prepared an addendum to the Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report, which is included in the Final EIS. The addendum provides an update to the visual impact assessment (VIA) conducted for the Draft EIS. In response to comments received regarding the assessment of the proposed project's visual impact to several specific areas, as well as new design changes to the Preferred Alternative, some areas near the proposed project were reassessed. The new analysis documents that viewer sensitivity ranges from low to moderately high. TxDOT will apply the Green Ribbon themes to the proposed project, including landscaping and hardscaping elements. The FHWA does not consider the planting of vegetation to be a noise abatement measure. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT is open to coordination with local groups or agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping. Aesthetic design is part of TxDOT's project development process and will be performed during detailed design, which is the final design stage of the project development process. Many of the elements that impact landscape and aesthetic design overlap into all parts of the final design process. Typically these areas include: •bridge design •lighting design •roadway design •hydraulics •environmental mitigation TxDOT will continue to consider the physical and cultural landscape of the project site through the during detailed design process, with the goal of fitting the project into the adjacent landscape in a way that is complementary to, and enhances, the existing landscape. TxDOT will work with COH and local groups to incorporate suggestions into final design, where feasible. TxDOT has prepared a 3-D visualization of the proposed project and it is available online: http://www.ih45northandmore.com/pub_hear_doc.aspx The visualization does not reflect design changes made after the public hearing (May 2017). TxDOT prepared static visualizations of multiple proposed project views, which are included in the Final EIS. Four new simulations from recreational facilities in Segment 3 were created for the Final EIS.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 5. (cont)</u> Further, while we appreciate the visual representations that have been provided thus far (such as found in Appendix L), the visuals and diagrams on pages 4-3 to 4-19 of Appendix L (Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report) offer only limited insight into how the expanded highway system will impact areas of viewer sensitivity such as residential communities, parks, schools, and the like. TxDOT has not offered meaningful analysis of mitigating for visual impacts—whether vegetative buffers or noise barriers will be used in particular locations. As a result, it is difficult for the public to give meaningful input on references in these sensitive areas—other than to imagine what TxDOT "might" do.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 5. (cont)</u> We believe that additional visual representations would enable the public to understand the visual impact on the built environment and for the public to provide meaningful input and feedback. Specifically, visual representations of static viewsheds in areas of viewer sensitivity would be useful, and with visualizations of mitigation measures.*9* When TxDOT begins to meet with community groups, providing additional visual representations would enhance the dialogue. With additional visual information from TxDOT on how sensitive viewer areas (residential neighborhoods, parks, and schools) will be impacted by the expanded highway, then the public can give feedback on visual preferences. *footnote 9: Note, the federal guidance defines "static viewsheds" as "what neighbors of the road see from a stationary location." FHWA Visual Impact Guidelines at 4-6*	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 5. (cont)</u> TxDOT notes its reliance on a National Cooperative Highway Research Program report entitled Evaluation of Methodologies for Visual Impact Assessment. There is another report by the same research program on Visualization for Project Development. *10* See Attachment D-2 ("Visualization Overview" chapter excerpt). The report discusses that, in the transportation community, "visualization is becoming . . . more a core requirement within the highway project development process." Id. at 38. Visualization "technology can be used throughout the life cycle of a project plan—from the process flow of value engineering, to the project development and environment study phase." Id. at 5. Specifically, critical issues such as roadway aesthetics, vertical and horizontal alignment fit, traffic flow, and line of sight can be identified. The general public can also obtain a greater understanding of the project by viewing the proposed changes from a potentially unlimited number of viewpoints." Id. *footnote 10: Available at https://www.nap.edu/download/13986.*	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 5. (cont)</u> As stated, the large scale changes proposed to I-45 and the transportation corridors around downtown could present an opportunity to improve the visual character of these corridors. According to research, in "addition to mitigation, the opportunity for enhancing visual quality should also be considered when evaluating the impacts a proposed project has. A VIA process that identifies such opportunities enables NEPA's aesthetic mandate to be met through a simple program of effective location, design, and mitigation decisions." NCHRP, Evaluation of Methodologies for Visual Impact Assessments at 143.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 5. (cont)</u> In short, we believe that community dialogue and additional visualization tools would enable the public to provide constructive feedback on viewer preferences, and ultimately enhance the overall visual character of the project. As with other aspects of the DEIS, it would be beneficial for the public to give such feedback before an FEIS is prepared and published.	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**D. VISUAL IMPACTS** **6. Parks are among the areas requiring visual analysis, but the DEIS and VIA include little visual analysis of park impacts.** Federal guidance counsels that, as part of the VIA, "practitioners should identify and analyze visual impacts on Section 4(f) properties in coordination with the analysis of Section 4(f) properties." FHWA Visual Impact Guidelines at 2-4. As noted above in Section B on parks and 4(f) issues, too much of the park analysis has been deferred for later resolution. The public must see these analyses before the final EIS.	The project complies with relevant regulations and guidance, including 23 C.F.R. pt. 774 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. All Section 4(f) impacts are addressed in the Section 4(f) Evaluation. The visual impact analysis has been revised. Specific recreational areas nearest to the project, or with prominent views of the project, are mentioned. Additionally, four new simulations from recreational facilities in Segment 3 have been included in the Final EIS.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**D. VISUAL IMPACTS** **7. TxDOT must budget for complete removal of billboards that will be "displaced" by the project.** The DEIS contemplates the "displacement" of billboards along the footprint of the I-45 project. For instance, the DEIS notes that the preferred alternatives for Segment 1 will displace 24 billboards, Segment 2 will displace 11 billboards, and Segment 3 will displace 9 billboards. See DEIS, App'x F, at §§ 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.5.3. But the DEIS makes no effort to explain what will happen to billboards once "displaced."	TxDOT will pay for removal of the billboard structures that are in the new right-of-way; these are identified as displacements in the Final EIS. TxDOT is not involved in the decision whether a billboard may be relocated within the city; that is governed by the City of Houston pursuant to its billboard ordinances.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 7. (cont) Under the City of Houston's Sign Code, TxDOT cannot commit to building new billboards to replace those which must be removed. Since 1980, the City of Houston has prohibited the construction of new billboards. City of Houston Sign Code § 4612(b)(1) ("From and after the effective date, no new construction permits shall be issued for off-premise signs..."). Since then, local billboard inventory has dropped by almost 90%.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 7. (cont) Within that context, TxDOT must not undertake a major highway project through the heart of sensitive areas—which include, for example, scenic districts, residential areas, the central business district, tourist-magnet parks, bayous, a convention center, sports and theater areas—without total removal of the signs that currently exist within the footprint of the I-45 project. Relocation cannot be an option. To move billboards to other areas would degrade other vistas. Billboards should not be treated differently than any other commercial structure in the path of a transportation project—any of which would be permanently removed and not replaced.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 7. (cont) Sensitivity to the local Sign Code, to citizen preference, and the development evolution of the community must be a factor in TxDOT's project plan. Development evolution means that sensitivity to community character and sense of place makes oversized, commercial signage inconsistent with the built and natural environment in many areas that the project touches. Complete removal of these billboards by TxDOT will be met with a very positive response across the city.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 7. (cont) Finally, the Texas Supreme Court's recent decision in State v. Clear Channel Outdoor, Inc., clarified that "a billboard may be a fixture to be valued with the land, and that while the advertising business income generated by a billboard should be reflected in the valuation of the land at its highest and best use, the loss of the business is not compensable and cannot be used to determine the value of the billboard structure." State v. Clear Channel Outdoor, Inc., 463 S.W.3d 488, 490 (Tex. 2015) (emphasis added). This opinion strongly suggests that the cost of removing a billboard without replacing it elsewhere will be affordable for TxDOT.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	D. VISUAL IMPACTS; 7. (cont) In the Final EIS, we urge TxDOT to budget for the cost to completely remove all displaced billboards.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE** **1. TxDOT is required to consider environmental justice principles in all TxDOT programs, and ensure that projects do not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on protected populations.** Executive Order 12898 requires each Federal agency to "make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations[.]" Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (Feb. 11, 1994).	Comment noted.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 1. (cont) In 2012, the Office of the Secretary of Transportation issued Updated Environmental Justice Order 5610.2(a) ("USDOT EJ Order"). This Order sets forth the DOT's policy to consider environmental justice principles in all DOT programs, policies, and activities; it describes how the objectives of environmental justice will be integrated into planning and programming; and it sets forth policies to prevent disproportionately high and adverse effects to minority or lowincome populations. The USDOT EJ Order highlights the importance of avoiding disproportionately high and adverse effects in programs, policies, and activities, and includes as its aim the identification of potential effects, alternatives, and mitigation measures. DOT Order 5610.2(a) at 6. The Order adopts a goal to "avoid[], minimize[] or mitigate[]" disproportionate effects. Id. at 7.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts throughout the project segments and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options to address the impacts to these communities. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these efforts. As discussed in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS, TxDOT has made a number of commitments to substantially reduce the effects of the project on minority and low-income populations related to relocation of residences and facilities, affordable housing, local access, safety, traffic noise, air quality, and homelessness. In some of these areas there would be improvements over the existing conditions such as new facilities for the residents of Clayton Homes and Kelly Village, restoring local access in the area around the I-45/Loop 610 interchange, and improving safety (e.g., improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations) on cross streets in environmental justice neighborhoods. After considering the benefits of the proposed project along with mitigation, the Build Alternative may cause disproportionately high and adverse effects to minority or low-income populations, but a substantial amount of these effects has been minimized through a variety of commitments and programs that will be implemented by TxDOT.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 1. (cont) In implementing its requirements under NEPA, Title VI, URA, SAFETEA-LU and other statutes involving human health or environmental matters, the USDOT EJ Order states that the following information should be obtained where relevant, appropriate, and practical: • Population served and/or affected by race, color, or national origin, and income level; • Proposed steps to guard against disproportionately high and adverse effects on persons on the basis of race, color, national origin, and income level.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 1. (cont) The Order also provides that DOT operations will be administered so as to identify and avoid discrimination and avoid disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority populations and low-income populations by: • Identifying and evaluating environmental, public health, and interrelated social and economic effects of DOT programs and activities; • Proposing measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse environmental and public health effects, and providing offsetting benefits and opportunities to enhance communities, neighborhoods, and individuals affected by DOT programs, policies, and activities; • Considering alternatives to proposed activities where such alternatives would result in avoiding and/or minimizing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental impacts; and • Eliciting public involvement opportunities and considering the results thereof.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 1. (cont) DOT officials must ensure that any of their programs, policies, or activities that will have a high and adverse effect on minority populations or low-income populations "will only be carried out if further mitigation measures or alternatives that would avoid or reduce the disproportionately high and adverse effect are not practicable." Id. at 11. Activities that will have a high and adverse effect on populations protected by Title VI will only be carried out if (1) a substantial need for the program, policy, or activity exists; and (2) alternatives that would have less adverse effects on protected populations, either (a) would have other adverse social, economic, environmental or human health impacts that are severe or (b) would involve increased costs of extraordinary magnitude. Id. at 11-12.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 1. (cont) FHWA Order 6640.23A, "FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," ("FHWA EJ Order") adopts similar policies concerning environmental justice. The Order adopts the USDOT EJ Order's four methods of identifying and avoiding discrimination and disproportionately high and adverse effects on protected populations. The FHWA EJ Order requires FHWA staff to ensure that programs, policies, and activities "do not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect" on protected populations," and defines when activities that have a disproportionately high and adverse effect can be carried out. FHWA Order 6640.23A at ¶8 *.11* *footnote 11:The language in this Order tracks that found in DOT Order 5610.2.*	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE** **2. The DEIS concludes that minority and low-income communities will be adversely affected. But the DEIS fails to adequately consider methods to and alternatives that would "avoid or reduce" the disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations.** The DEIS concludes that "[w]hile minority and low-income individuals and community facilities in the project area would be adversely impacted by the proposed project, no reasonable alternatives would avoid adverse impacts or have substantially less overall adverse impacts than other alternatives." DEIS at ES-4; see also 3-17, 3-23.	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements from the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. In accordance with the directive of EO 12898 and FHWA policies and principles of environmental justice, the Draft EIS evaluates the all of the reasonable alternatives for Segments 1, 2, and 3 which it was determined that they would all result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and/or low-income populations in the project area The proposed project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project as presented in the Draft EIS meets the criteria for "disproportionately high and adverse" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements and includes an environmental justice analysis with full discussion of impacts and proposed mitigation.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 2. (cont) It further concludes that each alternative would "displace single-family residences and/or multifamily units in areas with high minority populations (i.e., over 50 percent) and some low-income areas" and "places of worship, schools, and other facilities used by minority and low-income populations would be displaced." Id. at 3-17. Other adverse impacts include increased noise and traffic congestion during construction, increased noise and air emissions near environmental justice communities, and disruption to neighborhood and community cohesion. Id. at 3-17; 3-21. Additional details regarding these impacts were provided in Appendix F ("Community Impact Assessment Technical Report").	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 2. (cont) Under NEPA, the applicable regulations, and FHWA's EJ Order 6640.23A, a DEIS must assess whether environmental justice impacts are possible; conduct an environmental justice analysis; evaluate whether each alternative will have a disproportionately high and adverse impact on protected populations; and avoid or minimize any disproportionately high and adverse impacts to protected populations or, if impacts cannot be avoided, work with the affected community to develop mitigation measures to offset the impacts. The requirements to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act are similar (though not identical), to those under NEPA.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 2. (cont) The current DEIS does not meet the legal standard. Instead, the DEIS concludes that minority and low-income individuals and community facilities would be adversely impacted by the proposed project, but simply states that no reasonable alternatives would avoid these adverse impacts or have "substantially less overall adverse impacts" than other alternatives. See, e.g., DEIS, App'x F, at 5-56–5-60. In its mitigation section, the DEIS states that additional stakeholder outreach for facilities specifically serving environmental justice and other sensitive communities is ongoing, and potential mitigation measures for these impacts will be determined in the future. App'x at 7-3. While we appreciate that TxDOT has met with interested stakeholders for facilities that serve environmental justice communities, and hope that these future meetings are productive, this approach does not satisfy its obligations under NEPA.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 2. (cont) The conclusion that all alternatives will have a disproportionately high and adverse impact on protected populations should not end a NEPA analysis of these impacts or foreclose the possibility of further reducing these impacts. The environmental justice section of the DEIS must further analyze mitigation for all adverse effects, should make clear which alternative has the least adverse effects on protected populations, and should specify why this alternative is not being selected.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 2. (cont) FHWA's Environmental Justice Reference Guide outlines the analysis process under NEPA. This guidance, which tracks the legal requirements under NEPA and Title VI, states that if there are disproportionately high and adverse effects on a protected population, then the agency should consider mitigation for all adverse effects, focusing on the protocol of avoidance, then minimization, and then measures to offset or remedy the adverse effects. Federal Highway Administration Environmental Justice Reference Guide (April 1, 2015), at Fig. 8. If there are disproportionately high and adverse effects after the mitigation, then the agency must consider whether there are further practicable mitigation measures or alternatives that would avoid or reduce these effects. If so, then the project proponents must apply those measures. If not, and the affected population is protected under Title VI, then there must be a substantial need for the project and the alternative with the least adverse effects must be selected unless that alternative has much more severe social, economic, environmental, or human health impacts, or that alternative would involve increased costs of an extraordinary magnitude. See id.	The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 2. (cont) In its current form, the DEIS does not provide enough information to satisfy this analysis. First, the DEIS states that potential mitigation measures for impacts to EJ communities will be determined in the future. App'x F at 7-3. But without understanding what mitigation is being proposed for all adverse effects, including effects on EJ communities, the public cannot understand the actual extent of these impacts or make comments on further practicable mitigation measures or alternatives that would further reduce these impacts. The EJ analysis under NEPA is intended to be an iterative process. While we recognize that TxDOT has met with interested stakeholders and is working on some mitigation measures for EJ communities, without publishing this information in the DEIS, we cannot properly evaluate the adequacy of the proposed mitigation.	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. Accordingly, TxDOT is not required to prepare a supplemental Draft EIS. TxDOT is mindful that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, updated/revised technical reports were posted on the project website and were available at the TxDOT Houston District office. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS includes a detailed discussion on the development of mitigation measures to address displacements and other adverse impacts associated with project.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 2. (cont) Consequently, we request that TxDOT publish a supplemental DEIS with specific mitigation measures on which the public can comment. For the I-70 East Project, discussed in greater detail below, a Supplemental DEIS and Section 4(f) Evaluation was published following the first DEIS, and this Supplemental DEIS contained more detailed mitigation for each alternative. We also ask that TxDOT set aside a portion of the budget for eligible small-scale community-drive projects and draft community benefit agreements, and make these commitments public before publishing a Final EIS and Record of Decision.	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT. Accordingly, TxDOT is not required to prepare a supplemental Draft EIS. TxDOT is mindful that there is a great deal of public interest in NHHIP, and that public commenters have asked for more opportunity to review the analyses that TxDOT prepares. Accordingly, updated/revised technical reports were posted on the project website and were available at the TxDOT Houston District office. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low -income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. The Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS includes a detailed discussion on the development of mitigation measures to address displacements and other adverse impacts associated with project.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 2. (cont) Second, the DEIS concludes that impacts will be disproportionately high and adverse for protected populations if any of the alternatives are selected. That may very well be true. However, the information in the DEIS indicates that alternatives that are not recommended may reduce the disproportionately high and adverse effects of the proposed project. For example, for Segment 1, (Proposed Recommended) Alternative 4 will displace 218 total housing units, compared to 169 for Alternative 5 and 63 for Alternative 7. DEIS at Table 5-8. In Segment 2, (Proposed Recommended) Alternative 10 will displace 101 housing units, compared to 44 for both Alternative 11 and Alternative 12. Id. at Table 5-1. *12* Similarly, the Proposed Recommended alternative for Segment 3 will displace 916 housing units, and other alternatives may have a far less impact from an EJ perspective. See id. at Table 5-16. Many, if not most, of these displacements occur in protected communities. While we recognize that EJ impacts encompass much more than displacements of housing units, much of the EJ analysis in the DEIS focuses on displacements, and the information provided suggests that the proposed recommended alternatives likely do not have the least adverse effects on protected populations. Under Title VI caselaw and FHWA's environmental justice guidance, the alternative with the least adverse effects on protected populations must be approved unless specific circumstances exist (e.g., under FHWA's EJ guidance: the alternative would have adverse social, economic, environmental, or human health impacts that are more severe, or the alternative would involve increased costs of an extraordinary magnitude). There is insufficient information in the DEIS to make this determination. Given the magnitude of the proposed project's effects, and the fact that a significant portion of the adverse effects will be borne disproportionately by minority or low-income communities, TxDOT must ensure that all practicable mitigation measures that would reduce these effects are considered, publicly vetted, and implemented. *footnote 12: The Proposed Recommended alternative will also displace the most number of businesses.*	The Recommended Alternative would require more residential displacements than the other alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS. Residential displacements was one factor considered during the evaluation of the alternatives. Section 2 of the Draft EIS discusses the evaluation criteria for the analysis of alternatives and the primary reasons for selection of the Proposed Recommended Alternatives. Figures 2-10, 2-11, and 2-12 show the results of the alternatives evaluation conducted in 2015, with criteria that included: meets need and purpose and project goals, signature project potential, engineering, traffic, and potential impacts to cultural resources, natural resources, noise, social and economic resources, and hazardous materials. Based on the criteria and information available at that time, Segment 1 residential displacements for Alt. 4 were higher than Alt. 7 but lower than Alt 5, business displacements were lower, and potential hazardous materials concerns were less. For Segment 2, residential displacements were almost equal amongst alternatives, and Alt. 10 had less visual impacts than other r alternatives. For Segment 3, Alt. 11 had almost the same number of residential and business displacements as Alt. 12, and many less than Alt. 10, Alt. 11 provided the greatest improvement to mobility. TxDOT has minimized new ROW as much as possible to minimize impacts in residential areas. Other evaluation factors considered in evaluating social, economic, and other community impacts included construction, traffic noise, air emissions, and changes in access. Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project were evaluated. Through additional impact studies for the Preferred Alternative, and with input from coordination with HHA, other owners of facilities that provide housing and services for EJ populations, and representatives of EJ communities, TxDOT has identified measures to mitigate unavoidable adverse impacts to communities, including to EJ populations, as detailed in the Community Impact Analysis Technical Report. The project is primarily bounded by minority and/or low-income communities, thus by definition the project meets the criteria for "disproportionately high" impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE** **3. The EJ analysis must make clear that nearly all project impacts disproportionately affect EJ communities; this fact must be made explicit and should inform proposed mitigation.** As mentioned, the EJ analysis in the DEIS focuses somewhat narrowly on the displacement of residential units and displacement of community resources that serve low-income and minority populations. See, e.g., Tables 3-2, 3-3, and 3-4; Section 3.2.4. However, the provided Census data is clear that impacts to non-displaced residents within the project's footprint and in surrounding communities will also be borne disproportionately by low-income and minority communities. For example, approximately 92 percent of the Segment 1 Census block area is a minority population; approximately 85 percent of the Segment 2 Census block area is a minority population; and approximately 67 percent of the Segment 3 Census block area is a minority population. Given this information, the DEIS implies, but does not explicitly state, that many, if not all, of the social, environmental, and public health impacts for this project are also environmental justice impacts. This includes noise, air quality, and water resource impacts, as well as disruptions to community cohesion and access to public resources. This fact should be made explicit in any supplemental or amended DEIS or the FEIS. Additionally, any proposed mitigation for these impacts is subject to the EJ analysis outlined above, and all practicable mitigation measures that would reduce these impacts must be considered, publicly vetted, and incorporated into the final project.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoidance and mitigation have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements and includes an environmental justice analysis with full discussion of impacts and proposed mitigation. See Section 5.9 in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE</u> **4. TxDOT should evaluate impacts, concerns, and potential mitigation on a neighborhood-level scale, and should use block meetings and establish working groups to carry out this evaluation.** In the context of transportation, "effective and equitable decisionmaking depends on understanding and properly addressing the unique needs of different socio-economic groups." FHWA Environmental Justice Reference Guide (2015), at 2. According to the DEIS, the environmental justice data was gathered from Census block data, with field investigations to confirm community buildings, neighborhood facilities, and other land uses. TxDOT has also held a couple of rounds of public meetings and has held meetings with stakeholders during the project development process. TxDOT has committed to coordinating with interested stakeholders, including the Houston Housing Authority, to discuss potential project impacts on sensitive communities in the future.	The Draft EIS included a preliminary analysis of impacts to, and mitigation for, disproportionate and adverse environmental justice impacts and was based on best available information at the time. As the project has evolved, additional opportunities for avoiding, reducing, and mitigating adverse impacts have been identified - often through the suggestions of local citizens and coordination with the local communities. Appendix A in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS includes details about public involvement and community outreach during preparation of the Draft EIS and subsequent to the Draft EIS. Through communication with community members, groups, organizations and elected officials, TxDOT has revised the project design to reduce project impacts, and create project benefits. Additionally, mitigation measures to reduce adverse impacts were developed with community input and are proposed with this project. For example, TxDOT is continuing to engage with the Houston Housing Authority and the representatives of other community facilities, housing, social services, and businesses used by low-income, minority, and other vulnerable populations, to discuss the proposed project and develop mitigation options for each neighborhood affected. Accordingly, the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report in the Final EIS reflects these refinements. As directed by FHWA Order 6640.23A, when determining whether a particular program, policy, or activity will have disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations, the decision maker should take into account mitigation and enhancement measures and potential offsetting benefits to the affected minority and/or low-income populations. The mitigation actions described in the Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report substantially offset the disproportionate and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations that would result if the NHHIP is constructed. TxDOT has made a number of commitments to substantially reduce the effects of the project on minority and low-income populations related to relocation of residences and facilities, affordable housing, local access, safety, traffic noise, air quality, and homelessness. In some of these areas there would be improvements over the existing conditions such as new facilities for the residents of Clayton Homes and Kelly Village, restoring local access in the area around the I-45/Loop 610 interchange, and improving safety (e.g., improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations) on cross streets in environmental justice neighborhoods. After considering the benefits of the proposed project along with mitigation, the Preferred Alternative may cause disproportionately high and adverse effects to minority or low-income populations but a substantial amount of these effects have been minimized through a variety of commitments and programs that will be implemented by TxDOT. See Section 5.9 of the technical report for more information. The technical report also includes a discussion of impacts and mitigation for neighborhoods in the project area. TxDOT is aware of the recent FHWA environmental justice case studies from Colorado and Kentucky. TxDOT is undertaking measures to address the unique aspects of the NHHIP to effectively address instances of disproportionately high and adverse effects to minority and/or low-income populations throughout the project area. It is TxDOT's goal to ensure that the NHHIP impacts to EJ communities are recognized early and that mitigation measures will be implemented to properly address the widespread and unique needs in each community.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 4. (cont)</u> However, the environmental justice analysis in the DEIS is relatively coarse-grained: it analyzes whether particular Census blocks are disproportionately low-income or minority, highlighting displacements to residential units and neighborhood facilities. Appendix F discusses neighborhoods and community cohesion, but the community profile is provided on a segment basis, *13* and the subsequent discussion of superneighborhoods again focuses on displacements, with little data on disruptions to neighborhood connectivity or neighborhood-specific concerns about the project's impacts. See App'x F, at §§ 4, 5. From an environmental justice standpoint, this information is not specific enough to understand and properly address the unique needs of different socio-economic and community-based groups. *footnote 13 :See App'x F, at 4-1ff.*	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 4. (cont)</u> To use a different project as an example, during the I-70 East environmental study in the Denver area, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) used specific outreach programs designed to reach Hispanic/Latino and African American populations and neighborhoods, including door-to-door outreach, block meetings, neighborhood meetings, and establishing working groups to address specific issues. Attachment E-1 (FHWA Case Study, "Building a Foundation for Meaningful and Active Participation: I-70 East Project, Denver Area, Colorado"). This process helped CDOT understand specific neighborhood features, properties of interest, information on the social organization of the community, and perceptions of existing neighborhood transportation problems, and minimizing adverse effects on protected communities became an explicit project goal in the NEPA analysis. Id. During the final design stages, urbandesign workshops were held and local residents and businesses were encouraged to provide input and advice. Id. Ultimately, CDOT made 149 separate mitigation commitments, including many aimed at reducing the adverse effects on environmental justice communities. Attachment E-2 (Final EIS, "I-70 East Final Environmental Impact Statement and Section 4(f) Evaluation," Appendix 9 (Jan 2016)). Among other things, and as a point of interest for this project, CDOT committed to lowering the highway and covering portions of it to include space for community and neighborhood activities. See id.*14* *footnote 14: CDOT also committed to providing residents close to the highway with storm windows, furnace filters, attic insulation and two free portable or window-mounted air conditioning units; providing $100,000 to facilitate access to fresh food; providing an HVAC system and new doors and windows for an affected elementary school, plus two new classrooms; providing $2 million in funding to support affordable housing in the Elyria and Swansea Neighborhood; and providing eligible residents of some affected neighborhoods with free transponders, pre-loading of tolls, and other means to reduce barriers to using the Express Lanes after the project is completed. Id. These mitigation commitments were all included for a project with much less impact and much less total cost than the proposed North Houston Highway Improvement Project.*	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 4. (cont)</u> In another transportation case for the Newtown Pike Extension Project in Lexington, Kentucky, the project coordinator developed a community impact assessment that included a household survey determining length of residency, whether family lives in the neighborhood, likes and dislikes about the neighborhood, important community resources, mode of transportation to work, and familiarity with the project. Attachment E-3 at 12 (FHWA Case Study, "Preserving Community Cohesion through Southend Park Neighborhood Redevelopment," Newtown Pike Extension Project, Lexington, Kentucky). Later, an additional survey was conducted to understand the met and unmet needs of a particular community's residents. The team used an urban anthropologist to provide an oral history of the area, allowing team members to really understand the affected individuals, their community, and their needs. A business survey was also conducted to better understand impacts. Id. A community liaison was established to facilitate ongoing interaction and incentivize community participation. Id. at 13.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	<u>E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 4. (cont)</u> We respectfully request that TxDOT review the other FHWA Environmental Justice case studies available online to help determine best management practices moving forward. *15* Recognizing that it may be too late in the process to undertake some of these specific methods employed during the scoping phase, it is not too late to increase community outreach and create working groups that can analyze impacts, concerns, and preferred mitigation on a neighborhood or superneighborhood-level, especially for communities that are particularly impacted and/or are predominantly low-income or minority. Proposed mitigation for environmental justice impacts must address the particular needs of the affected groups. It is difficult to know where TxDOT is in this process given the lack of information provided in the DEIS, but we request that a more fine-grained, community-based approach be undertaken as mitigation is developed for the proposed project's impacts. *footnote 15: Available at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/resources/ej_and_nepa/ case_studies/case00.cfm.*	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE** **5. Some examples of particular EJ concerns for this project are included here.** In addition to the recommendations included above, we note the following concerns that affect EJ communities: • If the preferred alternative for Segment 3 does move forward in substantially its current form, we recommend that TxDOT consider committing, as CDOT did for the I-70 East project, to funding and/or ensuring funding for the proposed cap. We also recommend that an ad hoc committee is formed in the near future to help obtain commitments related to this cap and associated public space. This committee should include individuals from the east end of downtown Houston, including EJ communities, to help ensure that there is sufficient connectivity over the highway and public access to downtown from these communities. It is clearly important that TxDOT's infrastructure be able to support any future above-highway park space.	The Mayor of the City of Houston has appointed a committee to oversee the potential designs and funding options for uses for the open space areas in Segment 3 and TxDOT will consider its recommendations. The open space options shown on the schematics are conceptual; however, the proposed project will include the infrastructure to support a future open space option. The proposed project will include the infrastructure to create a highway cap in certain areas that can support open space options. The infrastructure for the highway caps have been designed to support loads similar to the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with the COH and the stakeholders committed to developing enhancements for each of the highway caps to ensure safe bicycle/pedestrian access across adjacent streets is incorporated into the detailed design.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; 5. (cont) • We are concerned with the elimination of the Polk Street connection to downtown, which currently acts as an east-west connector. • Census data shows that the largest share of people who use public transportation and bike are in lower-income brackets. Given the fact that the preferred alternative will affect individuals who commute downtown, it is important to ensure that current east-west connectors are maintained to the greatest extent possible and that any potential impacts to these modes of transportation are coordinated with appropriate local agencies, nonprofits, and affected communities. With respect to the existing purple and green rail lines that serve communities in the east and southeast, TxDOT must coordinate with METRO and others to minimize impacts to ridership. It takes time to adapt to changing modes of transportation, and minimizing impacts during the construction phase will require early coordination. With respect to bicycle infrastructure, TxDOT must continue coordinating with interested parties to minimize impacts and ensure continued and improved connectivity between communities outside the highway infrasturcture and downtown Houston.	TxDOT closely coordinated with the City of Houston (COH) to optimize the local street network connectivity in Segment 3, including the cross streets between Downtown and the east side of downtown. One of the key benefits of the project is the restoration of a continuous southbound street parallel to the highway between Commerce and Leeland Street. This restored street (noted as Hamilton in the December 2019 schematic) would reestablish connectivity of four east/west streets that were severed when the George R. Brown Convention Center was constructed (Dallas, Lamar, McKinney, and Walker) and it will improve access between Downtown and areas to the east (East End and Third Ward). It would also support local street capacity during sporting or convention center events. TxDOT has devoted considerable efforts to maintain Polk Street across I-45/I-69, however it was determined during development of the preliminary design that there would not be enough vertical separation between I-45 and Polk Street. To continue on Polk Street from the east side, drivers will be routed to the Lamar Street crossing which will be improved to provide a seamless connection to the restored Hamilton Street which connects back to Polk Street. Based on direct coordination with the COH, the Polk St. dedicated bike lane would be rerouted to follow the proposed Hamilton St. and connect to the Columbia Tap Rail-Trail via Walker St. Additionally, TxDOT has been working closely with stakeholders regarding access and connectivity for all modes of transportation. TxDOT coordinated with the COH regarding the specific design of the city streets 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. TxDOT will continue to coordinate with Houston METRO during final design and project construction to minimize impacts to existing transit operations. Information about temporary and permanent impacts to bus routes and bus stops public is updated in the Final EIS. TxDOT will coordinate with METRO to facilitate timely planning for bus route detours
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**F. AIR QUALITY** **1. TxDOT's air quality analysis recognizes that information is incomplete or unavailable to predict project-specific air impacts, but regulations still require TxDOT to conduct an analysis based on theoretical approaches or other research methods.** Section 4.1.5 of the DEIS states that information is incomplete or unavailable to credibly predict the project-specific health impacts due to changes in MSAT emissions. CEQ regulation 40 C.F.R. § 1502.22 requires that when information is incomplete or unavailable, the agency shall include an evaluation of such impacts based upon theoretical approaches or research methods generally accepted by the scientific community. Thus, when information is incomplete or unavailable, the agency cannot avoid analyzing the issue altogether; TxDOT must conduct the analysis using theoretical approaches or other research methods. TxDOT has not done this.	FHWA's Interim Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT) Guidance offers two analysis options that meet Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations regarding projects with incomplete and unavailable information: 1) a qualitative MSAT analysis and 2) a quantitative MSAT analysis of the project. A qualitative MSAT analysis was performed for the Draft EIS and a quantitative MSAT analysis for the Final EIS. Both are included in the MSAT Technical Report. Additionally, in response to public comment, TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix C of the MSAT Technical Report under the heading: The Role of Health Risk Assessment in a National Environmental Policy Act Context for Highway Projects.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**F. AIR QUALITY** **2. The DEIS fails to provide sufficient information regarding the current nonconformity with Texas' State Implementation Plan.** The DEIS states "The proposed project is not consistent with the State Implementation Plan (SIP) because it was not included in the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement program (TIP)." ES-4, DEIS 3-39, App'x C at 1. The DEIS further states that "The proposed project will be added to the RTP and TIP prior to the environmental decision." DEIS 3-39. However, the DEIS does nothing to explain the process or the timing of it. Thus, as a public disclosure document, the DEIS falls short. For example, the public should have been told that the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) performs the conformity determination, and that two state agencies (TCEQ & TXDOT) and two federal agencies (FHWA & EPA) must review and concur. The most recent conformity determination was in July 2016. See http://www.h-gac.com/taq/airquality_model/conformity/2016.aspx.	A project level conformity determination is the applicable conformity requirement that is tied to the project's NEPA approval. It is FHWA's responsibility to make the project level conformity determination and the required timeframe for completion is by the NEPA decision. The Draft EIS and the Final EIS disclose both the status and the applicable timeframe for obtaining the project level conformity determination. The project is in the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). On August 2, 2019, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) found that the 2045 RTP and the 2019-2022 TIP met all the requirements for making a joint conformity determination under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**F. AIR QUALITY** **3. The DEIS and the most recent conformity determination rely upon unrealistic or inaccurate post-project traffic speed predictions which may lead to underestimates of air quality impacts.** In July 2016, the TCEQ stated the following in its concurrence letter for the July 2016 conformity determination: The H-GAC used a methodology for its regional emissions analysis that deviates from the methodology used to calculate MVEB for the applicable SIP revision. While both methodologies employed the Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator (MOVES) model to estimate on-road emissions, the MVEB was calculated with utilities developed by the Texas A&M University Transportation Institute that utilizes MOVES in a mode that categorizes emission rates based on 1 mile-per hour (mph) vehicle speed increments. For its regional emissions analysis, the HGAC relied on the Spatial Emission Estimator (SEE) modeling framework, which utilizes MOVES in a mode that categorizes emission rates based on 5 mph vehicle speed increments. The SEE tool can be programmed to bin speeds at the 1 mph level, but the TCEQ determined that to be unnecessary for this conformity analysis because the regional emission estimates were sufficiently below the applicable MVEB. *16* *footnote 16: http://www.h-gac.com/taq/airquality_model/conformity/2016/docs/TCEQ-Concurrence-HGB07 0816.pdf.*	Regarding H-GAC's use of vehicle speed increments of 5 mph rather than 1 mph in its regional emissions analysis during the regional conformity process, FHWA, EPA, and TCEQ reviewed that analysis and determined that transportation conformity had been demonstrated. The Study Team used TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming (TPP) Division's Standard Operating Procedure to develop traffic projections for use in operational analysis. We utilized existing traffic count data, historical growth rate analysis, draft 24-hour traffic volumes, and the H-GAC travel demand model. The traffic projections were for three-hour peak periods. The project required evaluation of traffic diversions based on large geometric changes in the study area. The traffic diversions were based on the H-GAC travel demand model and expected route changes. The traffic model developed was large enough to provide a direct comparison between No Build and Build alternatives, by capturing expected traffic diversion routes. We used the posted speed limits as the 85th percentile speeds in the traffic model. The 85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85 percent of all vehicles are observed to travel under free-flowing conditions past a monitored point. It is a common metric used to set the appropriate speed limit for a roadway. We used the posted speed limits in all traffic model scenarios. The posted speeds are not likely to significantly change and having the same speeds for all scenarios (alternatives) provides a direct comparison for the traffic analysis. We applied speed reductions based on the radii of

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	F. AIR QUALITY, 3. (cont) We are concerned that TXDOT's reliance on emissions calculations that depend in part upon predicted post-project speed improvements is misplaced. For example, during the I-10 expansion project, TXDOT similarly relied upon predicted increases in vehicle speeds for its emissions calculations. However, seven years after the I-10 project was completed, average rush-hour vehicle speeds hover between 10 mph and 30 mph in many sections of I-10. See Attachment F-1 (Transtar speed charts). One study of the Transtar travel time data showed that in 2014, during peak rush hour, it took 70 minutes, 27 seconds to travel from Downtown, past Beltway 8, all the way to Pin Oak, just past the Katy Mills Mall. Compare this with 2011, when this same trip took 46 minutes, 53 seconds. See http://www.houstontomorrow.org/livability/story/it-took-51-moretime-to-drive-out-katy-freeway-in-2014-than-2011/. In short, expanding I-10 from eight lanes to 23 may have only provided short-term speed increases, but over the long term the expanded freeway in fact attracts and encourages more vehicles (in part due to induced growth and increased numbers of commuters), so the speed increases are lost over time.	curves through the study area. These are standard traffic model calibration methods. The output speeds generally decrease with congestion, so the predicted speeds from the models reflect the level of congestion. For the Build alternatives, we maintained the desired speeds (posted speed limits) used in the No Build alternative, unless there was a geometry change (curve radius, elevation change, etc.) that changed the design speed at certain locations. These are standard methods and the speed distribution methods are included in the Traffic Calibration Report, approved by FHWA. The desired speeds in the traffic models reflect how fast vehicles intend to drive in free flow conditions, which is the average speed a motorist would travel if there were no congestion or other adverse conditions. There is standard deviation built into the speed distributions, which mean that vehicles will travel faster and slower than the posted speed limit, just as in real conditions. The speed outputs in peak periods where congestion occurs reflect the amount of congestion and show reductions in speed. Regarding the commenter's concern that emissions calculations are based on post-project speeds that may not materialize, it should be noted that, even assuming speeds associated with the worst-case emission rates, the project would not be expected to exceed the applicable health-based standards. (CO TAQA Report, Section 5.0). In addition, in response to public comment, TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix D of the CO TAQA that includes TCEQ's Trends Report, which predicts continued decreases in CO emissions in the future even assuming substantial increases in vehicle miles travelled (VMT) over the same time period. With regards to MSAT, as identified in the technical report, note that the results of the quantitative MSAT analysis, i.e. showing reduced emissions in the future even with an overall increase in vehicle miles travelled, is consistent with the qualitative MSAT analysis that is based on a completely separate national analysis of MSAT.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	F. AIR QUALITY, 3. (cont) Here, the DEIS Air Quality Technical Report relied on projected speeds of 60 mph for the main lanes and HOV of segments 1 & 2, and 50 mph for Segment 3. We recommend that TXDOT justify these projected speeds by comparing post-project measured speeds after other highway expansions projects, including I-10. We further recommend that TXDOT evaluate and explain the sensitivity of the MOVES and SEE models to determine whether more realistic lower postproject speeds have a significant impact on air emissions. We also request that TXDOT provide this information to H-GAC for use in its conformity determination with a recommendation that they use 1 mph speed increments.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**F. AIR QUALITY** **4. The DEIS fails to analyze Mobile Source Air Toxics and other pollutants on a localized and quantitative basis.** The DEIS states that that localized MSAT concentrations "could be higher under certain Build Alternatives than the No Build Alternative." DEIS at 3-22. However, the DEIS makes no attempt to evaluate project specific MSAT health impacts, and only undertakes the bare minimum of qualitative MSAT analysis. DEIS at 3-40, App'x C 19–24. The DEIS states that a "quantitative MSAT analysis would be conducted during preparation of the Final EIS to calculate total MSATs of the affected network links as a result of the proposed project." DEIS at 3-40. Therefore there is nothing in the DEIS that allows the public to understand where these localized increases in MSAT emissions would be, or by how much MSATs will increase. It is also impossible to determine whether these increased MSAT emissions will be predominantly borne by minority and low-income populations. FHWA Order 6640.23A states that when an adverse effect is predominantly borne by a minority or low-income population, the impact is disproportionately high and adverse. As such, all practicable mitigation of near-road air impacts to this population should be considered.	TxDOT conducted a Quantitative MSAT Technical Report (MSAT TR), which is appended to the Final EIS. In this report, TxDOT evaluated MSAT emissions in accordance with FHWA's Interim Guidance on Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents, which does not recommend performing a project-specific health impacts analysis for MSATs. Please refer to the section of the MSAT technical report with the heading Incomplete or Unavailable Information for Project-Specific MSAT Health Impacts for more information. While the regulations do not require a study of emissions on a localized, project-level basis, TxDOT nonetheless examined data regarding emissions on a more local level as part of its evaluation of the NHHIP's impact on air quality. In Appendix C of the MSAT TR, TxDOT examined supplementary information regarding localized air impacts, specifically: 1) TCEQ's Air Pollutant Watch List (APWL) for air toxics, 2) TCEQ's Toxicological Review for the area, 3) TCEQ's air toxics monitoring, 4) further elaboration on the role of health-risk assessments for highway projects, and 5) an EPA ambient air school study. EPA conducted ambient monitoring of 14 schools across the U.S. abutting major roadways and found all monitored MSATs were less than thresholds for assessing short-term or long-term health risks. TxDOT considered the supplemental information and data, which demonstrates future reductions of MSAT emissions and determined that the project would not have disproportionate MSAT impacts on any minority or low-income populations, including sensitive populations such as children. During construction of the project, there may be a temporary increase in construction-related emissions for community members residing near the project site who open their windows for ventilation year-round due to preference or economic reasons. Accordingly, TxDOT proposes to provide qualifying community members with window air conditioning units, weather-stripping, and utility bill assistance.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	F. AIR QUALITY, 4. (cont) With the exception of carbon monoxide, it appears that TXDOT will rely primarily on analyzing air impacts at the regional level (e.g., through the conformity determination), and we are concerned that EIS will not give adequate consideration of near-road air emission impacts, especially to minority and low-income populations. CEQ's Environmental Justice Guidance under the National Environmental Policy Act states that "Agency consideration of impacts on low-income or minority populations . . . may lead to the identification of disproportionately high and adverse . . . effects that are significant and that otherwise would be overlooked. Council on Environmental Quality, "Environmental Justice: Guidance Under the National Environmental Policy Act" (Dec. 10, 1997) at 10. No analysis of localized impacts from MSAT emissions is presented in the DEIS.	With regard to regional analysis of the criteria pollutants, please note that the EPA conformity rule only requires "hot spot" analysis of CO or PM in areas designated nonattainment for those pollutants. The Houston-Galveston-Brazoria area, where NHHIP is located, is in attainment for both CO and PM. However, TxDOT performed a localized CO TAQA for the project, which is appended to the Final EIS. Also, in response to public comment, TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix D of the CO TAQA Technical Report regarding near-road monitoring specifically. TxDOT conducted a Quantitative MSAT Technical Report (MSAT TR), which is appended to the Final EIS as. With regards to MSAT, please refer to the section of the MSAT technical report with the heading Incomplete or Unavailable Information for Project-Specific MSAT Health Impacts for information on why dispersion and exposure modeling tools are inadequate for localized MSAT evaluations. Additional information is provided in Appendix C of the MSAT Technical Report, regarding: 1) TCEQ's APWL, 2) TCEQ's Toxicological Review for the area, 3) TCEQ's air toxics monitoring, 4) further elaboration on the role of health-risk assessments for highway projects, and 5) an EPA ambient air school study. As stated in the response to Comment 146, after the release of the Draft EIS, TxDOT considered additional factors pertaining to localized emissions in its MSAT TR and concluded that the project would not disproportionately affect low-income or minority populations with regard to air emissions. The project is in the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). On August 2, 2019, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) found that the 2045 RTP and the 2019-2022 TIP met all the requirements for making a joint conformity determination under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the NAAQS to be protective of public health, including sensitive populations. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has not adopted more stringent standards.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	F. AIR QUALITY, 4. (cont) Additionally, CEQ's Environmental Justice Guidance under the National Environmental Policy Act states that "Agencies should recognize the interrelated cultural, social, occupational, historical, or economic factors that may amplify the natural and physical environmental effects of the proposed agency action. These factors should include the physical sensitivity of the community or population to particular impacts." Id. at 9. The analysis in the EIS does not appear to have given consideration to any factors that may amplify the near-road air emissions (e.g. community asthma rates). While near-road air emissions may be minor for the general population, the impact may be amplified for minority and low-income populations along the proposed project.	In response to public comment, TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix D of the CO TAQA and Appendix C of the MSAT Technical Reports, regarding: 1) overall status of air quality in the greater Houston area, 2) mobile source air emission projections for Harris County, 3) ambient air monitoring for NAAQS and air toxics for the greater Houston area, 4) TCEQ toxicology assessment for the greater Houston area, 5) an EPA Study Assessing Outdoor Air Near Schools, and 6) national near-road monitoring data. The Final EIS, CO TAQA and MSAT Technical Reports and associated supplemental information do not identify adverse impacts associated with air quality, disproportionate or otherwise, for any population including sensitive populations such as children. During construction of the project, there may be a temporary increase in construction-related emissions for community members residing near the project site who open their windows for ventilation year-round due to preference or economic reasons. Accordingly, TxDOT proposes to provide qualifying community members with window air conditioning units, weatherstripping, and utility bill assistance.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**F. AIR QUALITY** **5. The DEIS relies upon EPA vehicle engine and fuel regulations that the Trump administration has criticized as too strict and ordered EPA to reconsider.** Further, the DEIS indicates that near-road air impacts will be sufficiently mitigated by implementation of EPA's vehicle engine and fuel regulations. DEIS 3-40. The DEIS claims that even with a predicted 100 percent increase in vehicle miles travelled (VMT) total emissions of MSATs will be "reduced by over 80 percent." DEIS at 3-40. While it may be true that EPA's national vehicle and fuel regulations will result in lower levels of ambient air pollution over time regardless of project alternative, nevertheless the preferred alternative will presumably result in near-roadway populations facing additional exposure to air pollutants than they would otherwise in the absence of the alternative. However, on March 15, 2017, President Trump instructed EPA to re-evaluate these very regulations. NBC News, Trump Rolls Back Obama-Era Fuel Economy Standards, (Mar 16, 2017), at http://www.nbcnews.com/business/autos/trump-rolls-back-obama-era-fuel-economystandards-n734256. Trump said he was ordering the EPA to reopen a mid-term review of Corporate Average Fuel Economy, or CAFE, standards that would require the industry to deliver a fleet average of at least 54.5 mpg by 2025. "My administration will work tirelessly to eliminate the industry-killing regulations," Trump said, his new EPA chief Pruitt adding his assertion that "these standards are costly for automakers and the American people." The re-evaluation may be completed before the FEIS is issued, and if so, TXDOT must update its air quality analysis to reflect any new EPA vehicle engine or fuel standards in place at the time. We recommend that TXDOT closely monitor the ongoing EPA re-evaluation of the 2016 regulations.	Comment noted. TxDOT will continue to use applicable EPA models at the time of the analysis. Also, EPA has stated in an April 9, 2018 email that: "MOVES2014 includes the impact of 2017-2025 Light-Duty GHG standards on direct emissions from vehicles. The emission impacts of any new GHG standards cannot be quantified until they are proposed, and MOVES official releases include new standards only after they have been finalized. Note that because the 2017-2025 GHG standards were projected to have a very small impact on criteria and toxic emissions from vehicles and because the vehicles affected by the 2017-2025 GHG standards would still need to meet applicable criteria pollutant emissions standards (e.g., Tier 3), we expect the impact of changes in GHG standards on direct criteria and toxic pollutant emissions from vehicles to be very small."
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**F. AIR QUALITY** **6. The DEIS fails to implement EO 13043 because it mostly ignores the impacts on children.** The DEIS contains a brief discussion of the impacts of the proposed project on children, but only with respect to displacement of community resources used by children, such as schools, child care facilities, parks, housing, and other places where children live, learn, and play. DEIS at 3-6, 3-23. However, there is no reference to Executive Order 13045 Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks in the DEIS. Pursuant to this EO, the DEIS must include discussions regarding the identification of impacts on children, including pollution and sources of concern; exposure assessment and baseline health conditions including poverty rates, respiratory impacts, traffic noise, impacts from air pollutant emissions and chemical exposures; and impacts that could potentially affect obesity.	Regarding EO 13045, the Final EIS, Carbon Monoxide (CO) TAQA and Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT) Technical Reports do not identify adverse impacts associated with air quality to any sensitive populations including children. A quantitative analysis of project -specific MSAT emissions was performed for the Final EIS and is included in the MSAT Technical Report. In response to public comment, TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix D of the CO TAQA and Appendix C of the MSAT Technical Reports, regarding: 1) overall status of air quality in the greater Houston area, 2) mobile source air emission projections for Harris County, 3) ambient air monitoring for NAAQS and air toxics for the greater Houston area, 4) TCEQ toxicology assessment for the greater Houston area, 5) EPA Study Assessing Outdoor Air Near Schools, and 6) national near-road monitoring data. During construction of the project, there may be a temporary increase in construction-related emissions for community members residing near the project site who open their windows for ventilation year-round due to preference or economic reasons. Accordingly, TxDOT proposes to provide qualifying community members with window air conditioning units, weatherstripping, and utility bill assistance. The Community Impact Assessment Technical Report includes a discussion of EO 13045 and potential project impacts to children. To mitigate for potential short-term construction dust and/or noise impacts, TxDOT will develop a program to provide weatherization and energy efficiency for qualifying low-income single-family residences.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**F. AIR QUALITY** **7. TxDOT should review and incorporate the findings of additional relevant studies.** Motor vehicles are a major source of air pollution in Houston. Exposure to traffic-related air pollution is linked to a range of adverse health outcomes. Reducing exposure to traffic-related air pollution will provide public health benefits, including improved cardiovascular and respiratory health and reduced rates of cancer. There are many traffic-related air quality and air pollution studies that TxDOT must fully evaluate, consider and discuss in any amended or supplemental DEIS or the FEIS, including, but not limited to the following: • Health Effects Institute Panel on the Health Effects of Traffic-Related Air Pollution, (2010) Traffic-Related Air Pollution: A Critical Review of the Literature on Emissions, Exposure, and Health Effects. • Loomis D, et al. (2013). The carcinogenicity of outdoor air pollution. Lancet Oncology, 14 (13): 1262–1263. • Benbrahim-Tallaa L, et al. (2012). Carcinogenicity of diesel-engine and gasoline-engine exhausts and some nitroarenes. Lancet Oncolocy, 13 (7): 663–664. • Crouse DL, et al (2012) Risk of nonaccidental and cardiovascular mortality in relation to long-term exposure to low concentrations of ne particulate matter: a Canadian national-level cohort study. Environmental Health Perspectives 120 (5), 708 • Zhang, K., & Batterman, S. (2013). Air pollution and health risks due to vehicle traffic. The Science of the Total Environment, 0, 307–316. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2013.01.074	TxDOT has reviewed and incorporated the findings of additional relevant studies. For instance, the 2010 HEI study referenced by the commenter was evaluated and referenced by FHWA in the development of their current interim MSAT guidance and TxDOT referenced the FHWA guidance and study in the MSAT Technical Report for this project. TxDOT also consulted relevant air toxics studies evaluated by FHWA in its interim MSAT guidance. A list of these studies can be found in Appendix D of their Updated Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents, October 2016. Lastly, in response to public comment, TxDOT provided supplementary information in Appendix D of the CO TAQA and Appendix C of the MSAT Technical Reports, regarding: 1) overall status of air quality in the greater Houston area, 2) mobile source air emission projections for Harris County, 3) ambient air monitoring for NAAQS and air toxics for the greater Houston area, 4) TCEQ toxicology assessment for the greater Houston area, 5) EPA Study Assessing Outdoor Air Near Schools, and 6) national near-road monitoring data.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**G. WATER RESOURCES** **1. The DEIS must consider the full impacts to important waterways.** All alternatives cross important waterways, most notably Buffalo and White Oak Bayous. All alternatives also cross other smaller bayous, including Halls and Little Oak Bayous. Each of these waterways are impaired waters as identified on TCEQ's Section 303(d) list, for variously bacteria and depressed oxygen demand, but TCEQ does not assess waterway impairment for litter, floating garbage, or gross solids. In the DEIS, TxDOT discloses the impacts for the proposed project on water resources, DEIS at 3-48, et seq. The DEIS recognizes TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, stating that they provide discussions of storm water controls to be implemented during	Comment noted

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	G. WATER RESOURCES, 1 (cont) The DEIS fails to adequately discuss the many ways that roadway and highway construction negatively impact water quality and does not adequately describe or quantify those negative impacts and potential mitigation for those impacts. As Houston continues to grow, it is widely accepted that careful stewardship of our water supply and of the quality of that water is increasingly important. TxDOT will need to take every effort to halt the continued degradation of water quality caused by road construction and work toward improving the quality of the stormwater discharged from their new roadways. The I-45 proposed project presents TxDOT with an ideal opportunity to incorporate the best design and implement the best management practices for stormwater and rainwater runoff.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed for the proposed project , pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures will be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. Specific best management practices for water quality will be determined during final design and updated throughout construction, as necessary. Additional impervious surface is accounted for in the proposed drainage infrastructure. This project will collect, convey, and detain where necessary the stormwater runoff from not only the highways, but adjacent properties that are currently draining to the highways. The project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible. The detention areas will not be parks.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	G. WATER RESOURCES, 1 (cont) Stormwater leaving a roadway or highway surface carries with it oil, grease, and other petroleum-based fluids, tire particles, vehicle litter, and various toxic and non-toxic materials that are spilled onto the roadway surfaces. Water temperatures of this runoff is typically very high when leaving pavement surfaces, resulting in very low oxygen levels, and low oxygen levels result in anaerobic conditions and fish kills. In addition, current construction practices allow heavy quantities of fine suspended solids to enter streams and bayous during construction and repair of roads and these fine particles provide a refuge for stream bacteria, especially fecal coliform, which are already a problem in urban waterways. Indeed, the current portions of highways (I-45, I59, and I 10) that cross the bayous were designed to allow runoff from the road way directly into the bayous without any pollutant control. Where they cross the bayous, the existing highways appear to lack any functional stormwater collection system, and instead have drainage holes on the sidewalls to allow runoff to flow directly into the bayous below. See Attachment G-1 (photos). While such a design may have been acceptable decades ago, it is no longer acceptable today, because all the runoff carries pollutants directly into the bayous.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**G. WATER RESOURCES (cont)** **2. The DEIS must contemplate appropriate mitigation measures for impacts to water resources.** Water quality features need to be built into the stormwater system in such a way as to remove and confine petroleum based liquids, solids and litter from the stormwater discharge stream. Detention basins may need to be designed and constructed to thoroughly treat the first flush of rainfall (typically the first inch), and to meet, or be less than, the natural runoff rates. Basins should be designed to receive 100% of the first flush flows, and wherever possible, basins should be designed with wet bottoms to maximize the containment time-frame and to maximize water quality improvements. It is our understanding that current TxDOT policy discourages the use of wet bottom detention and design their basins to only take peak flows. Specific and measurable water quality goals should be established to monitor roadway runoff to ascertain whether the management practices are achieving their objectives. Water quality controls must be designed and built into the stormwater system to remove and confine petroleum based liquids, solids and litter from the stormwater discharge stream. Detention basins should be designed and constructed to thoroughly treat the first flush of rainfall (typically the first inch), and to meet the expected runoff rates. Detention basins should be designed to receive all of these first flush flows, and wherever possible, basins should be designed with wet bottoms to maximize the containment time-frame and to maximize water quality improvements. It is our understanding that current TxDOT policy discourages the use of wet bottoms and designs their basins to only take peak flows, however we urge TxDOT to reevaluate this policy. Specific and measurable water quality goals must be established to monitor roadway runoff to ascertain whether the management practices are achieving their objectives.	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan is required for every project and therefore will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures would be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	G. WATER RESOURCES, 2 (cont) There are many transportation departments in the US and elsewhere that have developed better designs, techniques and policies concerning stormwater runoff. We encourage TxDOT to review the progress and up-to-date designs, techniques and policies. Some of these are listed below: • California: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/special/newsetup/index.htm#litter (Attachment G-2 (listing many studies, assessments, designs, and reports of pollution control from stormwater)) • North Carolina (Attachment G-3) • Hawaii (Attachment G-4) Many other examples likely exist; therefore, we encourage TxDOT to research best management practices outside of Texas with the objective of improving designs, techniques and policies for reducing pollutant runoff from new roadways in the Houston region. Best management practices have progressed beyond those identified in the 2002 TxDOT guidance paper.	Comment noted.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	G. WATER RESOURCES, 2 (cont) We retained a professional engineer, a hydrologist, to assist in some of the comments in the following three sections. Attachment G-5 (Report of Lawrence G. Dunbar, P.E. (July 21, 2017)). In assessing impacts on the bayous, our expert recommends that TxDOT evaluate the impact of pollutants, sediment and trash expected to be generated from the proposed project on the adjacent bayous. As stated in his letter report, the hydrologist states that an evaluation of the impact of pollutants, sediment and trash expected to be generated from the proposed project on the adjacent bayous should be conducted, and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated into the designs of the various alternatives for	A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan is required for every project and therefore will be developed for the proposed project, pursuant to the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, and in accordance with TxDOT policies. Measures would be implemented to prevent or correct erosion that may develop during construction. Guidance documents, such as TxDOT's Storm Water Management Guidelines for Construction Activities, discuss temporary erosion control measures to be implemented to minimize impacts to water quality during construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control practices from TxDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges will be implemented for the proposed project. TxDOT will perform routine maintenance operations that include street sweeping and litter removal. As stated in the Draft EIS, TxDOT has determined that the construction, operation and maintenance activities associated with the proposed project would not adversely impact water quality of waterways in the proposed project area.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	G. WATER RESOURCES, 2 (cont) The preferred alternatives and the other alternatives all increase the area of highway and the number of crossings of Houston's bayous. Many of the proposed highways also cross Houston's important Greenway Bayou trail system. We therefore request that TxDOT exceed its current 2002 policies, and design and construct this I-45 project to best protect the water resources and quality of Houston's bayous and parks.	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**H. STORMWATER AND FLOODPLAINS** **1. As with other aspects of the DEIS, here too with drainage TxDOT has improperly delayed analysis until the FEIS.** The DEIS states that "a detailed hydrologic and hydraulic study would be performed for the proposed project during the design phase to determine the appropriate locations and size of bridges, culverts, or other drainage structures that would be required." DEIS at 3-62. However, this deferral does not allow the public an opportunity to review or comment on these structures nor on the study itself. Furthermore, without such a study being done as part of the DEIS, a fair comparison of the various alternative and their costs cannot be made.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. TxDOT will coordinate with HCFCD and COH for approval of flood mitigation plans.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**H. STORMWATER AND FLOODPLAINS** **2. In rebuilding I-45, TxDOT should mitigate for the stormwater impacts of the entire project, as Greens, Halls, Little White Oak, White Oak, and Buffalo Bayous do not have extra capacity for increased runoff, and the original footprint of I-45 was not mitigated for stormwater impacts.** The Bayou Preservation Association (BPA) has submitted important comments to TxDOT on this issue and we wish to reiterate them here. Attachment H-1 (BPA Comments on NHHIP (Dec. 1, 2011)). As described in the BPA letter, TxDOT has adopted a practice of only mitigating for increases in impervious surfaces, effectively grandfathering any changes to existing surfaces. This practice ignores the cumulative impact of highway projects from decades past that did not take into account stormwater impacts, and impacts to floodplains. We wish to reiterate BPA's comment that TxDOT, as an agency charged with public safety, should design and construct stormwater facilities that take into account the entire project area when undertaking a significant highway reconstruction project. This is within TxDOT's engineering capabilities and is the right thing to do for the Houston community.	Additional impervious surface is accounted for in the proposed drainage infrastructure. This project will collect, convey, and detain where necessary the stormwater runoff from not only the highways, but adjacent properties that are currently draining to the highways. Proposed detention areas on the project are being evaluated as potential open spaces. The project will be developed under TxDOT's Green Ribbon Program, which allocates funds for trees and plants within roadway ROW. A detailed landscaping plan will be developed as part of the final design process. TxDOT will coordinate with local groups and agencies to accommodate enhancements to standard landscaping and recreation use of open space in and around storm water detention areas, where feasible.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**H. STORMWATER AND FLOODPLAINS** **3. The DEIS needs to integrate Executive Orders 13690 and 11988 related to floodplains into the drainage analysis.** As explained by Executive Order 13690, Executive Order 11988 of May 24, 1977 (Floodplain Management), requires "executive departments and agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and to avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative." See Attachment G-5 at 3. Executive Order 13690 expanded upon this directive. As raised by our hydrologist, the projected increase in rainfall rates for a 100-year storm event due to climate change should be incorporated into the hydrologic analyses presented in the TxDOT drainage study. The projected increase in rainfall rates should be incorporated into the design analyses of detention ponds needed for this project. Further, TxDOT needs to consider how the executive orders impact the level to be set for the mainlanes to be protected against flooding from the various bayou floodplains. See Attachment G-5 at 3.	TxDOT will comply with Executive Orders and other regulations and policies related to regulatory floodplains and drainage analysis. In September 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released a study, published as NOAA Atlas 14, Volume 11 Precipitation-Frequency Atlas of the United States, Texas, that found increased rainfall frequency values in Houston, resulting in changes to the rainfall amounts that define 100-year events, which are those that on average occur every 100 years or have a one percent chance of happening in any given year. The 100-year estimates around Houston increased from 13 inches to 18 inches and values previously classified as 100-year events are now much more frequent 25-year events. NOAA collected this data in Texas through December 2017, which includes rainfall from Hurricane Harvey. NOAA Atlas 14 rainfall values are used for infrastructure design and planning activities under federal, state and local regulations. They also help delineate flood risks, manage development in floodplains for FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program and are used to monitor precipitation observations and forecasts that can indicate flooding threats by NOAA's National Weather Service. Current standards used for infrastructure design and floodplain regulations will likely be revised based on the new values. Anticipating that drainage design criteria will be changing based on NOAA Atlas 14 data, TxDOT is incorporating updated rainfall frequency values and/or additional safety factors in the final design of the NHHIP.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**H. STORMWATER AND FLOODPLAINS** **4. With regard to bayou floodplain, HCFCD's "No Adverse Impact" policy was ignored.** In Section C.7.2 "Preliminary Conveyance Impact Analysis", the assessment of potential impacts was done only "in locations where future improvements impinge on the regulatory floodway." DEIS at § C.7.2. However, as our hydrologist observed, the regulatory floodway incorporates an assumed condition of some filling/obstruction within the floodplain that may not currently exist. See Attachment G-5 at 3. This conveyance analysis therefore does not reflect any impacts that would occur outside of the regulatory floodway but within the flow effective boundaries of the bayou's floodplain. Id. This would be contrary to HCFCD's No Adverse Impact policy. Id.	
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**H. STORMWATER AND FLOODPLAINS** **5. Project impacts should be evaluated for expected floodplain conditions due to the expected increase in heavy rainfall rates due to climate change; extreme events studied by TxDOT should include the 500 year event (at a minimum).** The DEIS states "the [drainage] study would also confirm that the project would not adversely impact existing floodplain conditions within the vicinity of the project for extreme events (i.e. storm events in excess of a 100-year storm event)." DEIS at 3-62. According to our expert, however, project impacts should be evaluated for not only existing floodplain conditions but also future expected floodplain conditions due to the expected increase in heavy rainfall rates due to climate change, as discussed below in Section I. Attachment G-5 at 3. TxDOT does not make clear how large of an event in excess of a 100-year storm event will be evaluated as an "extreme event" (e.g. 101-year event, 200-year, 500-year, or 1,000-year). Consulting with our expert, we recommend that the extreme event should at least include the 500-year event, in part because FEMA floodplain maps include the 500-year floodplain. Id.	

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**I. CLIMATE CHANGE** **1. While the DEIS discusses hurricanes as a byproduct of climate change, the DEIS omits and generally ignores extreme rainfall, which Houston already is experiencing, and climate change is expected to worsen these effects. TxDOT should ensure that the project design considers increased intensity and frequency of rainfall and must appropriately develop infrastructure and drainage management.** The DEIS states the following: "Climate change is expected to alter future weather patterns, including precipitation. Extreme weather events (hurricanes, tropical storms) are generally expected to increase in intensity with a warming climate." DEIS at 4-6. Specifically, it is mentioned that "one consistent indication from climate change models is an increase in hurricane rainfall rates predicted with increasing average temperatures." Id. at 4-7. The DEIS further states that "The changes to precipitation currently predicted can be used to describe climate change's impact on flood risk to the alternatives…" Id. at 4-6.	During final design, final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies, including the COH and HCFCD, to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposed project does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties within the project area. Detention basins are proposed to mitigate for increases in impervious surface. In September 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released a study, published as NOAA Atlas 14, Volume 11 Precipitation-Frequency Atlas of the United States, Texas, that found increased rainfall frequency values in Houston, resulting in changes to the rainfall amounts that define 100-year events, which are those that on average occur every 100 years or have a one percent chance of happening in any given year. The 100-year estimates around Houston increased from 13 inches to 18 inches and values previously classified as 100-year events are now much more frequent 25-year events. NOAA Atlas 14 rainfall values are used for infrastructure design and planning activities under federal, state and local regulations. They also help delineate flood risks, manage development in floodplains for FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program and are used to monitor precipitation observations and forecasts that can indicate flooding threats by NOAA's National Weather Service. Current standards used for infrastructure design and floodplain regulations will likely be revised based on the new values. Anticipating that drainage design criteria will be changing based on NOAA Atlas 14 data, TxDOT is incorporating updated rainfall frequency values and/or additional safety factors in the final design of the NHHIP. TxDOT will coordinate with HCFCD and COH for approval of flood mitigation plans. The Final EIS references TxDOT's *State-wide On-Road Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis and Climate Change Assessment Technical Report* . Extreme weather is discussed in Section 4 of this document.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	I. CLIMATE CHANGE, 1 (cont) Many in the scientific community adhere to the proposition that among the effects of climate change is the increase of extreme weather events—such as more intense and more frequent extreme precipitation events. See Attachment I-1 (National Academies of Sciences, Attribution of Extreme Weather Events in the Context of Climate Change (2016)).*17* We appreciate that TxDOT includes a section on climate change, DEIS 4-1 et seq. But TxDOT has not adequately incorporated the implication that for the Houston area, there will be more intense and more frequent extreme precipitation events—not just during hurricanes—which will effect floodplain and drainage management and related highway design. As our expert observed, the DEIS does not mention that extreme precipitation events, not necessarily associated with hurricanes, will have increased intensities with a warming climate and that such would be expected to result in increased stormwater runoff and increased flooding/floodplains. Attachment G-5 at 1. All this needs to be disclosed and addressed in the DEIS. *footnote 17: The report is available online, https://www.nap.edu/catalog/21852/attribution-of-extreme-weather-events-in-the-context-of-*	In September 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released a study, published as NOAA Atlas 14, Volume 11 Precipitation-Frequency Atlas of the United States, Texas, that found increased rainfall frequency values in Houston, resulting in changes to the rainfall amounts that define 100-year events, which are those that on average occur every 100 years or have a one percent chance of happening in any given year. The 100-year estimates around Houston increased from 13 inches to 18 inches and values previously classified as 100-year events are now much more frequent 25-year events. NOAA Atlas 14 rainfall values are used for infrastructure design and planning activities under federal, state and local regulations. They also help delineate flood risks, manage development in floodplains for FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program and are used to monitor precipitation observations and forecasts that can indicate flooding threats by NOAA's National Weather Service. Current standards used for infrastructure design and floodplain regulations will likely be revised based on the new values. Anticipating that drainage design criteria will be changing based on NOAA Atlas 14 data, TxDOT is incorporating updated rainfall frequency values and/or additional safety factors in the final design of the NHHIP. The Final EIS references TxDOT's *State-wide On-Road Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis and Climate Change Assessment Technical Report* . Extreme weather is discussed in Section 4 of this document.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	I. CLIMATE CHANGE, 1 (cont) Instead the DEIS focuses on changes in "annual heavy precipitation days" and "the average number of days per year receiving more than 1 inch of precipitation. DEIS at 4-6. As such, the DEIS concludes in its summary table 4-1 that "No impact expected due to non-tropical storm rainfall given predicted small increase in annual heavy precipitation days." Id. at 4-13. However, it should be acknowledged in the DEIS that impacts are expected due to non-tropical storm rainfall given the expected increase in precipitation intensities in the future due to climate change. The DEIS table goes on to state "Potential impact from hurricane rains that could be more intense when making landfall"; however, this is inconsistent with the above referenced statement from the DEIS that hurricane rains are predicted to be more intense. Thus, according to our expert, the DEIS should state that this impact from hurricane rains "would be expected to be" more intense when making landfall. Attachment	The content of the Draft EIS is compliant with the requirements from the Council on Environmental Quality, FHWA, and TxDOT.
555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	I. CLIMATE CHANGE, 1 (cont) Of note, the DEIS states that "one purpose of the project is to eliminate areas of flooding in the I-45 mainlanes." DEIS at 4-7. Thus, as our expert explains, it is imperative that the flood analyses incorporate the expected increase in flooding in and around I-45 due to the expected increase in extreme rainfall rates/intensity due to climate change. See Attachment G-5 at 2. It is disingenuous to acknowledge that "greater rainfall is predicted in individual storms" without also acknowledging that this would also be expected to cause increased flooding, rather than always stating that it "could" cause increased flooding. Id. at 2. Of note, the DEIS states that "one purpose of the project is to eliminate areas of flooding in the I-45 mainlanes." DEIS at 4-7. Thus, as our expert explains, it is imperative that the flood analyses incorporate the expected increase in flooding in and around I-45 due to the expected increase in extreme rainfall rates/intensity due to climate change. See Attachment G-5 at 2. It is disingenuous to acknowledge that "greater rainfall is predicted in individual storms" without also acknowledging that this would also be expected to cause increased flooding, rather than always stating that it "could" cause increased flooding. Id. at 2.	TxDOT has conducted a preliminary drainage study and additional studies are underway. Final drainage and mitigation analyses will be performed, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies to confirm that adequate measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties. All elements of this project will meet or exceed the most recent drainage system guidelines set out by the HCFCD. In September 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released a study, published as NOAA Atlas 14, Volume 11 Precipitation-Frequency Atlas of the United States, Texas, that found increased rainfall frequency values in Houston, resulting in changes to the rainfall amounts that define 100-year events, which are those that on average occur every 100 years or have a one percent chance of happening in any given year. Anticipating that drainage design criteria will be changing based on NOAA Atlas 14 data, TxDOT is incorporating updated rainfall frequency values and/or additional safety factors in the final design of the NHHIP. The Final EIS references TxDOT's *State-wide On-Road Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis and Climate Change Assessment Technical Report* . Extreme weather is discussed in Section 4 of this document.

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555	Irvine, Charles	7/27/2017	Written	**I. CLIMATE CHANGE** **2. Given climate change, TxDOT needs to be thinking in terms of transportation resiliency.** There are many studies emerging now on preparing transportation and transportation projects for the future in light of climate change and extreme weather events. For example, the National Cooperative Highway Research Program has published a report on Response to Extreme Weather Impacts on Transportation Systems (2014).*18* See excerpts in Attachment I-2. The report includes several case studies from different states on extreme precipitation (including ones on flooding, and a case study from Texas on drought), with lessons learned from each. Attachment I-3. Another study on Transportation System Resilience, Extreme Weather and Climate Change counsels very specifically: "The long-term solution to transportation system resiliency is not just about cleaning up after events and repairing the infrastructure, but planning for and designing infrastructure with the current and future climate in mind." See Attachment I-4. It is absolutely essential that extreme precipitation is a part of the analysis of a large-scale transportation project in the Houston area. Any rebuilding of I-45 presents a unique opportunity to plan for the future, and to build a project that will be resilient to the future conditions. We strongly recommend that this analysis become a part of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. *footnote 18: This report is available online at https://www.nap.edu/read/22376/chapter/1 .*	TxDOT has and will continue to comply with all relevant statutes and regulations. TxDOT works collaboratively with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) across the state, including H-GAC. TxDOT Houston District is represented on the membership of H-GAC's Transportation Advisory Committee, Transportation Policy Council, and Regional Transportation Plan Subcommittee. These committees and council provide policy guidance and overall coordination of the transportation planning activities within the region. In 2019, H-GAC, working with federal, state, and local partners, including TxDOT, began conducting a vulnerability assessment of the transportation system and assets within the 8-county MPO region to climate impacts such as flooding, sea-level rise, and storm surge disruptions. Resiliency recommendations will be developed based on vulnerability assessment results and results will also be used to prioritize funding for transportation projects and will inform future versions of the long-range transportation plan. In September 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released a study, published as NOAA Atlas 14, Volume 11 Precipitation-Frequency Atlas of the United States, Texas, that found increased rainfall frequency values in Houston, resulting in changes to the rainfall amounts that define 100-year events, which are those that on average occur every 100 years or have a one percent chance of happening in any given year. The 100-year estimates around Houston increased from 13 inches to 18 inches and values previously classified as 100-year events are now much more frequent 25-year events. NOAA collected this data in Texas through December 2017, which includes rainfall from Hurricane Harvey. NOAA Atlas 14 rainfall values are used for infrastructure design and planning activities under federal, state and local regulations. They also help delineate flood risks, manage development in floodplains for FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program and are used to monitor precipitation observations and forecasts that can indicate flooding threats by NOAA's National Weather Service. Current standards used for infrastructure design and floodplain regulations will likely be revised based on the new values. Anticipating that drainage design criteria will be changing based on NOAA Atlas 14 data, TxDOT is incorporating updated rainfall frequency values and/or additional safety factors in the final design of the NHHIP. The Final EIS references TxDOT's *State-wide On-Road Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis and Climate Change Assessment Technical Report* . Section 4.3 Strategies to Address a Changing Climate of this document provides example resiliency measures by TxDOT and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs).