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Officials announce consensus on TxDOT I-45 project

HOUSTON -- After almost two years of discussion and negotiation, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is proud to announce that it has reached common ground with City of Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner and Harris County officials, which will help advance the I-45 North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP).

"Both the [PDF Memorandum of Understanding](#) executed with Mayor Turner, and the agreed upon terms and conditions agreed to with Harris County, which will warrant their dismissal of the lawsuit against the project, represent how staying focused on common ground and the benefits to the region in key areas of interest have provided an outcome that will enhance the I-45 NHHIP project as we move forward," Texas Transportation Commissioner Laura Ryan said.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner said, "There has been a lot of work on the North Houston Highway Improvement Project over the last several years including community engagement. NHHIP can truly help Houston move towards our vision as a resilient, multimodal city that serves us all equitably." Mayor Turner also said, "I think you have an excellent project that will move forward, that will benefit the greater good of the Houston community, Harris County, and the region."

The three partners have reached an understanding on several project features including flood mitigation, affordable housing and congestion relief. In fact, in addition to compensating residents directly impacted, TxDOT will provide \$30 million in financial assistance for affordable housing in adjacent neighborhoods.

"If we can make this project better for one family, even one person in one of these underserved neighborhoods, then I am going to do that. What is important about this agreement is it establishes a tenor of collaboration moving forward. This is a big project," said Christian Menefee, Harris County Attorney.

"This agreement is reflective of so many coming together from different points of view... there were different approaches to ensuring this project is better," said Adrian Garcia, Harris County Commissioner, Precinct Two.

"We continue as leaders at the local level with our state partners and our federal partners...to make this big project even better," said Rodney Ellis, Harris County Commissioner, Precinct One.

"Finding common ground on a number of key issues helps to refine the project and deliver win-win solutions for Houstonians as well as the Greater Houston-Galveston Metropolitan Area," TxDOT Deputy Executive Director Brandye Hendrickson said.

The NHHIP will address critical needs including updating the highways to current design and safety standards, reducing traffic congestion, improving storm drainage, and improving hurricane evacuation routes.

TxDOT Deputy Executive Director Hendrickson added, "The agreements we are here to celebrate today help to identify our collective efforts to make sure the NHHIP is positively transformational for all involved."

Commissioner Ryan also said that TxDOT is having productive conversations with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and is working toward a resolution with the FHWA concerning the I-45 Project.

For more information, contact TxDOT Public Information Officer Danny Perez at (713) 802-5077. Also Follow us on Twitter and Instagram at @TxDOThouston and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TxDOThouston .

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More about the I-45 project (NHHIP)

The NHHIP will address critical needs including updating the highways to current design and safety standards, relieving traffic congestion, improving storm water drainage, and improving the evacuation routes. The NHHIP will add four managed express lanes on I-45 from Downtown Houston to Beltway 8 North; reroute I-45 to be parallel with I-10 on the north side of Downtown Houston and parallel to US 59/I-69 on the east side of Downtown Houston; realign sections of I-10 and I-69 in the Downtown area to eliminate the current roadway reverse curves that limit capacity; and depress I-69 between I-10 and Spur 527 south of Downtown to improve safety by eliminating unsafe weaving.

The purpose of the NHHIP is to implement an integrated system of transportation improvements that would:

- Bring I-45, I-10, and US 59/I-69 up to current design standards to improve safety and operations.
- Manage I-45 traffic congestion in the NHHIP area through added capacity, MaX lanes, options for single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) lanes, and improved operations.
- Improve mobility on I-45 between US 59/I-69 and Beltway 8 North by accommodating projected population growth and latent demand in the project area.
- Provide expanded transit and carpool opportunities.
- Improve the capabilities of I-45 as an emergency evacuation route.
- Improve storm water drainage on I-45.
- Support the projected significant increase in travel on the regional highways in the Houston-Galveston area.

For NHHIP project facts and highlights, visit www.ih45northandmore.com.

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