BUFFALO BAYOU EAST DESIGN CONCEPT

Connecting Buffalo Bayou East








FINAL REPORT

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Houston-Galveston Area Council

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONNECTING
BUFFALO BAYOU EAST

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Building on the Buffalo Bayou East Master Plan and H-GAC's regional transportation planning efforts, the Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept Study was initiated to address mobility challenges across four East Houston neighborhoods: Greater Fifth Ward, Denver Harbor, Second Ward, and Magnolia Park. Led by H-GAC in partnership with Buffalo Bayou Partnership, the study aims to improve access to parks, schools, employment centers, transit, and regional trails while supporting long-term community development.

Despite their proximity to major destinations and transportation facilities, these neighborhoods face significant barriers to mobility. Gaps in sidewalk and bicycle networks, limited pedestrian crossings, and physical barriers such as highways, railroads, and industrial areas contribute to a fragmented transportation system. High traffic speeds, flooding, and limited shade further affect safety and comfort, particularly for residents who rely on walking, bicycling, and public transportation.

To address these challenges, the study includes two complementary planning efforts:

- Active Transportation Network: Focuses on improving pedestrian and bicycle connectivity among neighborhoods, parks, schools, businesses, transit, and the Buffalo Bayou trail system through safer, more continuous, and accessible routes.
- Fifth Ward/Denver Harbor Transit District: Explores opportunities to integrate transit access, public spaces, housing, and community-serving amenities around Lockwood Drive and Lyons Avenue to create a more connected and vibrant neighborhood center.

Together, these efforts provide a coordinated framework for future transportation investments, addressing existing mobility barriers and supporting more livable and resilient communities in East Houston.

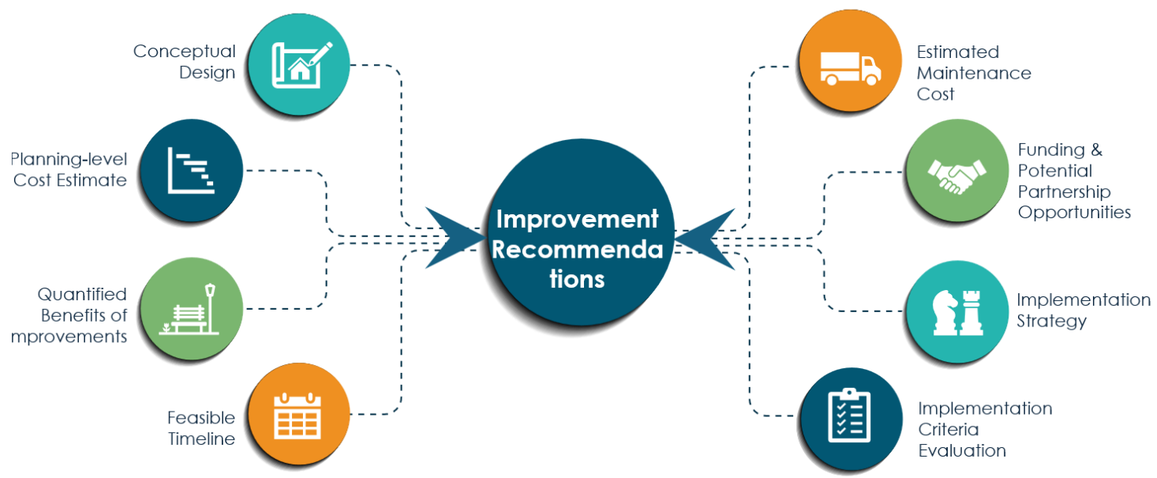


HIGHLIGHTED NEIGHBORHOODS

The study produced a set of recommendations and design concepts that can guide future transportation investments and support project development across the study area. Key deliverables include:

1. Proposed Active Transportation Network: A coordinated network of pedestrian and bicycle connections that addresses existing gaps and improves access to neighborhoods, parks, schools, transit, and regional trails.
2. Prioritized Corridor Improvements: A set of priority corridors and recommended improvements to address safety concerns, improve crossings, and strengthen connections between key destinations.
3. Phased Corridor Design Concepts: Planning-level design concepts illustrating potential improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and roadway configurations, with options for phased implementation.
4. Fifth Ward/Denver Harbor Transit District Concepts: Recommendations integrating transit access, pedestrian and bicycle connections, public spaces, housing, and community-serving amenities around Lockwood Drive and Lyons Avenue.
5. Implementation Strategy: Planning-level cost estimates, potential funding opportunities, and implementation considerations to help local agencies and partners advance recommended projects.

These deliverables provide H-GAC, local governments, Buffalo Bayou Partnership, and other partners with a basis for identifying projects, coordinating future investments, and pursuing funding for design and implementation.



RESULTS-ORIENTED DELIVERABLES

STUDY PROCESS

The Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept Study built on previous planning efforts and integrated technical analysis, field assessments, and community input to develop transportation recommendations. The study evaluated existing conditions, identified mobility barriers and opportunities, and developed network improvements, corridor design concepts, and implementation strategies.

The study was conducted into three phases:

Phase I – Existing Conditions Assessment

The study began with a review of previous plans, including the Buffalo Bayou East Master Plan, and an assessment of existing transportation, environmental, and community conditions. The analysis examined pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transit access, roadway characteristics, land use, and connections to major destinations.

The study team identified gaps in sidewalks and bicycle networks, limited crossing opportunities, and barriers created by highways, railroads, industrial areas, and flooding. These findings established a baseline for evaluating mobility needs and identifying areas for further study.

Phase II – Opportunity Identification

Building on the existing conditions assessment, the study team identified opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, address safety concerns, and strengthen access to parks, schools, transit, trails, and other community destinations.

Community engagement was an important part of this phase. Through public meetings, workshops, stakeholder coordination, online and in-person surveys, and walk and bike audits, the team gathered feedback from residents, local agencies, and community organizations.

Phase III – Recommendations and Implementation Strategy

The final phase focused on translating the identified needs and opportunities into recommended improvements for the Active Transportation Network and Fifth Ward/Denver Harbor Transit District.

For the Active Transportation Network, the study team developed a proposed network of pedestrian and bicycle connections, identified priority corridors, and prepared planning-level design concepts. Recommendations included improvements to sidewalks, bicycle facilities, crossings, streetscapes, and off-street connections. Phased design options were developed for selected corridors to illustrate how improvements could be implemented over time.

For the Fifth Ward/Denver Harbor Transit District, the study examined opportunities to improve access to transit and coordinate transportation improvements with public spaces, housing, and community-serving amenities around Lockwood Drive and Lyons Avenue.

The study also developed planning-level cost estimates, identified potential funding opportunities, and outlined implementation considerations to help H-GAC and its partners advance recommended improvements through future planning, design, and construction.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was integrated throughout the study to ensure that recommendations reflected the experiences, needs, and priorities of residents in Greater Fifth Ward, Denver Harbor, Second Ward, and Magnolia Park. Through community meetings, public workshops, stakeholder coordination, online and in-person surveys, and walk and bike audits, the study team gathered local perspectives and firsthand observations to identify transportation challenges and opportunities.

Community feedback emphasized safer crossings, lower vehicle speeds, improved lighting, increased shade and tree canopy, and better access to parks, schools, and transit. These priorities informed the opportunity framework, corridor selection, and recommended improvements.



First Stakeholder Meeting



First Steering Committee Meeting



Establish Context
Review existing conditions, prior studies, and data sources



Build Governance
Convene steering committee of agency partners for strategic guidance



Raise Awareness
Promote project goal and connect with residents in the community



Activate Community
Host meetings to gather early feedback from stakeholders and local voices



Ground-Truth Conditions
Conduct site audits along priority corridors to observe mobility challenges



Gather Insight
Collect and analyze surveys to understand lived experience and priorities

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION - EXISTING CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Phase I established a comprehensive baseline understanding of the study area through GIS analysis, fieldwork, and community engagement.

Key Findings

1. Connectivity Gaps & Barriers
2. Discontinuous sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure
3. Physical barriers including railroads, highways, and industrial corridors
4. Limited access to Buffalo Bayou and regional trails

Equity & Mobility Needs

1. ~15% of households lack access to a vehicle, increasing reliance on walking, biking, and transit
2. Underserved communities face limited safe mobility options
3. Strong need for improved first- and last-mile connections to transit

Economic and Social Vulnerability

1. Study area neighborhoods include some of the lowest median income populations in Houston.
2. Many residents depend on affordable, reliable mobility options to access jobs, schools, and services.

Environmental & Resilience Challenges

1. High impervious coverage (~79%) contributes to flooding and street ponding
2. Extremely low tree canopy (~1.87%) intensifies urban heat island effects
3. Communities face compounded environmental stressors, including heat, flooding, and limited shade

Community Priorities

1. Safer crossings and reduced traffic speeds
2. Improved lighting and comfort
3. Increased tree canopy and shade
4. Better access to parks, schools, and transit

Safety Challenges

1. High vehicle speeds and unsafe crossings create significant risk
2. Conflicts with trucks and industrial traffic reduce comfort and accessibility



First Public Meeting

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION - OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION

Phase II translated technical analysis and community input into a coordinated framework for transportation improvements, emphasizing network-wide connectivity and addressing mobility challenges beyond individual projects.

Core Opportunity Themes

Four key themes emerged from technical analysis and community input:

- **Safety**: Address high vehicle speeds, unsafe crossings, and conflicts with truck traffic.
- **Connectivity**: Close gaps in pedestrian and bicycle networks and improve access to Buffalo Bayou and transit.
- **Comfort and Environment**: Increase shade, tree canopy, and buffering from industrial traffic.
- **Placemaking and Identity:** Enhance public spaces and reinforce neighborhood character.

Opportunity Framework

Opportunities were organized across three interconnected spatial scales to guide transportation improvements:

1. **Regional Integration**

- Strengthen Buffalo Bayou's role as a regional ecological and mobility corridor.
- Improve crossings and connections to the bayou trail system.

2. District Structuring Corridors

- Enhance key corridors, including Gregg Street, Lockwood Drive, and Navigation Boulevard, as major transportation connections.
- Support multimodal mobility, economic activity, and neighborhood identity.

3. Neighborhood Connectivity

- Close gaps in pedestrian and bicycle networks connecting homes, schools, parks, and services
- Improve accessibility for short, everyday trips.

Design Principles

A three-tiered design hierarchy was established to guide improvements, emphasizing safety, comfort, and quality of life.

- **Safety**: Improve crossings, ADA accessibility, and traffic calming.
- **Comfort**: Enhance shade, lighting, landscaping, and green infrastructure.
- **Quality of Life:** Strengthen placemaking, neighborhood identity, and public spaces.

Together, the opportunity framework and design principles guided the identification of priority corridors and the development of recommended improvements in Phase III.



Nodal Improvements

Corridor-Level Active Transportation Improvements

Regional Connection Framework

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES BY DESIGN SCALE

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION - RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Phase III translated opportunities into targeted, implementable corridor projects supported by community priorities and technical evaluation.

Priority corridors were classified into two priority levels to guide future investment and implementation.

High Priority

1. Navigation Boulevard (Segment 1)
2. Lockwood Drive (Segment 1)
3. Lockwood Drive Bridge
4. Velasco Street
5. Lyons Avenue
6. Gregg Street (Segment 2)

Moderate Priority

1. Navigation Boulevard (Segments 2)
2. Navigation Boulevard (Segments 3)
3. Gregg Street (Segment 1)
4. Neighborhood streets

Key Improvement Strategies

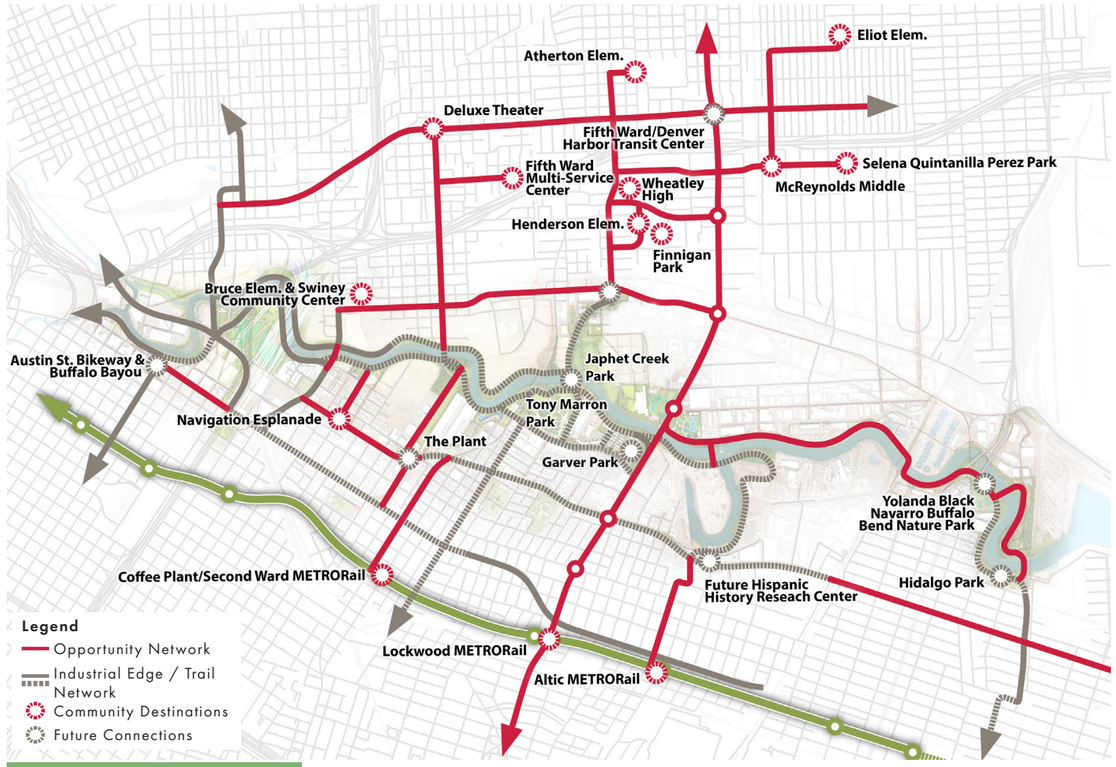
The proposed improvements are organized around four key themes to create safer, more connected, and comfortable streets:

- **Mobility and Safety:** Improve sidewalks, bicycle facilities, crossings, and intersections, supported by traffic calming measures.
- **Environment and Resilience:** Expand tree canopy and shade, incorporate green infrastructure for stormwater management, and reduce urban heat.
- **Connectivity:** Strengthen connections to Buffalo Bayou trails, regional networks, and transit facilities.
- **Public Realm and Placemaking:** Enhance streetscapes through lighting, seating, wayfinding, and elements that reflect neighborhood identity.

COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION - RECOMMENDATIONS&IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



FOCUSED NETWORK OF IMPROVEMENTS

Implementation Approach

These improvements are implemented through a three-tiered approach, Basic, Retrofit, and Rebuild, with each successive level incorporating a greater depth and integration of these four perspectives, progressively transforming the street into a more complete, resilient, and people-centered environment.

Each corridor includes three tiers of intervention:

1. Basic Improvements – Essential safety and connectivity upgrades implemented at low cost, aligned with current city policies and existing permitting frameworks.
2. Retrofit Improvements – reallocation of right-of-way for multimodal use.
3. Reconstruction Improvements – full corridor transformation with highest long-term impact.

This tiered strategy allows for phased implementation, aligning with funding availability and project priorities.

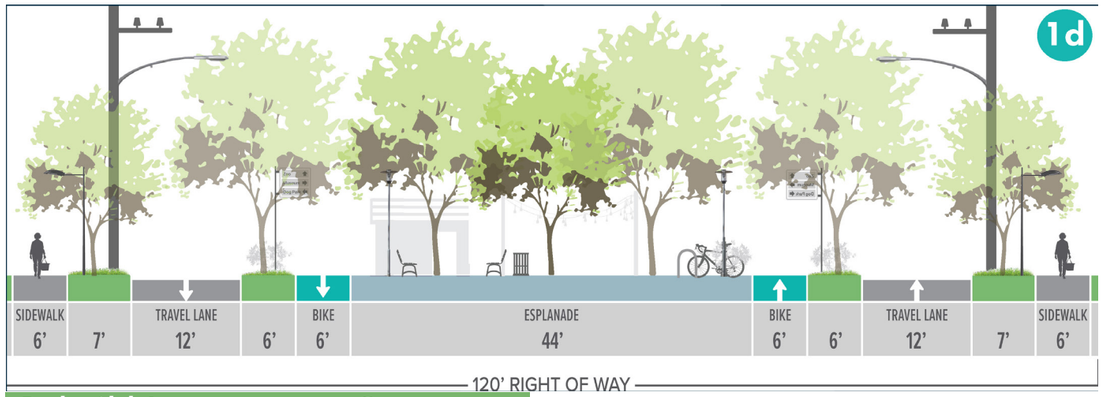
Overall Conclusions

The study establishes a clear, actionable roadmap for creating a more connected, resilient, and equitable transportation network in Buffalo Bayou East.

Key Takeaways:

- The primary challenge is not a lack of transportation assets, but limited connectivity between them.
- Safety, comfort, and equity must be addressed together.
- Buffalo Bayou should serve as a central organizing corridor rather than a barrier.
- Streets should function as both transportation corridors and community spaces.
- Investments should prioritize the mobility needs of historically underserved communities.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: NAVIGATION BLVD. SEGMENT 1 (HIGH PRIORITY, SHORT-TERM)



Rebuild Improvement Concept

Navigation Boulevard is a primary east–west corridor connecting the East End to downtown Houston. Between North Saint Charles Street and Delano Street, the corridor has been transformed into a vibrant cultural destination known as the Navigation Boulevard Esplanade. Extending the esplanade eastward to connect with the proposed Velasco Street shared-use path would establish an important link between existing destinations and the expanding Buffalo Bayou Greenway network.

Navigation Boulevard currently has four travel lanes and carries approximately 11,000 vehicles per day. This traffic volume suggests potential opportunities for roadway reconfiguration, subject to further traffic analysis. The wide roadway contributes to longer pedestrian crossings and higher vehicle speeds, creating safety concerns. Reallocating roadway space could shorten crossing distances, calm traffic, and improve multimodal accessibility.

The corridor presents an opportunity to expand the existing esplanade by widening sidewalks, improving curb ramps, and enhancing landscape elements to create a more continuous and accessible public space. Community feedback indicates strong support for enhanced bicycle facilities along the corridor.

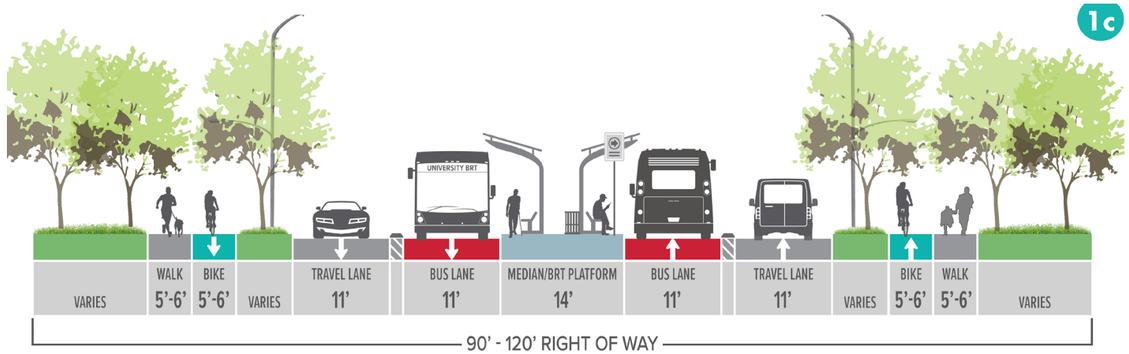


Navigation Blvd. Segment 1 Proposed Improvement
Illustration of Fully Integrated Improvement Scenario with Preliminary Conceptual Cost Estimate **$6,801,000**

Coordinating these improvements with the proposed Velasco Street shared-use path and potential connections along Jensen Drive would further strengthen regional connectivity.

Final design should be informed by detailed traffic, curb-use, and parking analyses to balance commercial activity, mobility needs, and public space enhancements.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: LOCKWOOD DR. (HIGH PRIORITY, LONG-TERM)



Rebuild Improvement Concept

Lockwood Drive serves as a major north–south arterial corridor connecting Fifth Ward, Denver Harbor, and surrounding neighborhoods to Buffalo Bayou, the East End, and areas farther south. Its role within the regional transportation network makes it an important corridor for improving multimodal connectivity and access to key destinations.

Recent improvements along Buffalo Bayou have strengthened connections near Navigation Boulevard and Lockwood Drive, including access to the bayou trail system, nearby residential developments, and Tony Marron Park. These investments provide a foundation for extending multimodal connections along the corridor.

Future improvements should build on these investments by extending multimodal connections both north and south of the bayou. The Lockwood Drive Bridge presents a key opportunity to incorporate protected bicycle facilities and wider pedestrian space. Dedicated bike lanes separated from vehicular traffic through physical buffers can improve safety and user comfort while maintaining corridor functionality.



Lockwood Drive Proposed Improvement
Illustration of Fully Integrated Improvement Scenario with Preliminary Conceptual Cost Estimate **$47,160,000**

Given Lockwood Drive's role in supporting bus transit and regional traffic, roadway modifications should carefully consider operational needs. However, existing conditions, including high vehicle speeds, limited visibility, and constrained pedestrian space, highlight opportunities to better balance the right-of-way. Improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, along with streetscape enhancements, can create a safer, more comfortable, and accessible crossing of Buffalo Bayou.

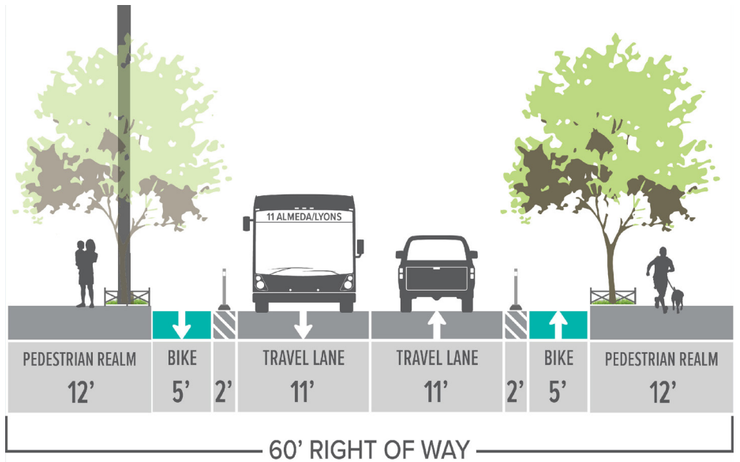
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: LYONS AVE. (HIGH PRIORITY, SHORT-TERM)

Lyons Avenue is a key east–west corridor connecting Denver Harbor, Fifth Ward, Northside, and downtown Houston, with strong potential to serve as Fifth Ward's "Main Street." Beyond mobility, it serves as a center of cultural identity and daily community life.

Existing pedestrian infrastructure is inconsistent, with gaps in sidewalks, limited shade, and few spaces for gathering.

Improvements should focus on safer, more equitable mobility and an enhanced public realm. Narrowing travel lanes could help calm traffic and create space for protected bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, and improved transit facilities. Sidewalk upgrades, ADA-compliant curb ramps, and enhanced crossings would further improve accessibility.

Streetscape enhancements, including trees, lighting, street furnishings, and public art, can create a more comfortable and inviting environment. Together, these strategies would position Lyons Avenue as a civic spine that supports local businesses, encourages social interaction, and celebrates Fifth Ward's cultural identity.



Rebuild Improvement Concept



Lyons Avenue Proposed Improvement
Illustration of Fully Integrated Improvement Scenario with Preliminary Conceptual Cost Estimate **$30,420,000**

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: VELASCO ST. - THE PASEO (HIGH PRIORITY, SHORT-TERM)

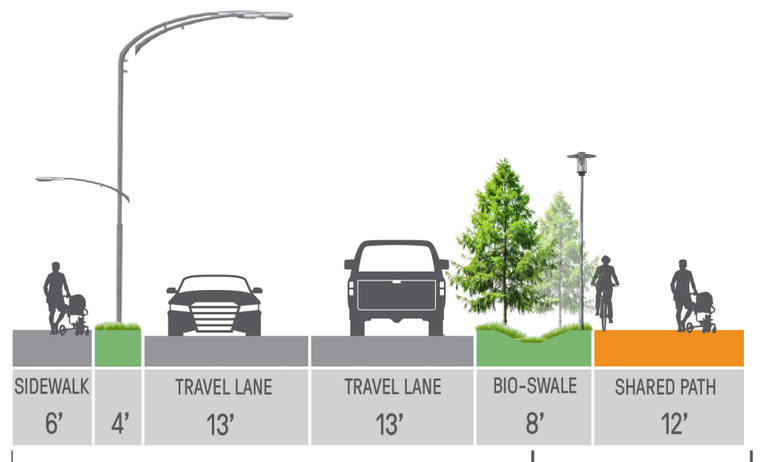
Velasco Street is a key north–south corridor connecting the East End, Fifth Ward, and Buffalo Bayou. It is identified as a Phase 1 project in the East End Bikeway Plan and will connect surrounding neighborhoods to trails, open spaces, and destinations such as The Plant.

Priority improvements include safe, clearly marked crossings at Navigation Boulevard, particularly near Engelke Street, to address potential conflicts and maintain network continuity.

North of Navigation, available right-of-way could accommodate a 10–12 ft shared-use path, offering opportunities for near-term multimodal improvements with minimal impacts on traffic.

As redevelopment occurs, Velasco Street could evolve into a primary frontage corridor supporting mixed-use development. Streetscape enhancements, including landscape buffers, lighting, and wayfinding, would strengthen corridor identity and improve user experience.

South of Navigation Boulevard, enhanced crossings will be essential to connect the corridor to the Navigation Boulevard Esplanade and nearby destinations. Coordination with adjacent property owners could provide additional right-of-way and support long-term improvements.



Rebuild Improvement Concept



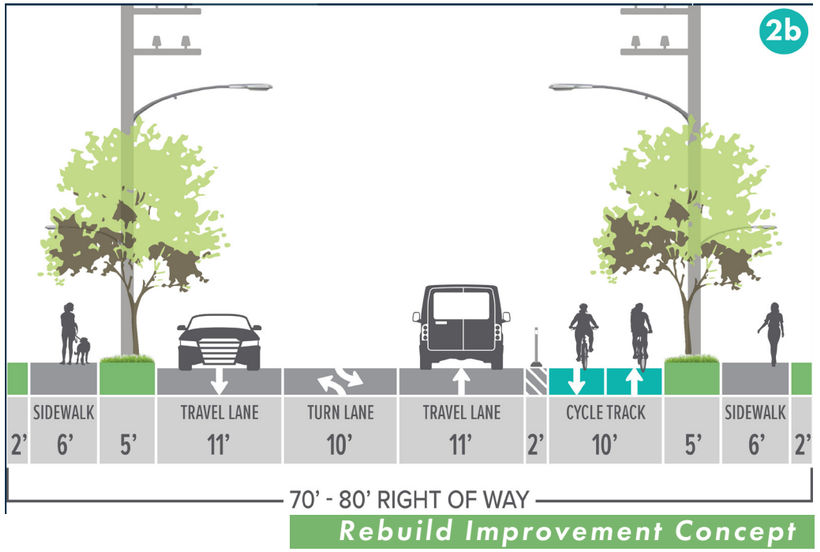
Velasco Street Proposed Improvement
Illustration of Fully Integrated Improvement Scenario with Preliminary Conceptual Cost Estimate **$3,738,000**

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: GREGG ST. SEGMENT 2 (HIGH PRIORITY, SHORT-TERM)

Gregg Street Segment 2 currently operates as a four-lane roadway, with a divided median south of Interstate 10 and an undivided configuration to the north. The existing roadway width presents opportunities to improve pedestrian safety, reduce crossing distances, and manage vehicle speeds.

A potential road diet, reducing the roadway to two through lanes with a median or center turn lane, could create space for multimodal improvements while calming traffic. Depending on available right-of-way and operational needs, improvements could include a protected cycle track, wider sidewalks, and on-street parking where appropriate. Wider sidewalks and accessible curb ramps would further enhance pedestrian safety and comfort. Coordination with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will be necessary to improve crossings at Interstate 10 and maintain corridor continuity.

In the long term, relocating bicycle and pedestrian facilities behind the curb could provide a more continuous and comfortable network with direct connections to Buffalo Bayou trails, while creating opportunities for landscaping and placemaking enhancements along the corridor.





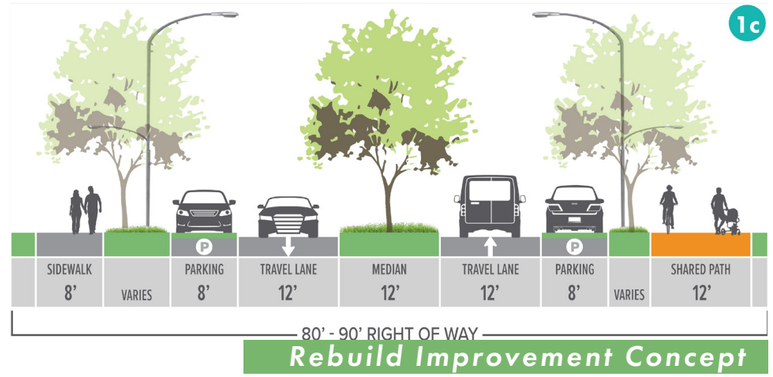
Gregg Street Segment 2 Proposed Improvement
Illustration of Fully Integrated Improvement Scenario with Preliminary Conceptual Cost Estimate **$5,882,000**

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: GREGG ST. SEGMENT 1 (MODERATE PRIORITY, SHORT-TERM)

Gregg Street functions as a key north–south corridor within Fifth Ward, linking residential neighborhoods to Interstate 10 and Buffalo Bayou. Despite its strategic location, the corridor currently lacks safe and continuous pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, limiting access to the bayou and surrounding destinations.

A proposed pedestrian and bicycle bridge across Buffalo Bayou would significantly enhance connectivity, linking the corridor to regional trail systems and expanding access to open space. However, the existing right-of-way allocation prioritizes vehicular movement, with limited space dedicated to multimodal use. Sidewalk gaps and the absence of bicycle facilities further constrain accessibility.

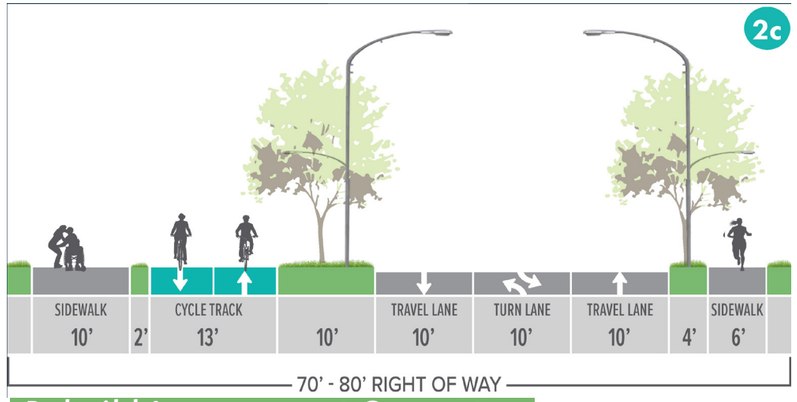
Enhancements to Gregg Street are intended to rebalance the corridor, improving safety and accessibility while supporting its role as a primary connection between neighborhoods and Buffalo Bayou. This segment is identified as a Phase 1 regional connection within the broader East End Bikeway Network.





Gregg Street Segment 1 Improvement
Illustration of Fully Integrated Improvement Scenario with Preliminary Conceptual Cost Estimate **$2,827,000**

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: NAVIGATION BLVD. SEGMENT 2 (MODERATE PRIORITY, MID-TERM)



Rebuild Improvement Concept

Navigation Boulevard Segment 2 offers a key opportunity to strengthen east–west connectivity between neighborhoods, Buffalo Bayou, and regional destinations.

East of Velasco Street, the corridor can extend multimodal connections to the Navigation Boulevard Esplanade, future trails, and nearby parks.

Currently, the corridor is vehicle-oriented, with wide lanes, long crossings, and limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. However, available right-of-way may provide opportunities for reallocation to support multimodal use.

Proposed improvements include protected on-street bicycle lanes (5.5–6.5 feet wide, with buffers), upgraded sidewalks, and enhanced lighting. These facilities would connect to key north–south corridors—Velasco Street, Sampson Street, and Lockwood Drive—linking neighborhoods to Tony Marron Park and the broader greenway network.

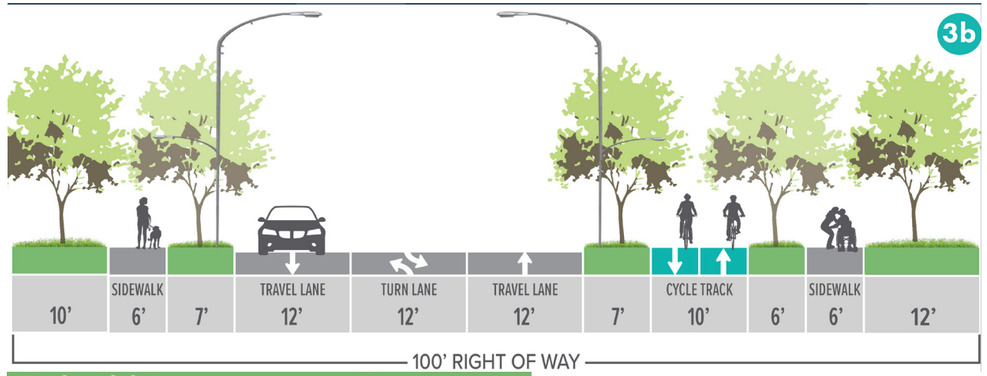
Additional upgrades, including improved curb ramps, driveway treatments, and safer crossings, would enhance accessibility. Curb use and parking strategies should balance access with multimodal needs.

As a Phase 1 priority, this segment would help establish a continuous, connected network supporting both local access and regional mobility.



Navigation Blvd. Segment 2 Proposed Improvement
Illustration of Fully Integrated Improvement Scenario with Preliminary Conceptual Cost Estimate **$19,794,000**

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: NAVIGATION BLVD. SEGMENT 3 (MODERATE PRIORITY, LONG-TERM)



Rebuild Improvement Concept

Navigation Boulevard (East) Segment 3 presents an opportunity to extend multimodal connectivity beyond the existing esplanade and strengthen links to regional trails. Reallocating travel lanes could support protected on-street bicycle facilities, connecting to the Sunset Trail and forming a continuous east–west route.

At the western end, the corridor could link to proposed greenway improvements by Buffalo Bayou Partnership, with a typical cross section consisting of two travel lanes, a center turn lane, and buffered bicycle lanes. Intersection upgrades at Wayside Drive and South Street will be critical to improving safety.

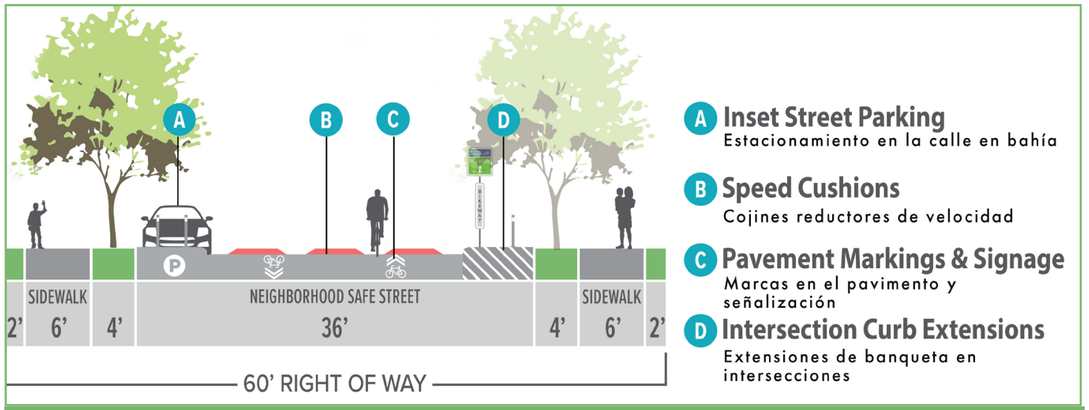
Additional improvements—including upgraded sidewalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, and enhanced crossings—would improve accessibility for all users. Identified as a Phase 1 project, this segment plays a key role in building a connected network.

In the long term, corridor reconstruction could introduce wider sidewalks, expanded tree canopy, and dedicated bicycle facilities, strengthening its role as an extension of the Buffalo Bayou Greenway. Future extensions eastward could connect to the Brays Bayou Trail, expanding regional access.

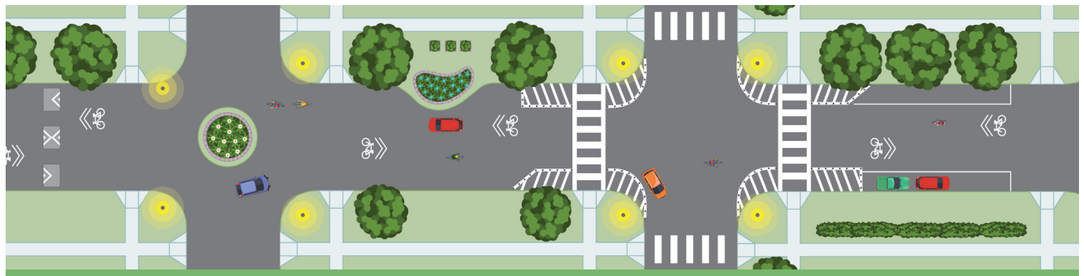


Navigation Blvd. Segment 3 Proposed Improvement
Illustration of Fully Integrated Improvement Scenario with Preliminary Conceptual Cost Estimate **$10,985,000**

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS (MODERATE PRIORITY, MID-TERM)



Right-of-Way Variability: Minimum Conditions of ROW



Neighborhood Street Improvements Plan View

On roads with exceptionally low traffic volumes (fewer than 1,500 vehicles per day) and posted speed limits below 25 mph, it may be appropriate for bicyclists to share the roadway with motor vehicles. Adding elements that alert drivers to the presence of bicyclists, such as shared-lane markings (sharrows), signage, and wayfinding, along with traffic calming measures, can improve safety and comfort for people bicycling.

Establishing a network of Neighborhood Safe Streets linking Japhet Creek Park, the Fifth Ward/Denver Harbor Transit Center, and Lyons Avenue would create opportunities to:

- Improve safety and accessibility for all roadway users.
- Provide safe, comfortable multimodal access to parks, schools, neighborhoods, businesses, and high-quality transit.
- Maintain existing vehicular and parking capacity.

The route could meander toward the future Buffalo Bayou East Greenway, using available space to incorporate additional landscaping and placemaking features.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE SUMMARY

Investment Strategy and Phasing Considerations

The recommended improvements across Gregg Street, Navigation Boulevard, Lyons Avenue, Velasco Street, Lockwood Drive, and neighborhood streets can be implemented at different investment levels, depending on available funding and long-term goals.

Rather than treating each corridor as a fixed design, this study evaluates multiple implementation approaches to support decision-making.

Focused Connectivity Investment (Basic Improvements)

A minimum investment scenario focuses on essential connectivity improvements, such as sidewalks, basic crossings, and safety upgrades.

These improvements:
1. Address immediate gaps in the network.
2. Improve basic accessibility and safety.
3. Require relatively low capital investment.

However, this approach offers limited long-term benefits, as it does not fully address multimodal needs, environmental conditions, or broader corridor transformation.

Balanced Retrofit Strategy (Balanced Improvements)

A more balanced approach involves implementing retrofit improvements across key corridors.

This strategy:

1. Reallocates right-of-way for multimodal use.
2. Introduces bicycle infrastructure, traffic calming, and streetscape enhancements.
   Improves safety, comfort, and environmental performance.

This investment level offers a balance between cost and impact, delivering meaningful improvements without requiring full corridor reconstruction.

Full Reconstruction (Long-Term Vision)

Full reconstruction represents the ultimate build-out condition, transforming corridors into fully integrated multimodal streets.

These improvements:
1. Include complete street redesign, underground utility upgrades, and major infrastructure improvements.
2. Provide substantial long-term benefits.
3. Require the greatest level of investment and coordination.

Phased and Incremental Investment Approach

In some corridors, improvements can be implemented incrementally, allowing early investments to build toward a long-term vision.

For example, basic improvements can address immediate safety and accessibility needs, retrofit improvements can be introduced over time, and full reconstruction can be pursued when funding and coordination allow.

This phased approach allows agencies to:
1. Deliver near-term benefits.
2. Spread costs over time.
3. Adapt to funding opportunities.

Important Consideration: Avoid Redundant Investment

Not all corridors are suitable for incremental improvements. In some cases, basic or partial retrofit improvements may need to be replaced during future reconstruction, resulting in duplicated costs and reduced long-term cost-effectiveness.

For these corridors, a strategic evaluation is needed to determine whether to proceed with incremental improvements or prioritize a more comprehensive investment when funding becomes available.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE SUMMARY

Strategic Recommendation

To maximize the effectiveness of future investments, the study recommends:

1. Prioritizing Retrofit Improvements as the primary implementation strategy.
2. Using Basic Improvements selectively for immediate needs.
3. Reserving Reconstruction for corridors where full transformation is necessary and feasible.

Next Steps

Further corridor-level evaluation is recommended to:

1. Refine planning-level cost estimates.
2. Identify project phasing and funding opportunities
3. Determine where incremental improvements are appropriate versus where full reconstruction may be more cost-effective.

The cost estimates presented in this report are intended to support future planning, design, and investment decisions.

Implementation Summary and Estimated Investment

The implementation summary chart below presents a combination of Rebuild and Retrofit improvements across key corridors, including Gregg Street, Navigation Boulevard, Lyons Avenue, Velasco Street, Lockwood Drive, and supporting neighborhood streets.

The total estimated investment is approximately $137 million, based on the selected combination of improvements. This planning-level estimate provides a benchmark for understanding the scale of proposed investments and guiding future funding and implementation decisions.

Rather than a single-phase project, the proposed improvements represent a coordinated program that can be implemented incrementally based on project priorities and funding availability. Together, these investments would enhance connectivity, safety, and accessibility across the study area, delivering network-wide benefits and supporting more connected, resilient, and equitable communities.

IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

Project Name	Street	Extents	Type of Improvement	Estimated Cost
G1a-Basic improvement	Gregg Street	Clinton Drive to I-10	Basic	$786,304
G1b-Retrofit improvement 1	Gregg Street	Clinton Drive to I-10	Intermediate (retrofit)	$3,039,980
G1c-Reconstruction improvement	Gregg Street	Clinton Drive to I-10	Ideal (reconstruction)	$2,826,803
G2a-Basic improvement	Gregg Street	I-10 to Lyons Avenue	Basic	$1,158,295
G2b- Retrofit improvement	Gregg Street	I-10 to Lyons Avenue	Intermediate (retrofit)	$5,882,029
LO1a-Basic improvement	Lockwood Drive	Harrisburg Blvd to Fifth Ward	Basic	$5,147,826
LO1b- Retrofit improvement	Lockwood Drive	Harrisburg Blvd to Fifth Ward	Intermediate (retrofit)	$35,406,710
LOc- Reconstruction improvement	Lockwood Drive	Harrisburg Blvd to Fifth Ward	Ideal (reconstruction)	$47,159,740
LOD1a - Basic improvement	Lockwood Drive	Lockwood Dr Bridge	Basic	$685,554
LOD1b - Retrofit improvement	Lockwood Drive	Lockwood Dr Bridge	Intermediate (retrofit)	$3,422,110
LOD1c - Retrofit improvement	Lockwood Drive	Lockwood Dr Bridge	Ideal (reconstruction)	$2,657,804
NA1a - Basic improvement	Navigation Blvd	Jensen Dr to N Palmer St	Basic	$1,281,197
NA1b - Retrofit improvement 1	Navigation Blvd	Jensen Dr to N Palmer St	Intermediate (retrofit)	$5,808,981
NA1c - Reconstruction improvement	Navigation Blvd	Jensen Dr to N Palmer St	Ideal (reconstruction)	$6,809,602
NA2a - Basic improvement	Navigation Blvd	Mack Street to N 77th St	Basic	$3,747,213
NA2b - Retrofit improvement	Navigation Blvd	Mack Street to N 77th St	Intermediate (retrofit)	$20,329,720
NA2c - Reconstruction improvement	Navigation Blvd	Mack Street to N 77th St	Ideal (reconstruction)	$19,793,310

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS: IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing the recommended active transportation corridor improvements will require a coordinated funding strategy that draws on local, regional, and federal resources. Given the scale and range of proposed projects, combining multiple funding sources will be important to support near-term improvements and long-term capital investments.

Local Funding Sources

1. Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ 18 and TIRZ 23): Potential funding for corridor improvements, streetscape enhancements, and public space investments within district boundaries.
2. City of Houston: Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Complete Streets initiatives, and coordination with drainage and utility projects.
3. Harris County Precinct 2: Potential support for mobility, parks, and active transportation improvements.

Regional and Agency Partnerships

1. METRO: Transit integration, first- and last-mile connections, and station area improvements.
2. TxDOT: Coordination on major corridors, bridges, and state-maintained roadways.
3. H-GAC: Regional transportation funding programs and planning coordination.

Federal Funding Opportunities

1. Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE): Potential funding for major multimodal transportation investments.
2. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A): Supports projects that improve roadway safety and reduce serious crashes.
3. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP): Supports pedestrian, bicycle, and other eligible active transportation infrastructure.
4. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ): Supports eligible transportation projects that reduce emissions and improve air quality.

Funding Alignment with Implementation Phasing

Near-term projects will rely primarily on local funding, supplemented by eligible federal grants. Mid-term projects will combine local, regional, and federal resources to support larger corridor improvements, while long-term capital investments will require competitive federal funding, sustained local commitments, and multi-agency coordination. This phased approach supports incremental implementation as funding becomes available.

IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

Project #	Project Title	Lead Agency	Partners	Timeline	Priority
1	Gregg Street Segment 1	TIRZ 18	COH	Near-Term	High
2	Gregg Street Segment 2	PCT2	TIRZ 18, COH	Mid-Term	Medium
3	Lockwood Drive	METRO	COH, TIRZ 23	Long-Term	High
4	Lockwood Drive Bridge	METRO, TxDOT	COH, TIRZ 23	Long-Term	High
5	Navigation Boulevard Segment 1	COH	TIRZ 23	Near-Term	High
6	Navigation Boulevard Segment 2	COH	TIRZ 23	Mid-Term	Medium
7	Navigation Boulevard Segment 3	COH	UPRR	Long-Term	Medium
8	Lyons Avenue	TIRZ 18	METRO, COH	Near-Term	High
9	Velasco Street	TIRZ 23	UPRR, COH	Near-Term	High
10	Railroad Right-of-Way / The Plant	TIRZ 23	COH, UPRR	Near-Term	High
11	METRORail Connection	TIRZ 23	COH, METRO	Mid-Term	High
12-1	Schweikhardt Street	COH	TIRZ 18	Mid-Term	Medium
12-2	Coke Street	COH	TIRZ 18	Mid-Term	Medium
12-3	Solo Street	COH	TIRZ 18	Mid-Term	Medium
12-4	Providence Street	COH	TIRZ 18	Mid-Term	Medium
12-5	Sonora Street	COH	TIRZ 18	Mid-Term	Medium
12-6	Shotwell Street	COH	TIRZ 18	Mid-Term	Medium

TRANSIT DISTRICT CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENT - OVERVIEW



BEFORE TRANSIT DISTRICT
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

The Transit District, centered around the Fifth Ward/ Denver Harbor Transit Center, serves as a critical mobility hub and community anchor within the study area. It has strong potential to connect surrounding neighborhoods to regional transit, Buffalo Bayou, and key destinations, but currently lacks safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle access.

Key characteristics

1. Major transit hub with significant daily ridership.
2. Centrally located between the Fifth Ward and Denver Harbor neighborhoods.
3. Close to key destinations, neighborhoods, and transportation corridors.

Existing challenges

1. Limited first- and last-mile connections.
2. Discontinuous sidewalks and inadequate bicycle infrastructure.
3. Unsafe crossings and high vehicle speeds.
4. Limited shade, lighting, and pedestrian amenities.
5. Poor connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

Opportunities for Improvement

1. Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections within a half-mile radius.
2. Improve crossing safety and intersection design.
3. Enhance shade, landscaping, lighting, and seating.
4. Improve access to Buffalo Bayou and regional trails.
5. Establish the transit center as a welcoming community gateway.

TRANSIT DISTRICT CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENT - OVERVIEW

Big Ideas

The Transit District is envisioned as more than a mobility hub — it is a central connection between surrounding neighborhoods, regional transit, and Buffalo Bayou. The goal is to transform the area from a car-oriented, disconnected environment into a safe, walkable district that reflects local identity.

Core ideas

1. Establish the transit center as a community gateway and civic anchor.
2. Strengthen first- and last-mile connections to surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Improve connections to Buffalo Bayou and regional trails.
4. Transform streets into people-centered corridors and public spaces.
5. Integrate mobility, ecology, and placemaking into a cohesive district.

Research & Analysis Steps

The study combined technical analysis, fieldwork, and community engagement to assess existing conditions in the Transit District and identify opportunities for improvement.

Key steps

1. Assess existing sidewalks, bicycle facilities, crossings, and transit connections.
2. Identify and map key barriers, such as railroads, highways, industrial edges, flood-prone areas, and vacant land.
3. Conduct walk and bike audits to evaluate on-the-ground conditions related to safety, comfort, and user experience.
4. Engage stakeholders and the community through meetings, workshops, outreach efforts, and surveys.
5. Define gaps and priority needs focused on improving safety, connectivity, comfort, and access to transit.



BEFORE TRANSIT DISTRICT
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

TRANSIT DISTRICT CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENT - RECOMMENDATIONS

Opportunity Areas

Opportunities were identified across three integrated systems:

1. Transit, Mobility & Connectivity
Improve pedestrian crossings, expand sidewalks, enhance transit service, and strengthen connections to key destinations.

2. Land Development (Housing, Community, Commerce)
Support infill and redevelopment opportunities

that introduce diverse housing, local businesses, and community-serving facilities.

3. Public Realm & Identity
Enhance streetscapes, introduce green infrastructure, and create civic spaces that strengthen neighborhood identity and experience.

Together, these opportunities respond to community priorities and existing conditions to support a more connected, vibrant, and resilient district.

Scenario-Based Approach

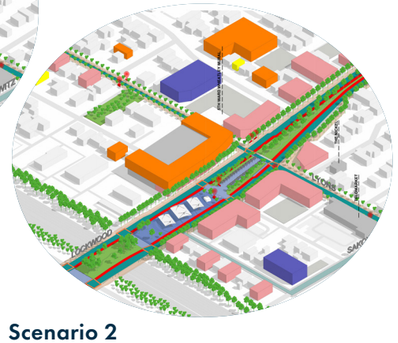
Three scenarios were developed to explore different levels of investment, physical transformation, and long-term impact.



Scenario 1
Central Community Core

Scenario 1 – Central Community Core

- Focus on near-term, achievable improvements within a quarter-mile radius of the transit center.
- Enhance pedestrian access, local streets, and community spaces.
- Support small-scale infill development and local businesses.
- Establish a neighborhood core anchored by a central plaza.



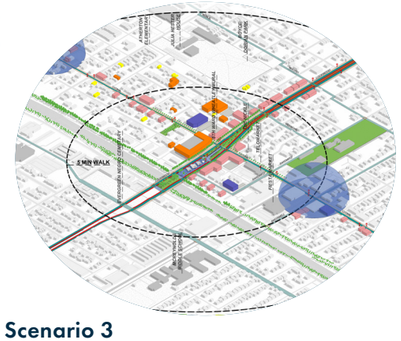
Scenario 2
Dense Core & Gateway

Scenario 2 – Dense Core & Gateway

- Expand improvements along major corridors, including Lyons Avenue and Lockwood Drive, within a half-mile radius of the transit center.
- Encourage higher-density, mixed-use development
- Explore a freeway cap over I-10 to create a gateway connection.
- Attract public-private partnerships and economic investment.

Scenario 3 – Expanded Connectivity & Activity Nodes

- Strengthen connectivity throughout the broader district.
- Introduce rapid transit and major infrastructure upgrades.
- Replace pedestrian bridges and improve highway crossings.
- Develop activity nodes along key corridors to support long-term growth.



Scenario 3
Expanded Connectivity
& Activity Nodes

TRANSIT DISTRICT CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENT - RECOMMENDATIONS

Transit District Improvement Recommended Projects

The recommended projects are organized into four key categories, each representing a coordinated set of strategies to improve mobility, connectivity, public space, and development within the Transit District.

S1 – Transit & Mobility Improvements

Enhance transit service, reliability, and passenger experience to strengthen the transit center as a major mobility hub.

Key Projects:

S1.1 - Increase transit service frequency along Lyons Avenue and Lockwood Drive
S1.2 - Expand service hours and improve route coverage
S1.3 - Upgrade bus stops and shelters with shade, seating, and lighting
S1.4 - Improve transit center design for safety and user comfort
S1.5 - Introduce rapid transit / BOOST or ART service corridors

S2 – Connectivity & Street Network Improvements

Create a safe, continuous, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle network that strengthens first- and last-mile connections.

Key Projects:

S2.1 - Fill sidewalk gaps and widen existing sidewalks
S2.2 - Improve pedestrian crossings at major corridors and barriers (I-10, railroads)
S2.3 - Add new rail crossing at Union Pacific Railroad (Hillsboro connection)
S2.4 - Enhance streetscapes with trees, lighting, and wayfinding
S2.5 - Develop a continuous green mobility spine along Lockwood
S2.6 - Replace outdated pedestrian bridges with safer, accessible crossings.

S3 – Public Realm & Placemaking

Transform underutilized spaces into vibrant, community-oriented environments that support identity, gathering, and daily activity.

Key Projects:

S3.1 - Create a central plaza at the transit center (convert parking to flexible civic space)
S3.2 - Develop community gathering spaces for markets, events, and recreation
S3.3 - Implement freeway cap park at Lockwood over I-10 as a gateway feature
S3.4 - Integrate public art, branding, and cultural identity elements
S3.5 - Introduce green infrastructure (bioswales, rain gardens, street trees)
S3.6 - Connect to greenway trails and Buffalo Bayou

S4 – Land Development & Economic Opportunities

Leverage vacant and underutilized land to support housing diversity, economic growth, and community-serving uses.

Key Projects:

S4.1 - Develop small-scale infill housing (duplexes, townhomes, small multifamily)
S4.2 - Support mixed-use redevelopment near the transit center
S4.3 - Introduce community-serving facilities (clinics, nonprofit centers, co-working spaces)
S4.4 - Activate commercial spaces (retail hubs, food markets, local businesses)
S4.5 - Encourage public-private partnerships for larger redevelopment sites
S4.6 - Implement TOD policies to support walkable, transit-oriented development



Final Recommendations

The implementation strategy adopts a flexible, phased approach that aligns transportation improvements with funding, policy, and development opportunities to create a more connected and accessible Transit District.

Short-Term: Low-cost upgrades such as sidewalks, crossings, lighting, and improved transit access to enhance safety and usability.

Mid-Term: Corridor enhancements including streetscape improvements, better transit service, and infill development to strengthen connectivity and activity.

Long-Term: major investments, including a potential freeway cap, rapid transit, and large-scale redevelopment, to support long-term growth and district transformation.

Implementation Approach

Successful implementation will require coordinated partnerships, supportive policies, strategic funding, and continued community engagement.

Key Enablers

Successful implementation relies on:

- Public-private partnerships to support redevelopment and large-scale projects.
- Policy alignment (TOD, zoning, and funding programs) to enable compact, walkable development.
- A phased funding strategy combining local, regional, and federal sources.
- Community engagement to reflect local needs and priorities.

These factors support coordinated, long-term implementation of the proposed improvements.



Implementation Timeline

Phase 1: Near-Term Infrastructure Improvements

Focus on foundational improvements within a ½-mile radius of the transit center, including filling sidewalk gaps on secondary streets, improving main streets, and enhancing pedestrian crossings along Lyons Avenue. This phase also includes pursuing Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) designation along Lockwood Drive and Lyons Avenue through the City of Houston Planning and Development Department to guide future walkable, transit-supportive development.

Phase 2: Near-Term Recreational and Public Space Development and Placemaking

Establish a green spine along Lockwood Drive on the north side of the transit center and implement placemaking improvement along Lyons Avenue. Key projects include greenway trails and a flexible community plaza. These improvements create recreational opportunities, strengthen connectivity, and establish a recognizable identity for the transit district serving Fifth Ward and Denver Harbor.

Phase 3: Mid-Term Gateway and Development

Support neighborhood revitalization and economic growth through mixed-income multifamily housing with a shared parking garage, a freeway cap park, and a job training center. These projects aim to promote equitable development, stimulate commercial activity, and strengthen neighborhood connections.

Phase 4: Long term Connectivity and Transit Expansion

Expand regional connectivity through the replacement and enhancement of pedestrian bridges, development of community activity nodes, and introduction of rapid transit service along key corridors. These investments will improve mobility and support long-term growth throughout the Transit District. The recommended projects represent transformation infrastructure investments that reconnect the communities of Fifth Ward and Denver Harbor, while improving mobility and access to transit. These initiatives strengthen connections to existing assets, introduce new civic and public spaces, and enhance transit services.

Together, the projects establish a stronger identity for the transit district while creating a pathway for future connectivity improvements and transit-oriented growth. By improving mobility and access, the recommendations support community vitality and create opportunities for economic development and long-term prosperity.

TRANSIT DISTRICT CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENT - COST ESTIMATES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Projects within the Transit District can leverage a combination of federal grants, local funding, and public-private partnerships to support implementation. Smaller-scale improvements may be funded through targeted grants, while major infrastructure investments will likely require multiple funding sources and coordinated partnerships.

Potential Funding and Incentive Opportunities:

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)

- Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program
- Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program
- Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant
- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Financing
- Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program

State and Local Funding

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – TxDOT
- City of Houston Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Partnership with TIRZ 19 for public art, landscaping, and maintenance
- Opportunity Zone investment incentives

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program

COST ESTIMATE SUMMARY

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT TITLE	COST RANGE	
		SCENARIO 2 PROJECTS	SCENARIO 3 PROJECTS
S1.1	Transit Service Improvements	N/A	
S1.2	Shelter Improvements	>$1M - $10M	
S1.3	Transit Center Modernization	$1M - $4M	
S1.4	Rapid Transit		Non Incl.
S2.1	Flexible Transit Plaza	$8M - $30M	
S2.2	Median Greenway Trail	$1M - $10M	
S2.3	Freeway Cap Park	$40M - $100M	
S2.4	Freeway Landscape	>$1M	
S2.5	Streetscape Improvements	>$1M - $8M	
S2.6	Secondary Street Sidewalk Improvements	$3M - $10M	
S2.7	Main Street Improvements	$1M - $10M	
S2.8	Connectivity Street Improvements		$10M - $50M
S2.9	UPRR Crossings	Non Incl.	
S2.10	Pedestrian Bridge Improvements		$30M - $60M
S2.11	Lyon's Nodes		$1.5M - $10M
S3.1	TOD Street Designation	N/A	
S3.2	Mixed-Use Housing	$45M - $80M	
S3.3	Job Training Center	$8M - $15M	
S4.1	Community Programming	N/A	
S4.2	Community Services	Non Incl.	
TOTAL		$109M - $277M	$41.5M - $120M

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CONNECTING BUFFALO BAYOU EAST

Houston-Galveston Area Council