

Transportation Policy Council Public Comments-July

Comment 1:

Our coalition sees the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the parties listed as a product of the public engagement process conducted over the last year by the City of Houston Planning Department. As such, we ask that the MOU itself and the process undertaken to draft it by this working group be as transparent and inclusive as the community engagement process was. We ask the following:

In regards to the H-GAC's MOU working group and the drafting process:

1. That the working group meetings be open to the public, streamed online in order to be accessible while maintaining social distancing, and recorded and clearly posted afterwards.
2. That working group agendas be published and posted prior to meetings.
3. That public comment on items be allowed during working group meetings.

In regards to the agreements outlined in the MOU document, we ask that it contain:

1. A commitment by all parties, including TxDOT, to engage in a robust community outreach and feedback process through all phases of the project.
2. A commitment by TxDOT to a full reevaluation process under NEPA guidelines to reconfigure the project to meet the requests made in Mayor Turner's letter.
3. Clear identification of all of the mitigation actions TxDOT has made, is in the process of conducting, and will commit to in the future.
4. A commitment to meet the requirements outlined in Mayor Turner's letter regarding assistance and reimbursement of households being displaced.
5. An accountability mechanism wherein the Transportation Policy Council, the City of Houston, Harris County, or any other party to the MOU can withdraw funding support for the project if the goals of the MOU are not sufficiently met.

In regards to the members of the working group, we ask that the members selected:

1. Consider the residents in Houston that will bear the burden of this project.
2. Are open minded regarding Mayor Turner's requests as outlined in his letter to Commissioner Ryan.

Susan Graham

Stop TxDot I-45

Comment 2:

I made some comments concerning METRO. Because of this I sent CC emails to Chair Patman and CEO Tom Lambert.

1. Thank you for voting for funding improvements to the Shepherd Corridor, North Loop 610 to Washington Ave, last month. One thing to consider in the upgrade is to provide some traffic lanes to run under the UP Houston Terminal Subdivision. This highway-Rail crossing causes major backups, and hurts the performance of METROBus route 027 Shepherd, an upcoming frequent route. Improvements without slowing down Union Pacific's traffic.

2. I think any movement on the NHHIP should wait until the results of the November elections. The White House, the Congress, staffs thereof, and the various Federal Departments could change, and change dramatically. I think it would not be in the taxpayers interest to come up with something, and then have it shot down. The area does not need the Washington-Local conflicts of the nature METRO USED TO HAVE. Thank goodness that nightmare is no more.

3. WE HAVE TO FIX FLOODING. AND KEEP THE AREA ACCESSABLE. EVEN IF SOME TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE HAS TO BE ELEVATED. Learn from the City of Galveston after the storm of 1900....

4. Houston, we have a problem. The great economic divide. We have people of all backgrounds who have money and power, and people of all backgrounds who do not. Colorblind solutions are needed. If this is not fixed, all the best infrastructure in the world will not help this area if major disruptions occur

Dominic Mazoch

LINK HOUSTON

Transportation Policy Council (TPC)
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite #100
Houston, TX 77027

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

July 23, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

Richard Petty
Chair

Re: Public Comment on TPC July 24, 2020 Agenda Item #6

Bill Fulton
Vice Chair

Dear Chair Clark and Members of the Transportation Policy Council (TPC),

Adrienne Mangual
Treasurer

My name is Jonathan Brooks, and I serve as an alternate voting member representing citizens interests on the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). I am writing regarding the July 24 agenda item #6, "Appointment of a Working Group to Develop a Memorandum of Understanding for the North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP)." On June 26, 2020 TPC voted to create an MOU between local and regional government agencies regarding the NHHIP. The agencies specifically mentioned in the June 26 motion are H-GAC, TxDOT, City of Houston, Harris County, and Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO). The TPC requested that Chair Ken Clark appoint a working group to develop the MOU. Yesterday, on July 23rd, Chair Clark released a list of 16 nominees for the working group. He will seek approval for the nominees at today's, July 24, TPC meeting.

Elizabeth Love
Secretary

Dr. Denae King

Janis Scott

Michael Skelly

Amanda Timm

Berenice Yu

James Llamas

Oni K. Blair

The proposed working group membership is not in keeping with the language or intent of the motion in June; nor does the working group represent the population and businesses in the footprint of the NHHIP project. Of the proposed members, 10 of 16 do not represent agencies voted on in June as parties to the MOU or other agencies which were discussed (i.e., Harris County Flood Control District) and 8 of those are officials whose jurisdictions are not adjacent nor overlap the NHHIP's footprint. This proposal is inequitable and unacceptable.

First, we call on TPC to revise the working group membership to emphasize representation from the five organizations who will sign the future MOU are part of the negotiations and other directly jurisdictional organizations (e.g., Harris County Flood Control, Gulf Coast Rail District, Port Houston).

Second, we also call on TPC to direct the working group to remain transparent. All meetings and negotiations should be open to the public.



LINK HOUSTON

Third, we call on TPC to ensure the priorities of the future agreement prioritizes the public interest of people and businesses in Houston directly impacted by the project during construction and for the 50+ year lifespan of whatever is built:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Richard Petty
Chair

Bill Fulton
Vice Chair

Adrienne Mangual
Treasurer

Elizabeth Love
Secretary

Dr. Denaë King

Janis Scott

Michael Skelly

Amanda Timm

Berenice Yu

James Llamas

Oni K. Blair

- **Delineate agreement to specifically study and pursue alternatives outlined by Mayor Turner in his letter to Commissioner Ryan.**
- **Address outstanding adverse impacts outlined in the Mayor's document, especially displacement of people and businesses.**
- **Include a decision to halt or withdraw funding should the project fail to address the very real concerns of residents and business owners who live adjacent to the project.**
- **Provide ongoing engagement with the public.**
- **Separate completion of the NEPA process for Segment 3 from that for Segments 1 & 2.**

It is imperative that the TPC working group negotiate in good faith to address the real concerns that numerous stakeholders and residents have identified concerning the inequitable consequences of the NHHIP on Black and Latinx communities, especially displacing people, businesses, and community resources.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Brooks
Director of Policy & Planning
LINK Houston



NHHIP Proposed MOU Working Group Not Representative

On June 26, 2020 the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Transportation policy Council (TPC) voted to create a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between local and regional government agencies regarding the NHHIP. The agencies specifically mentioned in the June 26 motion are H-GAC, TxDOT, City of Houston, Harris County, and Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO). The TPC requested that Chair Ken Clark appoint a working group to develop the MOU. On July 23rd, Chair Clark released a list of 16 nominees for the working group. He will seek approval for the nominees at the July 24 TPC meeting.

The proposed working group membership is not in keeping with the language or intent of the motion in June; nor does the working group represent the population and businesses in the footprint of the project. Of the proposed members, 10 of 16 do not represent agencies voted on in June as parties to the MOU or other agencies which were discussed (i.e., Harris County Flood Control District) and 8 of those are officials whose jurisdictions are far from overlapping the NHHIP's footprint.

The working group should be comprised of members representing MOU signee agencies listed in the June 2020 motion.

TPC Agenda Item 06
Mailout 7/17/20

APPOINTMENT OF A WORKGROUP TO DEVELOP A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Background

At the meeting in June, Transportation Policy Council has approved to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between various agencies on the North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP). In addition, TPC has recommended the TPC Chair to appoint a Workgroup to assist with the development of the MOU and to present that to TPC's approval.

The purpose of the MOU is to articulate the understanding that multiple agencies, including H-GAC, Texas Department of Transportation, City of Houston, Harris County, and Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), will work cooperatively in the planning and implementation of the NHHIP. The MOU can also provide a description of responsibilities or commitments from each agency.

Current Situation

TPC Chair, Kenneth Clark will nominate the following members at the TPC meeting to serve on the workgroup to develop the MOU for the NHHIP and will seek TPC's approval:

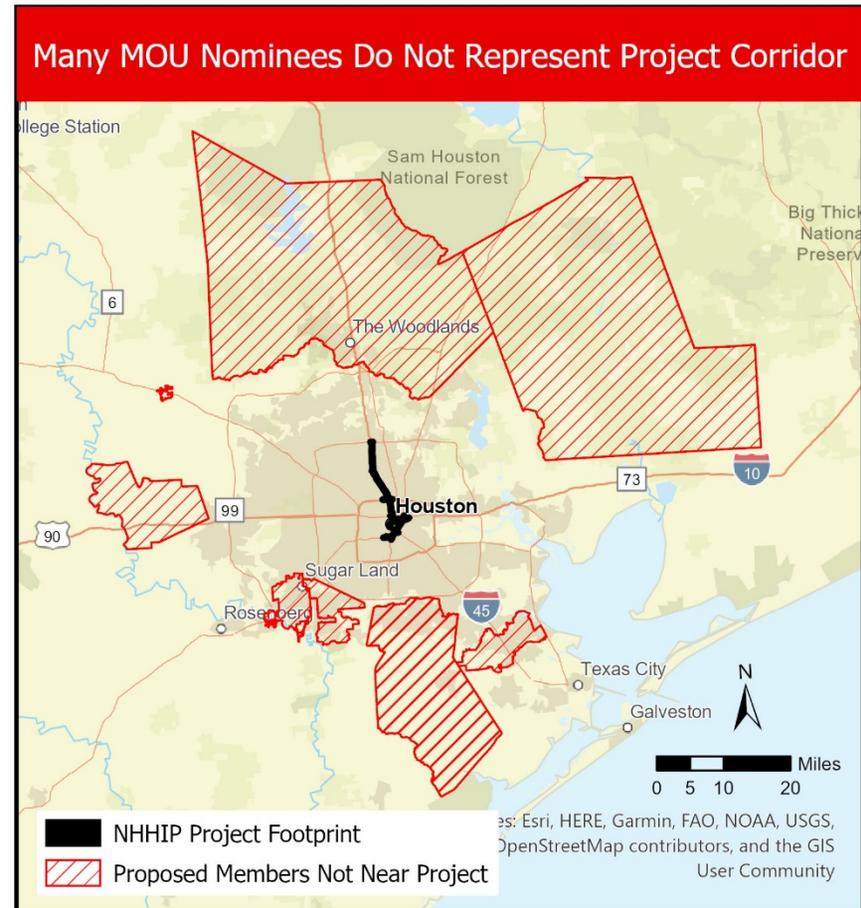
1. Justin Beckendorff, Waller County Commissioner, Pct. 4
2. Adrian Garcia, Harris County Commissioner, Pct. 2
3. Chuck Wemple, Executive Director, H-GAC
4. David Douglas, Liberty County
5. David Robinson, Council Member, City of Houston
6. Dr. Carol Lewis, Chairman, Gulf Coast Rail District
7. Eliza Paul, District Engineer, TxDOT Houston District
8. Grady Prestage, Fort Bend County Commissioner, Pct. 2
9. Joe Zimmerman, Mayor, City of Sugar Land
10. Larry Millican, Council Member - City of League City
11. Mark Keough, Montgomery County Judge
12. Nancy Arnold, Council Member, City of Waller
13. Roger Guenther, Executive Director, Port Houston
14. Carrin Patman, Chair, Board of Directors, METRO
15. Russ Poppe, Harris County Flood Control District
16. Ex-Officio: Texas House of Representatives Ed Thompson, District 29

The TPC Chair's proposed nominees are not in keeping with the language of the motion in June; nor does the working group represent the population and businesses in the NHHIP footprint:

- Six (6) expected MOU working group agency representatives
- Ten (10) non MOU signing agencies (several far from the project footprint)

Action Requested

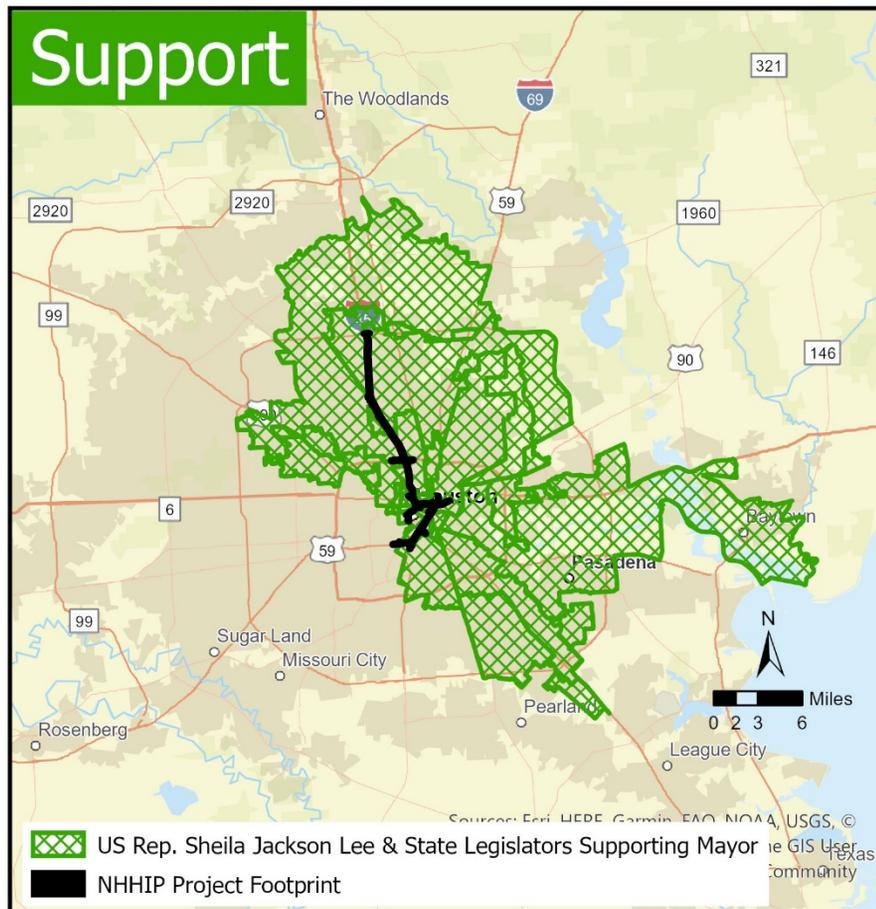
Appointment of a Workgroup to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between various agencies on the North Houston Highway Improvement Project.



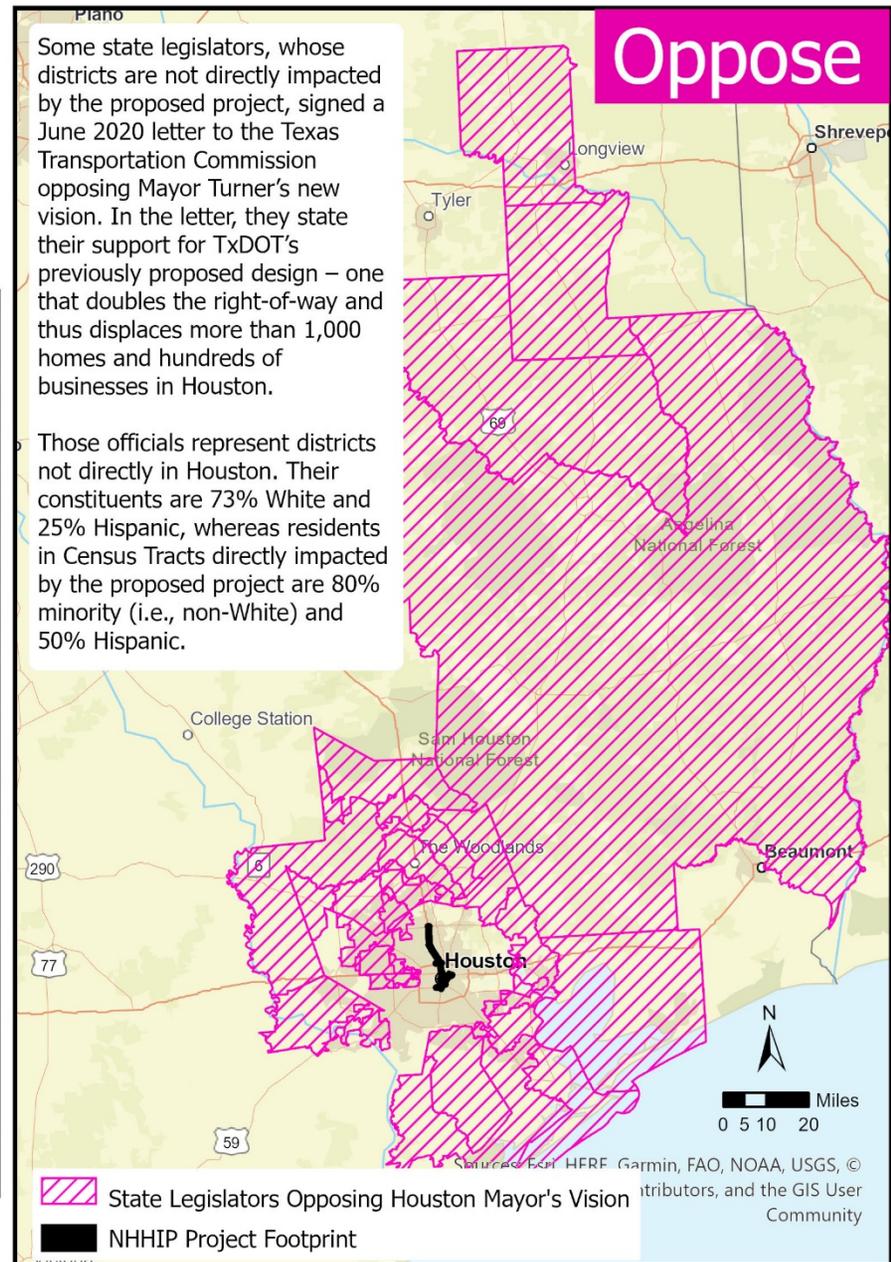
Support for Mayor Turner's I-45 North Vision

Under Mayor Sylvester Turner's directive, the City of Houston engaged the public for a year to identify a new vision for the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP), or the I-45 North Expansion. The Mayor detailed his new vision, which represents genuine input from all impacted communities, in a letter to the Texas Transportation Commission in May 2020.

Federal and state legislators representing the directly impacted communities – largely African-American and Hispanic populations - expressed strong support for Mayor Turner's vision.



Advocates for a robust and equitable transportation network so that all people can reach opportunity



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2018 American Community Survey and TxDOT NHHIP Community Impacts Assessment (December 2019)