

Emailed Comments Received

I live at 7 Gessner and I am writing to vehemently oppose the proposed widening of Gessner from the Buffalo Bayou to Richmond Ave. This will cause an increase in traffic congestion which will cause an increase in pollution and road noise. Any widening will be a health hazard for my family. Already the speed limit on Gessner is 5 mph faster than any other through street with homes on it (eg Kirkwood, Wilcrest, Dairy Ashford). Compounded by vehicles constantly racing by at upwards of 50 mph. The current congestion could be easily handled if the timing of the lights from I10 to Richmond was not so terrible. Surely a traffic algorithm can be developed to increase the efficiency of existing lanes. Please don't destroy a wonderful neighborhood just because some bureaucrats at City Hall want to make Gessner into an expressway.

Ethan Tritt

The purpose of this letter to the Mayor, Council Members, and PWE is to protest the widening of Gessner. The widening of Gessner serves one purpose only: to route increased traffic to the Memorial City Mall and surrounding commercial district. This developer-promoted plan includes widening Gessner to 8 lanes north to Nuens and to 6 lanes south to Richmond. The developers have a problem: insufficient ROW. The City of Houston has 100 feet ROW over Memorial Drive east to Beauregard. From Beauregard east the ROW is 90 feet to just west of Gessner, where the ROW narrows to 80 feet. Just west of Gessner the City of Bunker Hill has 80 feet ROW over Memorial Drive. The CIP #N-100017 for widening Gessner shows an overpass at Westheimer where Gessner intersects Westheimer. CIP # N-100017-Gessner Street Paving and Drainage (Buffalo Bayou to Richmond). Project will widen the existing four lanes to six lanes, construct a bridge along Westheimer (grade separation), replace traffic signals and upgrade storm, water and wastewater lines as needed. Design is anticipated in FY2015, and Construction in FY2018. Source:<http://www.houstontx.gov/cip/15cipadopt/street.pdf>, page 49 Never mind that the overpass at Gessner/Westheimer will probably hurt the Westheimer shopping district. Never mind that the cost will be excessive and unnecessary. Never mind that the overpass will be an ugly eyesore. If developers can get an overpass at Gessner/Westheimer, they can get an overpass at Gessner/Memorial. And thus work around the problem of the 80 foot ROW at Gessner/Memorial. If you do not like this reason for opposing the Gessner Widening Project, there are plenty of other good reasons. Metro National and Moody Ramblin and Midway Companies have 20 lanes of traffic on I10 and 16 lanes of traffic on Beltway 8, plus 6 lanes on Gessner north to Kempwood, and 4-5 lanes on Memorial. Now if these companies cannot make a profit with all that traffic, then widening Gessner will not help them. Metro National and Moody Ramblin and Midway Companies should do more with what they already have. Timing the lights will help move the traffic on Gessner. Also improving the traffic pattern through Town and Country Village will attract more shoppers. Improving the access and parking may improve CityCentre. The traffic plan is currently a disaster. Parallel parking and valet parking at a regional mall??? The parking lots are not safe. In August a woman's purse was stolen in the parking lot of the US Post Office, a federal property. The jewelry store Bailey Banks and Biddle was hit the week of 07/29/2015 during daylight hours. Crews of thieves work the parking lots of Memorial City. Memorial City management hires security patrols. But the thieves are experienced. They have lookouts posted. With their long screwdrivers, they can break into a vehicle in seconds. Until Memorial City management can keep their vast parking lots safe for their shoppers, adding more traffic and more parking will exacerbate the problem of thieves. Widening Gessner will attract commuters who do not want to pay the Beltway 8 toll. Widening Gessner will reduce the revenue from tolls currently paid to TXDOT. Widening Gessner will funnel more traffic into the I10 Corridor, already overly congested. At the north end Gessner dead ends into a residential neighborhood and a sand pit. At the south end Gessner dead ends into a residential development of Missouri City. It really doesn't begin or end anywhere. So what's the point? As stated above, the only point is to increase traffic to Memorial City Mall. More traffic is the last thing we need in West Memorial. WE NEED DETENTION. We need detention to hold the storm water run off from the 1000 acres of concrete jungle that is Memorial City, Town and Country Village, and CityCentre. Four basins of detention were promised years ago in 1999, when the COH formed the TIRZ 17. The residents south of I10 are still waiting for detention. Until TIRZ 17 delivers the promised detention to West

Memorial, please do not pour any more concrete or widen any roads. TIRZ 17 has a Master Drainage Plan. The plan is to channel all storm water run-off from 1000 acres of high rises and mid rises and endless parking lots into the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Commercial developers are not required to provide detention under their buildings. The city does not require detention of commercial developers if the property is grandfathered. Most commercial properties are grandfathered, according to the City of Houston Planning and Development Dept. Until 2008, the Memorial area did not flood. In April, 2009, over 2000 homes and town homes flooded, after a 6 inch rain. In May, 2015, the same homes flooded again after a 6 inch rain. Once a neighborhood becomes stigmatized by flooding, property values decline. The declining property values have a cascading effect. The influx of young families into the Memorial area slows. The young homeowners are no longer willing to remodel or rebuild. Not only does the property tax base decline. The population of school children declines. Eventually the customer base of shoppers and diners for Memorial City Mall will decline. This flooding is having a devastating effect on the Memorial area. But not in Katy, or Sugar Land, or the Woodlands. TIRZ 17 is increasing populations of the master planned communities that ring Houston. The City of Katy should give thanks every day to TIRZ 17. On August 6 I attended a meeting of the TIRZ 17. I sat watching the spectacle of Frostwood residents recounting the hardships of the flooding of May 28 & 29, 2015. Each resident pleaded with the TIRZ 17 for detention. They were allotted 2 minutes, which passed quickly. After the 2 minutes, Chair Ann Givens cut the mike. As soon as the Public Comment period ended, Ann Givens and Board Members began discussing the widening of Gessner from 6 to 8 lanes north to Nuens. And the drainage plan for the south of I10 residents? If there is a drainage plan, which I doubt, it has been postponed until 2017, at the earliest.

Kay Haslam

North Gessner mobility Project North Gessner mobility Project TIRZ 17 and Harris county has deferred detention and drainage projects in the place of development north and south of I 10. This has resulted in increased home flooding and deteriorating drainage south of I10 with the latest event occurring on Memorial Day weekend with some 40 homes being flooded in Frostwood south of I10. Mobility projects increasing the frequency of flooding due to more impervious surfaces need to be deferred till detention and drainage projects are planned and executed. Homes are now impacted that were in the past not affected. It has become a family well being issue that TIRZ and Council need to address with the upmost urgency. TIRZ 17 need to keep their Commitments.

John Jackson

Comments Received After the Public Comment Period Deadline

Gessner lane increase 4 to 6 & new drainage from Richmond to Bayou. 1. 4 to 6 lanes from Richmond to Briar Forest is logical. Going to 4 at the Bayou bridge will negate widening to the South without other improvements. 2. Instead improve access to BW8 & feeder at Westheimer and Briar Forest from Gessner. 3. Install UPS on stop lights from Briar Forest to I10 to keep them sync & not default to flashing every time there is a power interruption. It's a frequent occurrence, 4. Improve drainage & detention before any changes so COH can be proactive in addressing residents well being. thanks for the opportunity to respond.

John Jackson