



CITY OF HOUSTON

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May 25, 2018

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Amendments to the 2017 Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP)

The City of Houston Planning Commission will hold a **public hearing on Thursday, July 26, 2018 at 2:30 p.m. in the City Hall Annex Chambers, Public Level, 900 Bagby Street, Houston, Texas, 77002**. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to allow interested citizens to be heard concerning proposed changes to the 2017 Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP). The MTFP identifies right-of-way needs and proposes roadway alignments within the city limits of Houston and its Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). The MTFP does not initiate the timing of right-of-way acquisition or construction activities related to the roadways.

Information on each proposed amendment will be available for public review at an **open house to be held on Wednesday, June 13, 2018 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the United Way Community Resource Center, 50 Waugh Drive, Houston, Texas, 77007**. The applicants and Planning and Development Department (P&D) personnel will be available at the open house to answer questions.

This notification package - which includes this letter, information about the specific amendments which may be of interest to the respective property owner, and some frequently asked questions - has been mailed to property owners and registered civic associations adjacent to roadways included in the amendment request.

In addition to making comments at the Public Hearing, **written comments may be submitted using the online comment form until the comment deadline of July 6, 2018**. All comments, whether written or in-person, will be considered by the Planning Commission before a final decision is made on each amendment request. Additionally, the Commission will weigh information provided by P&D and other government transportation agencies in the Houston region.

Four weeks after the public hearing, on August 23, 2018, staff will present recommendations to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will vote on each amendment and forward its recommendations to City Council by September 1, 2018. Once an ordinance for the amendments has been adopted by City Council, a new MTFP will be published by the City.

More information about the MTFP and proposed amendments are available on the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan webpage at www.houstonplanning.com. The information, as well as the online comment form, can be found http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/transportation/18_MTFPRequests.html. You may contact the Planning & Development Department at 832-393-6660 or email wu.ying@houstontx.gov.



2018 Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP) Amendments

Frequently Asked Questions

Q What is a Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP) Amendment?

A The City of Houston's MTFP was first adopted by City Council in 1942. It is a long range plan that provides for a system of thoroughfares and collectors to support overall mobility. It does not deal with timing of right-of-way acquisition or road construction. The Plan is updated through an annual amendment process. Amendments generally delete, add or modify a portion of a planned Thoroughfare or Collector. The Plan will continue to be modified in order to meet Houston's growing transportation needs.

Q What is an alternative?

A When the City receives an application to amend the MTFP, staff evaluates the proposed request and studies the adjoining area's major roadway network. The Planning Department (P&D) may identify and evaluate other options in the area, other than the one submitted by the applicant. Such options will be presented as alternatives at the Open House so that all interested parties are aware of options being considered by P&D and Planning Commission.

Q I received a letter from the City. Why? What does this have to do with me?

A If you have received a notice in the mail from the City, it means that our records show you own property that may be located close to or that may be impacted by a proposed amendment to the MTFP. Please read the enclosed report to learn more about the proposed amendment that may impact you and your property.

Q My property is located in the County, not within the City limits. Why is the City dealing with issues in the County?

A The MTFP covers not just the major road network within the City limits, but also within the City's Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). This allows transportation needs to be addressed on a regional basis.

Q I am concerned about a proposed amendment. What can I do?

A First, you can find out more about the amendment request in the following ways:

- Read the report that was included in the mail out; see other helpful links on our website (*see below*)
- Go online to review the application
↳ www.houstontx.gov/planning/transportation/18_MTFPRequests.html
- Attend the **public open house** to meet with the applicant, talk to City staff & fill out a comment form:
↳ **Wednesday, June 13th, 5:30-7:30 p.m., United Way Community Resource Center, 50 Waugh Drive, Houston, TX 77007**
(see map on reverse)
- Contact the Planning Department staff and/or the applicant

Then, if you would like to make your concerns known to the City you can:

- Write an email, letter or fax to the City expressing your concerns
- Attend the **public hearing** and speak directly to the Planning Commission
↳ **Thurs. July 26th, 2:30 p.m., City Hall Annex Chambers, 900 Bagby, Houston, TX 77002** (see map on reverse)

Q What is going to happen at the public open house on June 13th? (see map on reverse)

A There will be map displays and information about each amendment request. You can walk around and view the information and learn more about the amendment requests that are of interest to you. You will also be able to have one-on-one conversation with the applicants and P&D staff. Also, you can learn more about what will happen at the public hearing and how you can best express your concerns to the Planning Commission.

Q What is going to happen at the public hearing on July 26th? (see map on reverse)

A The Planning Commission holds a public hearing to provide an opportunity for concerned citizens to make their views known publicly. Comments submitted by July 6th, using the online comment form on the website (refer to instructions above to locate the link on the website), will also be taken into account by the Planning Commission in making a decision on amendment requests. Additionally, the Commission will weigh information provided by the P&D staff and other government agencies concerned about transportation in our region.

Q Who decides what to do?

A Four weeks after the public hearing, P&D will present its recommendations to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will vote on each amendment and forward its recommendations to City Council by September 1, 2018. Once an ordinance for the amendments has been adopted by City Council, a new MTFP will be published by the City and made available as a reference to other agencies and the public throughout the year.

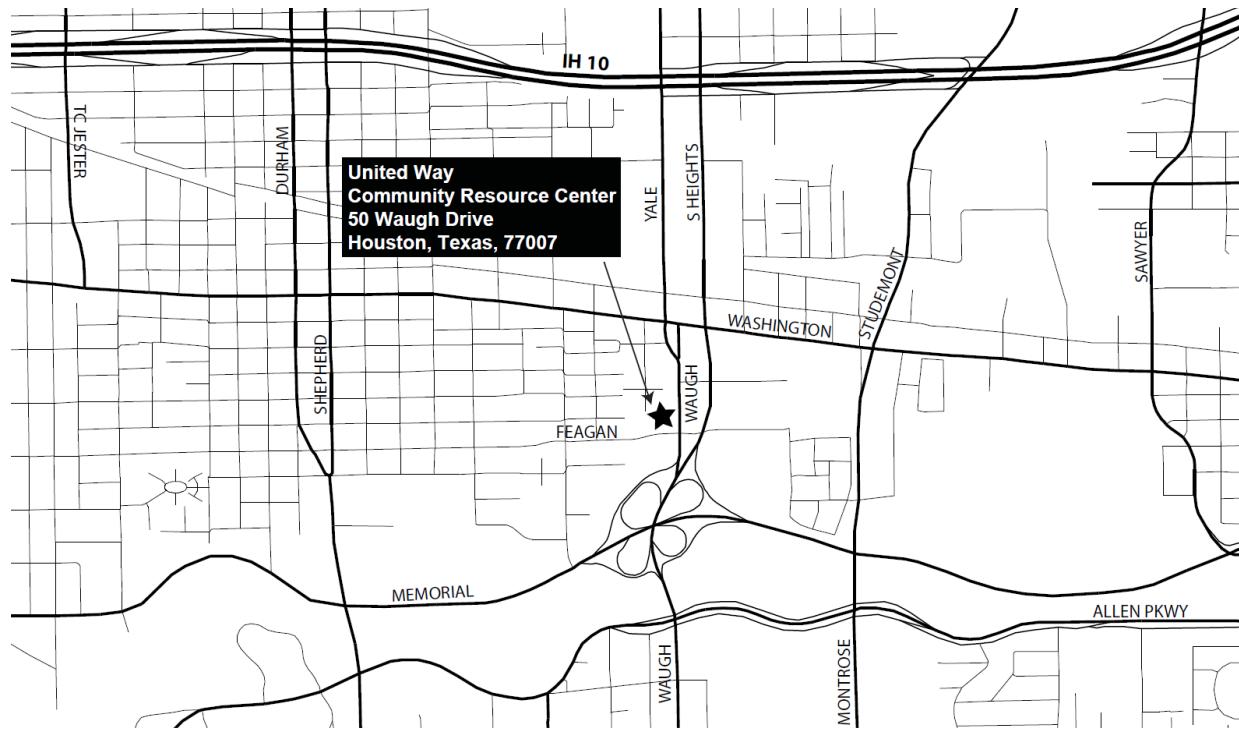
City of Houston - Planning & Development Department

Mailing address: P.O. Box 1562 Houston Texas, 77251-1562

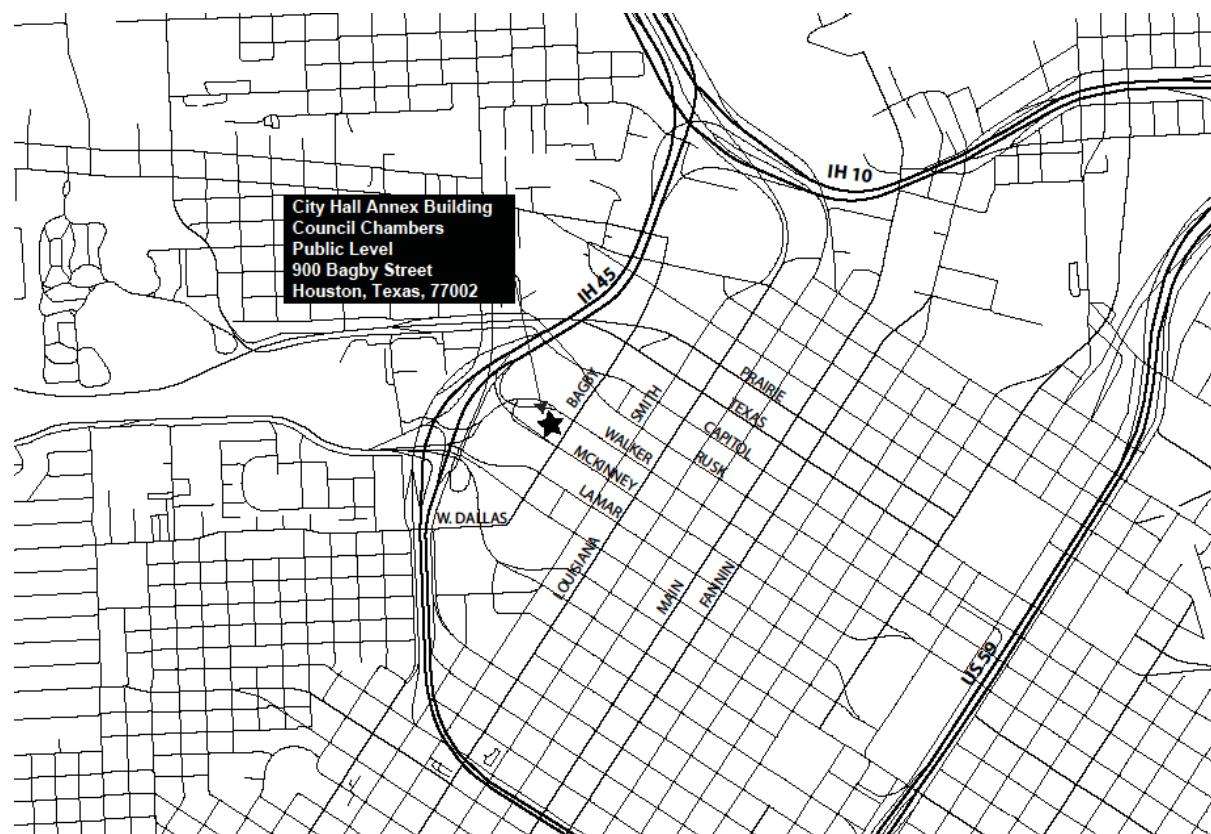
Physical address: 611 Walker, Houston Texas, 77002

Phone: 832.393.6660 Fax: 832.393.6661 Email: mobility.planning@houstontx.gov

Map of Public Open House Location, Wednesday, June 13, 2018 (5:30 - 7:30 p.m.)



Map of Public Hearing Location, Thursday, July 26, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)



PRELIMINARY REPORT

E: Main Street (Western Bypass)

APPLICANT: Walter P Moore

LAMBERT: 5457, 5458

JURISDICTION: City of Houston

PRECINCT: Harris County Pct. 1

DISTRICT: H

PROPOSAL:

Walter P Moore on behalf of the University of Houston is requesting to delete Transit Corridor Street (TCS) Main Street (Western Bypass) from Harrington Street to Shea Street from the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP).

APPLICANT'S JUSTIFICATION and HISTORY:

The western bypass of North Main Street was added to the MTFP at the request of METRO. It first appeared on the plan in 2008. At the time, METRO owned the property the loop road travels through, as well as additional property to the east, and was planning a large multimodal transit facility in the area. Subsequent changes to METRO's architectural program as well as its overall service plan resulted in all the transit facilities being located east of Main Street, in the area surrounding the current Burnett Street light rail station. METRO sold the property surrounding the proposed loop road to the University of Houston- Downtown (UHD), who wishes to construct an academic facility for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) on the land. The original purpose and need for the loop road no longer exists.

Proposal must be considered this year as UHD is in the process of developing a large academic building on the site—architectural plans, site civil work, etc. Lack of consideration would impede plans to develop the property by making it infeasible to site the facility in a timely manner, delaying the educational programs and related academic goals.

Deletion of this thoroughfare will cause no effect on the overall transportation system, and will not adversely affect overall mobility. The short (one-half mile) loop of transit-corridor roadway was requested by METRO as part of a development proposal which is no longer planned. It connects to Main Street at both ends and intersects no other thoroughfares. The broader goals and objectives of the MTFP will not be adversely affected by this proposed amendment, as it would not have served fast or heavy traffic and would not have traveled for any considerable length. The one-mile grid of thoroughfares will see negligible effect. Main Street is less than 500 feet to the east of the loop road to be deleted, and no east- west thoroughfares will change. The transit corridors as a whole will not be adversely affected by this deletion—METRO no longer plans transit along this loop, and sold the surrounding property to UHD.

The proposed amendment will remove a short loop which connects to Main Street at both ends, and intersects no other thoroughfares. There is no impact to the MTFP network as a whole. Traffic to and from the STEM facility must use Main Street, which will remain as a Transit Corridor Street. However, it is not anticipated that the STEM facility itself will increase traffic greatly, as it is part of a campus where visitors park once for multiple buildings. There is a large parking area immediately to the north, and the student population is also likely to continue using transit—there are two light rail stops very near the facility, various bus routes, and a multi-use trail all in proximity to the UHD campus.

This amendment will have no negative effect on the physical characteristics and urban pattern of the area. It will allow UHD to develop a larger footprint of the STEM facility and strengthen their position as a major Downtown activity center. The proposal directly affects UHD's land by eliminating an unnecessary loop which cuts through the property. The majority of land in the area is owned by UHD, METRO, Union Pacific Railroad, and the Harris County Hospital District, with some limited private ownership of undeveloped parcels along the northern and eastern edges of the area.

The loop road we propose for deletion is not needed for access to any of these parcels, with Main Street immediately to the east, and its removal results in the STEM facility having a larger developable area, while also

allowing it to remain away from the constraints to the south (Interstate 10) and to the west (White Oak Bayou's floodplain).

The Complete Streets Executive Order calls for a context-sensitive approach to selecting roadway enhancement for all users. The proposed amendment, while it removes a duplicate loop of transit street, does not affect the continuous Transit Corridor of Main Street, nor any proposed improvements in and around the Burnett Street light rail stop or the Hardy Yards development. Further, by allowing the replacement of surface parking with academic buildings, the proposed amendment will bring additional users to an area already rich in transit and walkability.

The proposed amendment does not negatively affect the Bicycle Master Plan. Neither Main Street nor the loop requested for deletion have an existing or proposed bicycle facility. UHD property does access the existing MKT Trail along White Oak Bayou, and area improvements will facilitate access to and from that multi-use trail, as well as recognizing the trail as an amenity for visitors to the STEM complex.

The proposed amendment recognizes METRO's transit plan, as the loop was originally requested by METRO as part of their plans for the property. Changes to their plan resulted in the property being sold to UHD. The original purpose for the added loop roadway no longer exists, and removing it reflects METRO's current plans for the surrounding area and its transit service.

This area was part of H-GAC's Near Northside Livable Center study in 2010. That study shows the loop road (labeled "Main Bypass"), as METRO was still planning for it to supplement the Burnett/North Main Tunnel. The study recommended more pedestrian facilities in and around the area, and implementing "Parkway" upgrades to Burnett Street. Those upgrades are underway or complete, as part of the METRORail Red Line and the Hardy Yards development. They will not be affected by the elimination of the yet-unbuilt loop road. The study further identified the entire site now owned by UHD as an "area of opportunity"; the STEM facility made possible by this proposed MTFP amendment will bring a large population of faculty, staff, students, and visitors to a currently-undeveloped site.

