



**September 3, 2021**

## **HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL OFFICIAL STATEMENT**

### **H-GAC SUPPORTS CONTINUED DIALOGUE WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO RESOLVE NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT OBSTACLES**

The Texas Transportation Commission's decision to keep the North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP) in the 10-year Unified Transportation Plan provides an opportunity for continued collaboration and conversation regarding its design and impact. This transformative project stands to provide much needed safety and congestion improvements to a critical piece of our region's – and the nation's – infrastructure. The I-45 corridor supports hundreds of thousands of trips each day, helps freight move to and from one of the largest and busiest ports in the country, and provides a critical emergency evacuation route for the region.

As the agency charged with carrying out a cooperative transportation planning process for the region, the Houston-Galveston Area Council recognizes the important concerns raised by local governments and the communities that will be most impacted by the project, as well as the efforts made to ensure those concerns are being heard and addressed by project planners. There are still clear challenges surrounding this project that we must overcome. However, rather than being viewed as reasons to stop the project entirely, these challenges should be thought of as opportunities for stronger engagement and more dedicated collaboration between all the parties with an interest in the development and improvement of this corridor.

Given the potential benefits from the NHHIP to our region and the state of Texas, all stakeholders – including local governments, impacted community members, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration – should undertake all necessary efforts to collaborate on this project. The Houston-Galveston Area Council will continue its work to foster conversation and cooperation, so that together, we can ensure the NHHIP provides the best possible outcomes to all who live, work, and rely on the I-45 corridor and for the entirety of the region.