

# LINK HOUSTON

September 28, 2020

Commissioner Laura Ryan  
Texas Transportation Commissioner  
125 E. 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701

LINK HOUSTON  
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**RE: NHHIP FEIS Comment Period Extension Request**

Dear Commissioner Ryan:

LINK Houston is writing to request that the Texas Department of Transportation **extend the comment period to 120 days** for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the North Houston Highway Improvement Project, also known as the I-45 highway expansion and NHHIP. The minimum required comment period of 30 days is inadequate time for our organization, our partners, and most importantly impacted community members, to adequately review and provide comment on the 8,189 pages in three Final EIS volumes: the 380 pages in Volume 1, the 5,949 pages in Volume 2, and the 2,240 pages in Volume 3.

Over the course of public community engagement in the past three years, we have consistently heard from concerned residents and organizations about the importance of this project to the region and the significant impacts it will have on the low-income residents and communities of color adjacent to the project. Houstonians deserve more time to examine the Final EIS and respond to TxDOT. It is important for TxDOT to listen to residents directly impacted by the project, whose experiences and input will help the state create a better project that improves quality-of-life and avoids re-harming communities in ways similar to past injustices. As we continue to grapple with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we ask that TxDOT mail every residence and business that will be affected by the project a notice about the comment period explaining how they can participate in the civic process.

We want to see a plan for the NHHIP that preserves communities and allows residents to remain in their homes while improving access and safety to multi-modal transportation. These are among the issues outlined in Mayor Turner's vision for the NHHIP as derived from genuine, thorough community engagement. Mayor Turner's vision reimagines the NHHIP in ways that preserve and benefit Houston's communities. The vision is based on realistic goals that prioritize people and community over the typical goals used to justify highway expansions and which are consistently seen not to materialize.

We ask you to do all in your power to extend the comment period and align Mayor Turner with his concerned constituents, as well.

Sincerely,



Oni K. Blair  
Executive Director



Richard Petty  
Chair