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Ms. Roksan Okan-Vick
Executive Director
Houston Parks Board

RE: Public Comments Northwest Sub-regional Mobility Study

Dear Ms. Okan-Vick:

Thank you for your public comment submission on behalf of the Houston Parks Board for the Northwest Sub-regional Mobility Study. The purpose of this letter is to address comments raised in your public comment submission, and provide better insight of final recommendations resulting from this study. Please note all comments received are processed and saved to our public record to ensure a transparent and collective review of public comments. As highlighted by the Northwest Sub-regional Mobility Report and Mayor Parker's recent Complete Streets Executive Order, study recommendations are intended to strike a balance between the regional mobility needs of the City and local needs of the community. Corridor recommendations highlight those priority elements identified by the project team and community that include pedestrian, bicycle, parking and transit facility considerations.

Please note, below responses are organized in the order in which they were received.

- **Traffic Model Result Release:** Travel demand forecasting is defined in Chapter IV. Future Mobility Considerations, under subsection 4.1 Travel Demand Forecasting. The City of Houston and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), through an inter-local agreement, conducted travel demand forecasting for the study area based on future population and employment growth. Utilizing 2035 demographic data currently maintained by H-GAC, the project team modified model assumptions based on submitted development permits, future developments in planning, as well as additional studies previously conducted. To provide a more detailed understanding of model results, Appendix D: Travel Demand Results has been added to the final report for public consumption. Traffic volumes, as utilized by traffic engineers, are provided by segment and color coded by level of failure per provided scenario as detailed in Chapter 4.1.

- **Antoine Drive Bike Connection:** Projected travel demands indicate a need to expand Antoine Drive from a four-lane to six-lane thoroughfare on the City's Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan. However, given recent improvements, future investments slated for the corridor, and feedback received during the final public comment period, the provided 6-lane

designation does not adequately reflect community needs along all segments of the corridor. Working jointly with the Northwest Management District, the project team was able to successfully modify draft recommendations to include a four-lane recommendation for segments of the corridor between Houston N. Rosslyn to SH 249 in line with the community's developmental vision of the corridor. A six-lane designation is recommended for those segments of the corridor providing regional access to area highways from US 290 to Houston N. Rossyln and SH 249 to Beltway 8.

- **Antoine On-Street Bike/Pedestrian Connections:** A shared use path, which is a separated off-street bicycle facility, is recommended in parallel to Antoine Drive given provided traffic volumes and associated speeds. The intent of this recommendation is to ensure safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian access along the corridor regardless of the number of travel lanes recommended for the corridor. This recommendation works to increase the continued connectivity of non-motorized networks within the study area and increase access to neighborhood amenities such as the White Oak Bayou Greenway. Similarly, the Northwest Sub-regional Mobility Study introduces the concept of street connectivity to existing off-street trail networks in Chapter 5.4 Street Connectivity Considerations. This chapter is the first in a sub-regional mobility study to explore alternative connectivity options not directly related to the automobile. Additionally, intersection design considerations are determined at pre-engineering. Recommended considerations are detailed in Chapter 5.8.

- **Boulevard vs. Avenue Designation:** The designation of a boulevard vs. an avenue does not dictate the number of vehicular lanes associated with a corridor. Instead, projected vehicular traffic demands are used to determine whether or not a corridor maintains a sufficient number of lanes. Please visit Chapter 4.1 Travel Demand Forecasting and Appendix D: Travel Demand Model Results, for more information. Speeds along the corridor are also not determined by an avenue vs. boulevard designation, and is often influenced by the general design or feel of the corridor. However, the project team understands concerns raised by the public regarding existing definitions as previously provided in Appendix B: Thoroughfare Types. Given public concern, associated definitions have been modified to properly reflect the intent of this report.

- **Hollister Road:** Hollister Road is recommended for completion by 2035. Given the provided barriers associated with constructing a bridge across the noted detention pond, the segment of Hollister Road north of West Road to Fallbrook Drive is not anticipate to be built by 2035. However, the connection of this corridor is vital for the longevity of the greater transportation system, and as such this segment of the roadway is not recommended for removal. The project team acknowledges that bike facilities along Hollister Road would greatly benefit the provided bicycle network, but present a challenge in terms of implementation. As such, a series of Minor Collectors directly abutting, or in parallel to Hollister Road, are recommended where vehicular traffic counts and speeds are low providing alternative routes for bicycle traffic to the bayou including:

  - Langfield Road
  - Guhn Road
  - Fairbanks White Oak
  - Woodland West Drive (with connection across White Oak Bayou)
  - Woodland Oaks Drive (with connection across White Oak Bayou)

  Should the network be completed, the project team recommends consideration of bicycle facilities along Hollister Road in conjunction with, or in lieu of, facilities on Fairbanks N. Houston. Similarly, connections to the off-street bike network, as well as continuous connections across associated bayous, are recommended.

- **Ella Blvd Bike Facility and Bridge**: Recognizing the importance of Houston Parks Boards efforts, the following verbiage has been provided on the Ella Boulevard Corridor Sheet as provided in Chapter 6.2 Corridor Sheets:

  Ella Boulevard is a regional connector and not appropriate for on-street bicycle facilities along some portions of the roadway. However, on-street facilities are recommended along the more urbanized sections of the corridor, and an off-street bike path may be accommodated north of Dewalt Street to Mount Houston providing added amenities to a more residential context. Should Ella be extended north of SH 249, connections to the off-street trail network along Halls Bayou, including continuous access across the bayou for both on-street and off-street users, should be prioritized.

- **West Road:** West Road is not anticipated to be built by 2035. However, the project team recognizes the importance of providing essential links to the bayou network for an enhanced multi-modal network. Northwest Sub-regional Mobility Study represents the first study of its kind to explore Changing Mobility Consideration (Chapter V.) affecting Houston today. The intent of this chapter is to explore Houston's maturing transportation network from one that moves the greatest number of vehicles to one that moves the greatest number of people. Topics include understanding the components of the pedestrian realm, defining bicycle users types and related bicycle facilities, as well as intersection design considerations where all provided modes – including the pedestrian - intersect. Within the suburban context of the Northwest study area, the provided chapter also explores ways in which access to neighborhood amenities – such as schools, libraries, etc. – can be increased through alternative off-street networks often associated with area bayous

- **North/south connections for Bayou Greenways 2020 project:** Please see West Road response, and refer to Chapter 5.4 Street Connectivity Considerations for more information. The provided section represents the first of its kind within a City of Houston mobility study, and the project team is enthusiastic to see this section mature within other studies throughout the City.

Thank you again for your comments on behalf of the Houston Parks Board. We thank you and your organization for cooperation throughout this process as the project team works to finalize recommendations that best serve both regional and local transportation needs. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 713-837-7950 or via email at Amar.Mohite@houstontx.gov

Sincerely,

Amar Mohite
Division Manager

PW:AM/ah

cc: Michael Kramer, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Khang N, Assistant Director Public Works & Engineering