

Harris County



Precinct One

RODNEY ELLIS
Commissioner

4/24/20

J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.
Chairman, Texas Transportation Commission
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chairman Bugg:

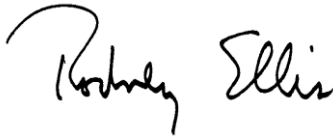
I am requesting that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) delay the release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP). Our office's capacity to adequately respond and the community's ability to provide substantive feedback have been drastically impacted by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Houston and Harris County regions are currently working under a Stay Home, Work Safe order, in an effort to protect the public's health. This condition makes engaging in any form of feedback difficult for our residents, businesses, and County leadership. The existing time constraints allow for neither the proper evaluation of the \$7 billion project nor the lasting impact it will have on our residents.

As part of a multi-agency collaboration, including the City of Houston, the County and METRO, my office is working to evaluate proposed alternatives to TxDOT's recent plans. These plans will address our region's transportation goals and the feedback of those directly affected by the NHHIP expansion. This effort will be in vain if TxDOT does not take into account the effects of COVID-19 on our ability to evaluate the project and proposed alternatives within the current expected timeline.

This is why I am calling for a fair opportunity to complete and submit our feedback and alternative recommendations to TxDOT's existing plan for inclusion in the FEIS. I ask that TxDOT delay the release of the FEIS envisioned by the NHHIP until the 3rd or 4th quarter of 2020, and issue an official public statement prior to the public meeting of the Texas Department of Transportation Commissioners on April 30, 2020.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodney Ellis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R".

Rodney Ellis
Harris County Commissioner, Precinct One

Cc: Commissioner Alvin New
Commissioner Laura Ryan
Commissioner Robert C. Vaughn
James M. Bass, Executive Director, Texas Department of Transportation
Eliza Paul, District Engineer – Houston, Texas Department of Transportation