



# South Gessner Reconstruction

CIP No. N-100017-0001

## PROJECT INFORMATION

*Updated April 2017*



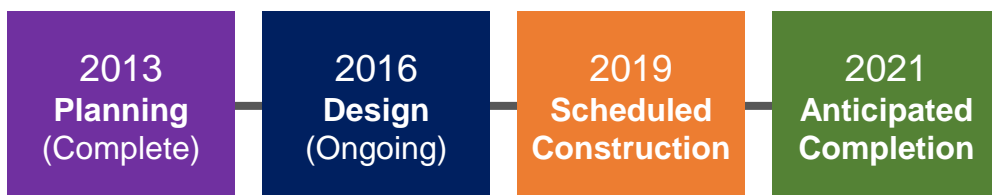
# About the Project Area

This Capital Improvement Plan project provides paving, storm water drainage, water, sanitary and intersection improvements to the Gessner corridor.

Project limits extend along South Gessner from Richmond to Buffalo Bayou.

The project is funded and programmed for construction in 2019.

## PROJECT TIMELINE



*\*Timeline subject to change.*

### Public Input Meeting held:

April 13, 2016

### Meeting Location:

Tracy Gee  
Community Center  
3599 Westcenter Dr.  
Houston, TX 77042

### Presenter:

Mark L. Loethen, P.E.  
Deputy Director  
Infrastructure  
Planning Branch  
Department of  
Public Works &  
Engineering (PWE)

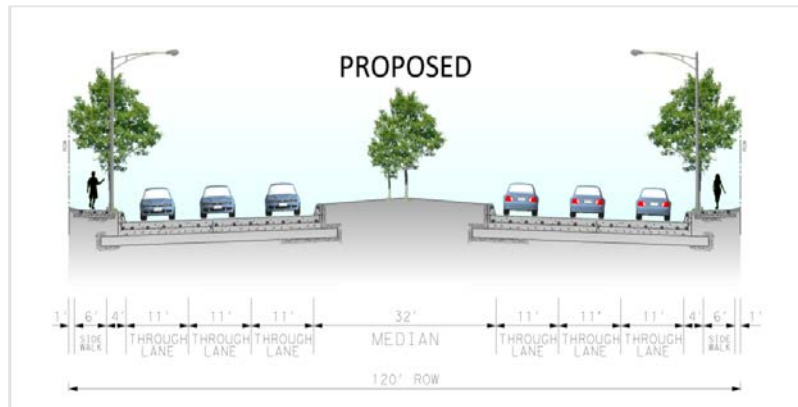
### Total # of Attendees:

121

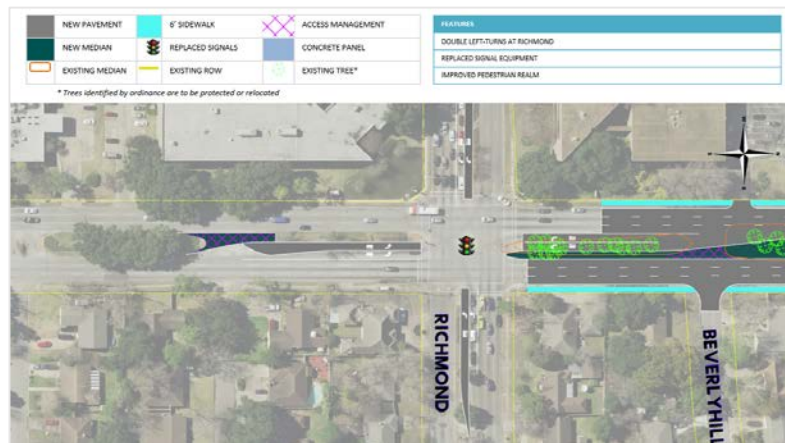
# Project Details

Proposed improvements as presented at the public meeting include:

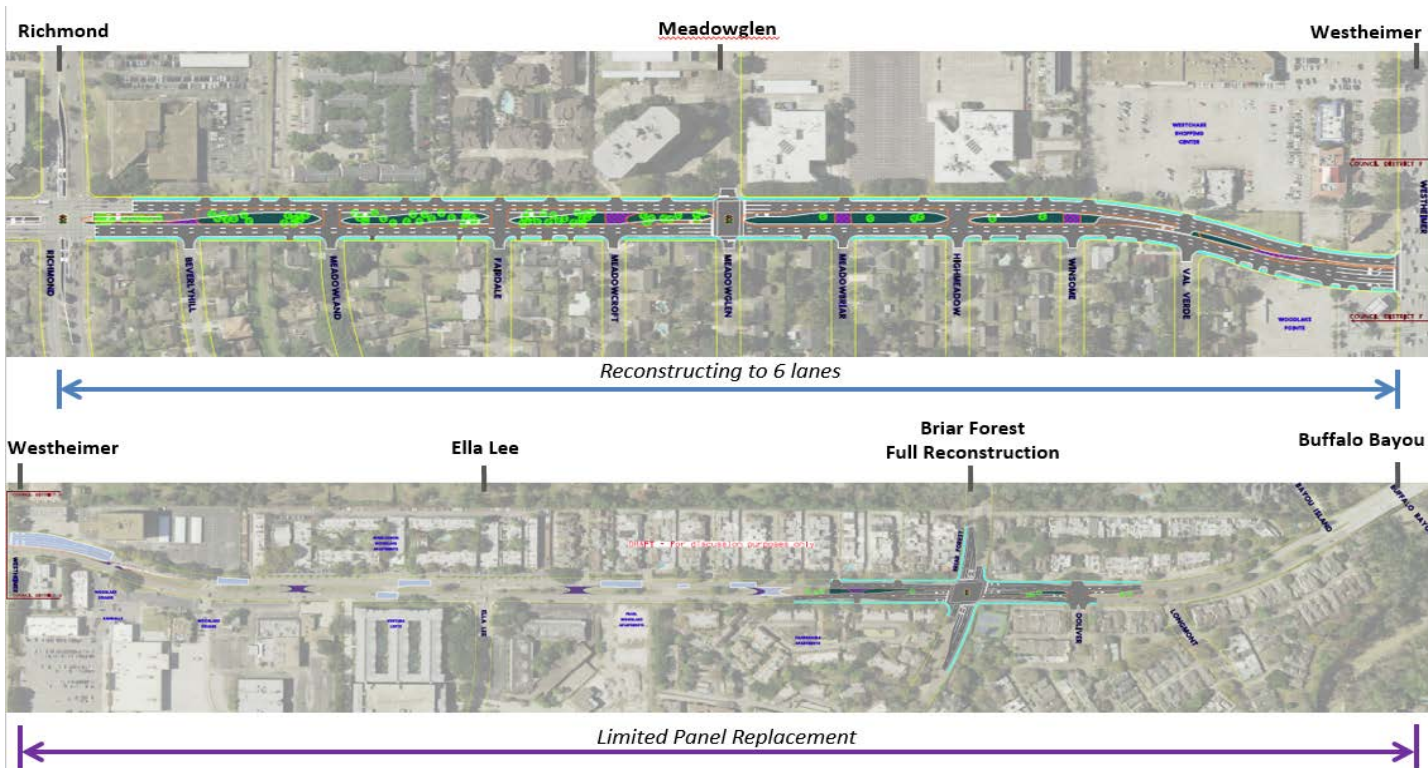
- Expand to six lanes south of Westheimer
- Replace panels in limited areas north of Westheimer
- Improve signals and turn lanes at intersections
- Replace storm, water and sewer systems as necessary
- Improve pedestrian realm



Gessner – Richmond to Westheimer



Gessner – Richmond Intersection Improvements



# Summary of Public Comments

## Traffic Comments ( pgs. 1 of 4)

### Public Comment or Concern

1. Do not widen Gessner, north of Westheimer, to six lanes. There is long term concern that it will eventually happen between Westheimer and I-10.

#### **PWE Response:**

*At this time, Gessner will not be widened to six lanes between Westheimer and Buffalo Bayou.*

### Public Comment or Concern

2. Widening Gessner from Richmond to Westheimer will only push the bottleneck further north. It will also attract more traffic.

#### **PWE Response:**

*Widening Gessner from Richmond to Westheimer may affect traffic patterns, but it is expected to reduce congestion at intersections within the project limits.*

### Public Comment or Concern

3. The traffic signal at Gessner and Briar Forest needs immediate attention because it malfunctions when there is lightning, and sometimes even with light rain.

#### **PWE Response:**

*The traffic signal at Gessner and Briar Forest will be reconstructed. Malfunctioning may occur during inclement weather and should be reported to [311](#) for evaluation and repairs.*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

#### Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

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**Comment Period:**  
April 13, 2016 thru  
May 16, 2016

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**# of Comments Received:**

**121**

# Summary of Public Comments

## Traffic Comments ( pgs. 2 of 4)

### Public Comment or Concern

4. Some citizens think adding turn lanes at Gessner and Briar Forest will relieve problems, others think they are unnecessary and adjusting the timing of the signals could solve all of the traffic problems at the intersection. One resident suggests having double left-turns at the northbound approach of Gessner, instead of an exclusive right-turn. Another resident suggests the consideration of a roundabout.

### PWE Response:

*The planned reconfiguration of the Gessner and Briar Forest intersection was based on a traffic analysis that included traffic counts. An option was presented to provide double left turns at each approach, but it was not possible due to existing geometric and Right-of-Way (ROW) limitations. The next best configuration was implemented into the plan. Changing the timing of the traffic signals may help, but additional lanes are necessary to provide a reasonable level of service through this intersection. A roundabout would require acquisition of additional real estate.*

### Public Comment or Concern

5. Bike lanes should be removed.

### PWE Response:

*The bike lanes along Briar Forest will remain, as they are integral to the City's plan to provide a bike network to its residents. Measures will be taken by the design engineer to ensure safety to bike riders and drivers as they cross the Gessner intersection.*

## Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

### Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Traffic Comments ( pgs. 3 of 4)

### Public Comment or Concern

6. The bus stop on the northwest corner of the Gessner and Briar Forest intersection should be relocated to the southwest corner, away from the planned exclusive right turn lane, in order to allow vehicles to turn west unimpeded. Its relocation should be considered now because traffic congestion due to a stopped bus is often observed.

#### **PWE Response:**

*The relocation of the bus stop on the northwest corner of the intersection of Gessner and Briar Forest will be evaluated during the design process. The design team will coordinate with METRO.*

### Public Comment or Concern

7. Traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle signals need to be modernized. Traffic monitoring cameras should be implemented in order to adjust signals according to traffic demand.

#### **PWE Response:**

*Signals at all intersections will be upgraded to meet current City standards.*

### Public Comment or Concern

8. Traffic obstruction should be kept to a minimum during construction.

#### **PWE Response:**

*Construction will take place in segments that allow a reasonable and safe flow of traffic.*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

#### Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Traffic Comments ( pgs. 4 of 4)

### Public Comment or Concern

9. Are there any immediate ways to help traffic flow through the Gessner and Briar Forest intersection?

#### **PWE Response:**

*This project will address traffic flow by updating intersections and traffic signals to meet current City standards. For immediate assistance, please call [311](tel:311) or visit the City's Traffic Operations Division at: <https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/traffic/index.html> .*

### Public Comment or Concern

10. The amount of heavy vehicles should be limited along Gessner in order to improve road quality. Many heavy vehicles use Gessner to bypass the tollway.

#### **PWE Response:**

*The City does not have the jurisdiction to limit heavy trucks from using Gessner.*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

#### Traffic Comments

Accessibility  
Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and  
Property Comments



# Summary of Public Comments

## Accessibility Comments ( pgs. 1 of 3)

### Public Comment or Concern

1. There is no plan to safely support accessibility into and out of Woodlake Forest IV Community. A traffic signal is needed for this section of the neighborhood. The current plan to add a left-turn bay at Doliver will make it difficult for drivers to access the southbound lanes of Gessner from the neighborhood. Drivers currently use the median opening to wait as the southbound vehicles at the Briar Forest intersection clear out. It would be ridiculous to make a U-turn at Longmont in order to head south along Longmont.

### **PWE Response:**

*The design team will look closely at the accessibility in and out of Woodlake Forest IV. The need for a traffic signal for the neighborhood was not identified during planning stages, but at a minimum, measures will be taken to improve the sight distance at Doliver and Longmont.*

### Public Comment or Concern

2. The median opening at Doliver should be closed because turns across Gessner should be discouraged.

### **PWE Response:**

*Closing the median opening at Doliver would improve traffic through the Briar Forest and Gessner intersection, but it may disrupt accessibility to Woodlake Forest IV. The design team will take these factors into consideration during the project analysis.*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments



# Summary of Public Comments

## Accessibility Comments ( pgs. 2 of 3)

### Public Comment or Concern

3. Do not close the median that allows access into Randall's because it helps ease congestion during the peak traffic hours.

#### **PWE Response:**

*The current plan would convert the first median opening north of the Westheimer intersection into a restricted left-turn lane. This configuration would improve traffic conditions at Gessner, while still allowing left turns into Randall's.*

### Public Comment or Concern

4. Closing the medians between Richmond and Westheimer will create more cut-through traffic for the Tanglewilde neighborhood. Can signs that say "No Thru Traffic" be added? What else can be done to prevent cut-through traffic?

#### **PWE Response:**

*The additional lanes, closed median openings, and proper operation of traffic signals between Richmond and Westheimer should encourage drivers to stay on Gessner instead of cutting through the Tanglewilde neighborhood. Speed cushions on neighborhood streets that have a median opening at Gessner may also help deter cut-through traffic. Residents that are interested in implementing speed cushions, road signs, and other traffic-calming measures should contact the City's [Neighborhood Traffic Management Program](#) .*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Accessibility Comments (pgs. 3 of 3)

### Public Comment or Concern

5. Widening Gessner will make access to residential driveways along Gessner more dangerous than it already is.

#### **PWE Response:**

*The widening of Gessner should not change the accessibility to residential driveways along Gessner. However, residential driveway encroachment will be evaluated during the project design analysis.*

### Public Comment or Concern

6. Closing the median at Meadowvale will cause significant traffic to be deterred directly in front of 9671 Meadowvale and throughout the neighborhood. Are there any plans to block Meadowvale from thru traffic?

#### **PWE Response:**

*Currently, there are no plans to close Meadowvale from through traffic. Closing the median opening at Meadowvale would eliminate the ability to turn left onto Meadowvale, thus reducing traffic through Meadowvale.*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Safety Comments (1 of 3)

### Public Comment or Concern

1. If traffic calming devices are the solution for cut-through traffic that will be generated from the closed medians between Richmond and Westheimer, then response by emergency vehicles will be slowed down.

### **PWE Response:**

*The implementation of traffic-calming devices considers the effects they can have on emergency vehicles; City-standard speed cushions are designed with spacing that allows emergency vehicles with wide bases to pass through the device without having to slow down.*

### Public Comment or Concern

2. The increased traffic that will result from this project will cause more pollution, crime, and traffic accidents. How are you going to protect the neighborhood from car pollution and noise pollution? There should be a sound barrier along the northbound lanes between Richmond and Westheimer. Kids and animals have also been hit by cars; the Tanglewilde neighborhood should have its speed limit lowered to 20 mph.

### **PWE Response:**

*Sound barriers are not standard for thoroughfares similar to Gessner. Trees will be planted along the corridor, which may serve as a noise deterrent. Congestion relief provided by this project can also lead to air quality improvements. For traffic speed limitations, please contact the City's [Neighborhood Traffic Management Program](#) .*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Safety Comments (2 of 3)

### Public Comment or Concern

3. Drivers that speed along the southbound lanes of Gessner have wrecked the fence on Bayou Pointe more than once. The current plan will attract more traffic and cause this to happen more often. The City should pay to fix the fence every time.

### **PWE Response:**

*The fence damage on Bayou Pointe is a law enforcement speeding issue and will be handled by the police department. The lane configuration along this segment of S. Gessner from Westheimer to the Bayou will not change, however, limited panel replacement is being proposed.*

### Public Comment or Concern

4. The speed limit along Gessner should be reduced to 30 mph in order to make it safer for residents living along Gessner.

### **PWE Response:**

*The speed limit along Gessner will remain at 35 mph. However, immediate concerns with traffic and speed limitations should be forwarded to the City's [Neighborhood Traffic Management Program](#).*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Safety Comments (3 of 3)

### Public Comment or Concern

5. Make pedestrian facilities and bike lanes safe.

#### **PWE Response:**

*Sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities will be rebuilt between Richmond and Westheimer and near the Briar Forest intersection. The bike lanes along Briar Forest will be widened as they approach the intersection at Gessner to enhance safety.*

### Public Comment or Concern

6. Elementary schools near the project limits are vulnerable to the negative impacts that traffic will cause. Can school zone signs be placed on all streets leading to Emerson Elementary?

#### **PWE Response:**

*Requests to add school zone signs must be submitted through the school principal to the [City's School Coordination Program](#) .*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

**Safety Comments**

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Drainage Comments (1 of 1)

### Public Comment or Concern

1. The intersection of Gessner and Briar Forest floods with minimal rain, making it difficult for compact cars to cross the intersection. There are no new drains planned for that intersection.

#### **PWE Response:**

*The intersection of Gessner and Briar Forest will be repaved and new drainage inlets will be added in order to mitigate drainage problems at the intersection.*

### Public Comment or Concern

2. Drainage ditches should be cleaned and dredged.

#### **PWE Response:**

*Requests for ditch maintenance should be submitted to the City's 311 service.*

### Public Comment or Concern

3. This project has the probability of adversely affecting drainage and flooding homes. Meadowvale, especially at its intersection with Tanglewilde, floods during heavy rain and this project will make it worse.

#### **PWE Response:**

*The plan for the segment between Richmond and Westheimer includes the addition of a 60-inch diameter storm system and inlets in order to provide adequate storm water conveyance for the surrounding drainage areas. Overall drainage impact from the project has been evaluated and will be confirmed during the design process.*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Landscape and Property Comments (1 of 2)

### Public Comment or Concern

1. Do not destroy the medians, along with its trees and flowers that took years to develop. Tree conservation needs to take place and removal needs to be kept at a minimum.

#### **PWE Response:**

*Both the addition and removal of median space needs to take place in order to achieve a serviceable flow of traffic. The conservation and relocation of existing trees will be analyzed during the design phase and trees will be replaced or relocated where necessary.*

### Public Comment or Concern

2. Taller curbs should be used to keep cars out of the grass and trees.

#### **PWE Response:**

*Standard curbs are 6 inches tall and will be used throughout this project.*

### Public Comment or Concern

3. This project will be detrimental to property values and will ruin the neighborhood, especially near the planned widening. All value could be lost if any acquisition were needed to facilitate the widening.

#### **PWE Response:**

*the improved infrastructure and drainage, proposed by this project, may lead to lend some value overall, to the neighborhood . No ROW acquisition is scheduled for the project. However, limited acquisition may occur at intersections to accommodate updated traffic signal equipment. Residents will be notified of any ROW acquisitions necessary as a result of final design.*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

# Summary of Public Comments

## Landscape and Property Comments (2 of 2)

### Public Comment or Concern

4. There seems to be no plan to improve the sidewalk between Windswept and Richmond, which will adversely affect the value and aesthetic appeal of the properties along Gessner. Are there any plans for sidewalk improvements south of Richmond?

### PWE Response:

*Planned sidewalk improvements end at Richmond, but could extend south to Meadowvale in order to provide compliant facilities to pedestrians crossing Richmond. Residents outside of the project limits that wish to have sidewalk improvements must submit an application to the City's [Safe Sidewalk Program](#).*

### Public Comment or Concern

5. If a grade separation at the intersection of Gessner and Westheimer is needed, it should be an underpass because a bridge would ruin the adjacent neighborhood and destroy any chance it has to retain anything resembling a truly residential character.

### PWE Response:

*The planned grade separation at Gessner is currently recommended as an overpass due to the higher cost and contingencies that would result from proposing an underpass. No plans or funding has been allocated to implement the recommendation at this time.*

### Major Categories or Areas of Concern Are:

Traffic Comments

Accessibility Comments

Safety Comments

Drainage Comments

Landscape and Property Comments

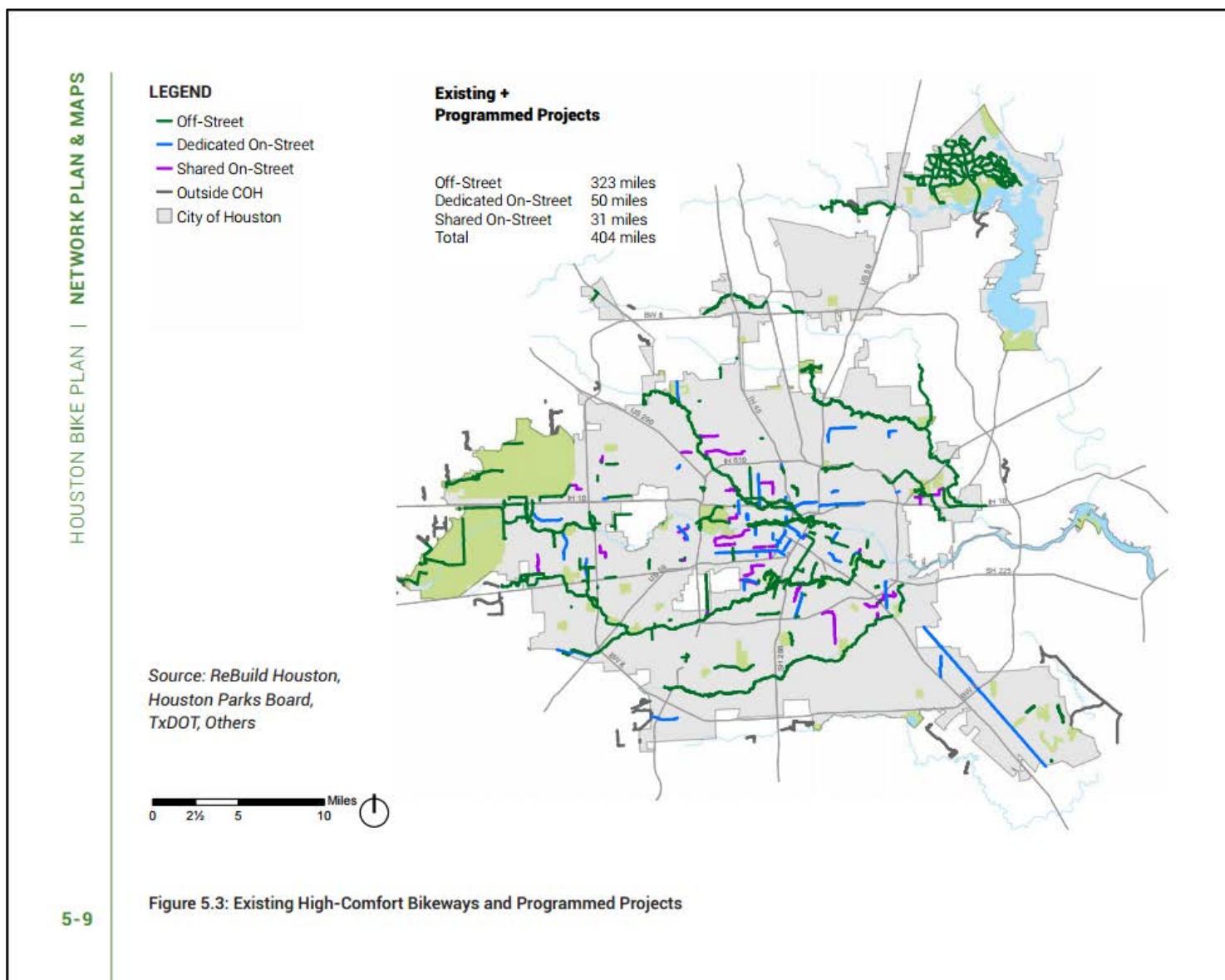


# About the Houston Bike Plan

The City of Houston developed the Houston Bike Plan through a 12-month planning effort to update the City's Comprehensive Bikeway Plan originally adopted in 1993. The City and the Houston region have made great strides in improving people's ability to bike to more destinations, earning a Bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community award from the League of American Bicyclist in 2013. New trails are being built along our bayous, new protected bikeways have been installed, and more people are riding all over the City.

For more information, please visit:

<http://houstonbikeplan.org/about-the-houston-bike-plan>



# About Complete Streets and Rebuild Houston

## ABOUT COMPLETE STREETS

Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan (Executive Order 1-15) guides the development of mobility planning and design of the City of Houston street and drainage projects. This Executive Order identifies goals and steps to move the City toward the achievement of Complete Streets through the planning, designing, budgeting, constructing, and reconstructing of all transportation improvements. The Executive Order recognizes that all streets are not the same and that reconstruction of the public right-of-way (ROW) should strongly utilize context sensitive design, incorporating local development context, and also take into account the role a particular corridor plays in the region's multimodal transportation networks. The introduction of these programs, as well as other initiatives that address multimodal safety on the region's roadways, requires rethinking existing planning and design. Evaluating existing approaches ensures that projects developed and constructed by the City of Houston meet these objectives.

## ABOUT REBUILD HOUSTON

The reconstruction of the City's street and drainage infrastructure following the guidelines of the Complete Street and Transportation Plan is made possible through resources provided by the ReBuild Houston Program. ReBuild Houston is a voter-initiated and voter-approved, Pay-As-You-Go program to address the City of Houston's street and drainage infrastructure needs in a systematic, prioritized and objective manner. ReBuild Houston is a part of the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and the 10-Year plan for Streets & Drainage. Street & Drainage improvement projects are separated into three phases of planning, design, and construction which allows for a much more detailed and objective planning process that complements the City's established Capital Improvement Plan.

To learn more about the ReBuild Houston and Street & Drainage infrastructure improvement process visit [www.rebuildhouston.org](http://www.rebuildhouston.org).

