

TxDOT Projects and Plans for Houston Area

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The Houston District is remarkable because of the variety within its six-county area. Of the twenty-five districts in Texas, only the Atlanta and Dallas districts are smaller in actual square miles. However, it is the largest district in the state in terms of funding and population. With more than 3.5 million citizens in Houston, the Houston District has a million more persons than the Dallas District and is seven times larger than the district with the smallest population. In terms of current construction, the Houston District has, since the mid 1980's, captured approximately one quarter of the state construction funds awarded by the Texas Transportation Commission. With one-fifth of the state population and one-fifth of all state-registered vehicles, the Houston District is currently rebuilding major freeways in every part of the district. Extensive reconstruction of the state maintained highways has a demonstrable effect on the region's highways; in Houston the congestion index as measured by the Texas Transportation Institute declined seven years in a row, moving Houston from first place into a tie for 12th place. There are more miles of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes than any other city in the nation. An active partnership with the City of Houston, Harris County and METRO, the transit authority, has produced TranStar, a regional traffic management facility.

TxDOT continues to flex its muscle here. At over 10,000 feet in length, the Fred Hartman Bridge over the Houston Ship Channel is the longest cable-stayed bridge in the state, and at the time it was designed, the longest in the nation. If you worked on Texas 249, you may have contributed to the advancement of bridge design with the installation of the new light-weight box girders used in the construction of the Louetta overpass or in Surfside with the creation of the longest segmental bridge in Texas -- the new High Bridge at Surfside on State Highway 332 over the Intracoastal Waterway. Today the longest steel girders in the state are in the Houston District. These girders are currently under construction on the HOV structure tying IH 45 and IH 10 to downtown Houston. Building highways in the nation's fourth largest city requires the Houston District to search out and adapt for local use innovative designs and structures. In the near future, the district will start the \$1 billion worth of improvements to IH 10-Katy Freeway as well as the reconstruction of the IH 610-West Loop.

But not all programs demand more steel and concrete. Highways built in the future in the Houston District will be pleasant green corridors full of esthetic amenities because of the work done here by the Green Ribbon Project. A joint project of local community leaders and the Houston District, the project provides highway planners with construction design alternatives to emphasize natural cultural and historical landmarks. This will encourage the building of state facilities according to new environmental-friendly standards since this district contains the earliest Austin colony settlements and historical sites, including the site of the Battle of San Jacinto.

The Houston District is a significant partner in the efforts to increase mobility for the region. From Galveston's wharves to the Bush Intercontinental Airport, Houstonians rely on transportation. In partnership with others or alone, the district employees contribute measurably to the well being of

the citizens of this part of Texas as their transportation partners.

If you have any questions, please contact [Dr. C.Vipulanandan](#)

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