



CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL TO LA PORTE INDUSTRY

Local Road Project Updates

For this meeting on local road project updates, there were 3 presenting parties. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) provided updates on SH 225 from Preston Road to SH 146 and SH 146 from north of 225 to south of Barbours Cut Boulevard. Harris County Precinct 2 gave an update on reimagining the Spencer Highway Corridor Study. Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) provided updates on Beltway 8 Sam Houston Ship Channel Bridge.

TxDOT - SH 225 and SH 146 Project Updates

Robel Sintayehu, TxDOT Advanced Project Development, and Mike Rudd, TxDOT Infrastructure Consulting & Engineering, provided updates on long-range planning. TxDOT is conducting a schematic environmental study covering approximately nine miles of SH 225 from Preston Road to SH 146 and portions of SH 146 north of SH 225 to south of Barbours Cut boulevard. The study builds on the earlier PEL study which recommended elevated lanes to improve mobility and safety. These elevated lanes could be constructed either in the center of the roadway or between the frontage roads and the general-purpose lanes. The study evaluated different operational concepts for these lanes, including a truck-only option, a high-occupancy vehicles (HOV) option, and a managed-lane option. Under the managed-lane concept, the elevated lanes could accommodate trucks, high-occupancy vehicles (HOV), transit passengers, and potentially other vehicles during designated times of the day to optimize traffic flow and system efficiency. TxDOT will also assess existing roadway conditions, ramps, and design criteria to determine necessary upgrades. Stakeholder engagement and public meetings will continue, with updated recommendations expected later this year.

Jamal Elahi, TxDOT Area Engineer, provided updates on three current construction projects along SH 225 and SH 146. SH-225 from IH-610 East to Preston Avenue project began in June 2025 with a bid amount of \$22 million. The project is currently 41% complete and is estimated to be finished in early 2026. The scope of work includes full-depth concrete repairs, asphalt

overlay on the main lanes and frontage roads, updated pavement markings, guardrail replacement, and installation of new street signs.

To date, level-up work has been completed on both eastbound and westbound main lanes and frontage roads. Crews have begun replacing guardrails and pouring mow strips, and are awaiting for warmer weather to complete the final surface layer operations. During construction, motorists should expect increased traffic, contractor activity along the roadway, uneven lanes, and potential daytime and nighttime lane closures. Once weather conditions permit, the final surface layer will be applied to improve ride quality and complete the driving surface.

The SH-225 from Beltway 8 to Miller Cut-off Road project is scheduled to begin in April 2026 with a bid amount of \$14 million and an estimated construction duration of 10 months. The scope of work includes full-depth concrete repairs, placement of a 2-inch asphalt overlay, and installation of new pavement markings. These improvements are intended to enhance pavement condition, extend roadway life, and improve overall ride quality for motorists.

Beltway 8 Frontage Roads from Fairmont to Darling Street project began in June 2022 with a contract amount of \$29 million. The project is currently 67% complete, with an estimated completion date of August 2026. The scope of work includes full roadway reconstruction, drainage improvements, sidewalk and driveway construction, and new pavement markings.

At this time, the northbound section has been completed, while construction continues on the southbound section. During construction, motorists should expect one to two lane closures, traffic congestion, movement of heavy equipment, nightly closures, and typical construction-related noise and activities.

Harris County Precinct 2 - Spencer Highway Corridor Update

Jorge Bustamante, Harris County Precinct 2, presented updates on the Spencer Highway project and Fairmont Parkway Improvements project. The Spencer Highway project aligns with Commissioner Garcia's "Revive to Thrive" initiative and Harris County's Vision Zero commitment to have safer streets. Spencer Highway was identified as a high-risk corridor for serious crashes and fatalities. This project planning process included data collection, two rounds of community meetings, public input on roadway cross-sections, medians, sidewalks, and safety improvements. A third public meeting will present a recommended design alternative, including median configurations and safety features tailored to different segments of the corridor. There are still opportunities for refinement.

The Fairmont Parkway Improvements project includes widening from Red Bluff to 14th Street, drainage improvements, sidewalks, bridge replacements and traffic signs. The next public

meeting was on February 9th. The meeting flyer was sent out to all attendees the day after the meeting.

Harris County Toll Road Authority - Sam Houston Ship Channel Bridge

Leilany Thielen, Harris County Toll Road Authority, presented updates on the Sam Houston Ship Channel Bridge. Currently, approximately 60,000 vehicles use the crossing daily. Traffic is expected to grow by three times in the next 10 years. The reconstruction delivers a safer, stronger, and more reliable connection across the Sam Houston Ship Channel. The project will replace the existing four-lane bridge with two new cable-stayed bridges. Key features of the new bridge include four lanes in each direction, full shoulders on both sides for disabled vehicles, gentler incline while maintaining 175-foot ship channel clearance, bridge pylons over 500 feet tall, and foundations built outside the waterway to avoid vessel conflicts.

Construction recently reached a milestone with installation of the first cables. Four of the eight direct connectors between the Sam Houston Tollway and SH 225 are currently under construction. These four connectors are scheduled for completion in January 2028. The remaining connectors are still in the design phase and will move into construction afterward, with continued coordination between the Harris County Toll Road Authority and the Texas Department of Transportation to align with SH 225 improvements.

Current construction activities include widening the SH 225 main lanes where the direct connectors will tie in, with work primarily focused on westbound SH 225. Nightly closures at the frontage road intersection are ongoing and are expected to continue through mid-February, weather permitting. Crews are also actively drilling foundations and installing columns on the northbound side as part of the structural work for the new connectors.

During construction, all traffic is currently being maintained on the existing bridge while the first new bridge is built alongside it. Once the first new bridge is complete, both northbound and southbound traffic will be shifted onto that structure. At that point, the existing bridge will be demolished to make way for construction of the second new bridge. In the final configuration, traffic will operate on two separate bridges, with four lanes in each direction, providing increased capacity and improved safety.

The CAC is a forum for candid and constructive dialogue between those who live or work in La Porte, Morgan's Point, and Shoreacres and the managers of 41 chemical plants in La Porte. The CAC welcomes visitors. It meets again on Tuesday, March 3rd at 6:00 p.m. to hear about the Annual Report on Worker Safety in LPCAC Plants. Contact info@laportecac.org if you wish to attend. The CAC shares information about its meetings and presentations at www.laportecac.org.