



Executive Summary

Old Sixth Ward/TIRZ 13 Phase II Mobility Plan

2024

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Acknowledgments

Lead Agency

Houston-Galveston Area Council

Transportation

Caroline Bailey, Project Manager

Carlene Mullins, Deputy Project Manager

Monique Johnson, Subregional Planning Manager

Rodney Sigua, Planner

Data Analytics and Research

Heng Wang, Data Analytics and Research Manager

Michael Onuogu, Principal Data Analyst

Weijie Zhuo, Principal Data Analyst

Huijie Gao, Data Analyst - Travel Demand Modeling

Communications

Ashley Seals, Manager

Kelly Shannon, Outreach Coordinator

Keith Garber, Principal Graphic Designer

Jessica Vandervoort, Graphic Designer

Project Sponsor

TIRZ 13, Sherry Weesner

Steering Committee

Houston-Galveston Area Council

Caroline Bailey

Carlene Mullins

TIRZ 13

Sherry Weesner

City of Houston

Itay Porat

Brian Smith, II

Wilson Calvert

METRO

Aubin Phillips

Harris County Precinct 1

Peter Key

Heeral McGhee

Houston Police Department

Patrick Alexander

Daniel Watson

Houston Fire Department

John Hoffard

TxDOT

Jeffrey English

Stephanie Guillot

Consultant Team

TEI Planning + Design

Chelsea Young

Sydney Sepulveda

Justin Welling

Asakura Robinson

Andrew Knuppel

Mollie Hinderaker

Quiddity Engineering, LLC

Kristin Landry

Victoria Macalino

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Introduction

The Old Sixth Ward/TIRZ 13 Phase II Mobility Plan builds upon the “TIRZ 13 Mobility Plan” completed in 2021 by the Old Sixth Ward/TIRZ 13. The Phase II Mobility Plan extends into the historic First Ward neighborhood and identifies strategic key recommendations that will make getting around on foot, using a mobility device, on bike, by bus, or by car, safer, more accessible, and more inviting. All recommendations were identified through an understanding of baseline conditions analysis and through community engagement efforts that aim to achieve three key goals:

1. **Safety: Create safe and accessible streets and places**
2. **Connectivity: Strengthen neighborhood connectivity to key corridors and destinations**
3. **Livability: Improve the mobility experience**

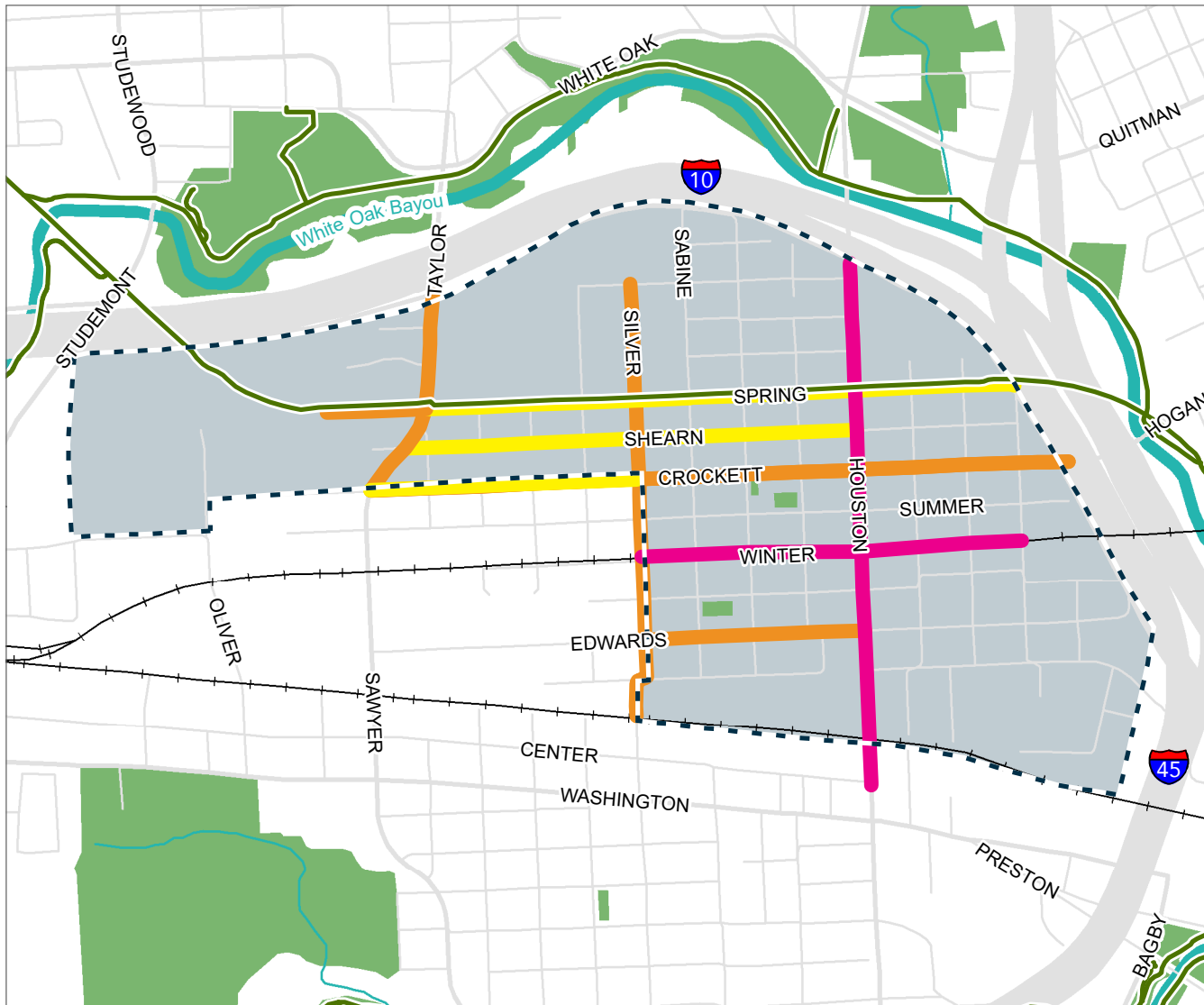
Public Engagement

Throughout the plan process, the project team worked extensively with Houston-Galveston Area Council and TIRZ 13 staff to identify key stakeholders and audiences, develop engagement activities and outreach materials, and facilitate information exchange at community events. The following table summarizes the series of public engagement events that provided forums for feedback for this plan. Discussion forums and interactive activities were also posted on the project website for both phases of public engagement. Appendix D summarizes all engagement for this effort.

Engagement Activity	Date	Location
Steering Committee Meeting 1	February 27, 2024	Houston Permitting Center
Community Pop-Up Tabling and Outreach (event to pass out fliers in advance of the April 20th Pop-up)	April 13, 2024	The Deck at Silver Street Studios
Community Pop-Up	April 20, 2024	The Deck at Silver Street Studios
Steering Committee Meeting 2	May 16, 2024	Virtual - Microsoft Teams
Steering Committee Meeting 3	August 22, 2024	Houston-Galveston Area Council
Public Engagement at National Night Out	October 1, 2024	The Art Alley at Sawyer Yards



“I would like a safe way to cross Houston [Avenue] with my daughter.”



Priority Corridors

The map in Figure 0.1 illustrates the Old Sixth Ward/TIRZ 13 Phase II Mobility Plan priority corridors where key recommendations are made to support overall mobility in the area. These corridors facilitate most north-south, east-west movements and support access to key destinations.

Houston Avenue is a key north-south corridor connecting the Heights into downtown and a key economic corridor. Today, the street acts as a barrier creating a dividing line between neighborhoods on the east and west sides of Houston Avenue with few safe opportunities to cross east-west. Creating a safe, multimodal vision for Houston Avenue was one of the key recommendations to come out of this mobility planning effort and can be seen on the following page and in Chapter 2.

Through three Steering Committee meetings and ongoing public engagement, the following mobility needs and community priority projects were identified:

Mobility Needs

- Traffic calming and safety
- Accessibility
- Placemaking and landscaping

Community Priorities

- Crockett Street traffic calming
- Silver/Crockett Street traffic circle
- Crockett Street/Houston Avenue signal
- Pedestrian improvements: sidewalks, trail connections, improved crossings
- Houston Avenue railroad underpass, landscaping, mid-block crossing, and sidewalk

Legend

- Short-Term Priority
- Medium-Term Priority
- Long-Term Priority
- Hike and Bike Trail
- Waterway
- Parks and Open Space
- Study Area

Figure 0.1. Study Area Boundary with Priority Corridors

Houston Avenue Vision



Railroad Ramp and Underpass

There are currently two pedestrian railroad underpasses between Center Street and Dart Street with poor lighting and driveway approaches, as well as stairs that prevent bikes, wheelchairs or other mobility devices, and strollers from safely and conveniently using the underpasses. Improving the lighting, landscaping, drainage, and visibility of these underpasses and converting the stairs to ramps could improve access and safety.



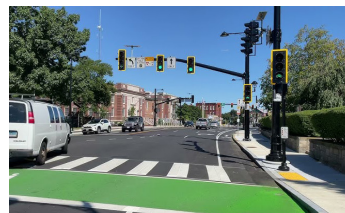
Access Management

In areas with high traffic volumes and poor sight lines, turning movements and crossing lanes can be especially dangerous. Adding mountable medians that restrict left-turn movements and direct turning traffic to a safer location while maintaining business access. For example, possible improvements to Dart Street would direct users to a new traffic signal at Edwards Street to travel south on Houston Avenue.



Signal Improvements

Improving traffic signals at intersections, including adding phases for traffic movements such as protected left turns, can help improve safety and performance along the corridor. A new signal is proposed at Edwards Street, and adding a protected left-turn signal at Crockett Street is recommended.



Landscaping (Medians, Behind Curb)

Beyond improving the appearance of Houston Avenue, landscaping and street trees can provide additional shade and wildlife habitat. Landscaping can also be implemented and maintained through partnerships with community groups.



Railroad Safety Crossing at Winter Street

The existing at-grade railroad crossing at Winter Street includes medians and crossing arms for vehicular traffic, but not for pedestrians and cyclists. Adding safety features for pedestrians and cyclists will help reduce potential conflicts with train traffic.



Houston Avenue Vision



Parallel Parking

Businesses along Houston Avenue rely on on-street parking for convenient access for customers. Formalizing parallel parking and reducing head-in parking spaces can make these parking areas safer.



Spring Street Trail Intersection

This important intersection has already been improved with medians that reduce the risk of collisions between drivers making left turns and pedestrians and cyclists. Additional improvements would include safer crossings for cyclists and pedestrians traveling along Houston Avenue, improved landscaping, and rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) that signal to drivers that bicycle and pedestrian traffic is crossing Houston Avenue.



Mid-Block Crossings

Mid-block crossing treatments are added along Bingham Street, Summer Street, and Alamo Street. These crossings are not located at a signalized roadway intersection and can create additional safe and direct crossings for pedestrians.



Sidepaths / Back-of-Curb Bike Facility

Where an on-street bike lane might not be desirable, sidepaths or bike facilities located behind the curb can provide a high-comfort route separated from vehicular traffic that also provides enough space to separate bicycle and pedestrian traffic.



Key Corridor Recommendations and Implementation

The recommendations focus on eight key corridors identified as vital to the mobility network for the neighborhood and important locations for addressing the three key goals for this plan. The following table summarizes the key corridor recommendations, potential timeframe for implementation, cost estimate (high-level), and elements to be implemented. [Note: Crockett Street is split into short-term and medium-term based on length and level of improvements.]

Corridor	Time Frame	Cost Estimate*	Recommendation Elements
Spring Street	Short-term	\$\$	New sidewalks and ramps, consistent trail/crossing treatments, trail lighting, all-way stops at both White Street and Sabine Street, trail markings across driveways, trail landscaping, and daylighting at intersections
Shearn Street	Short-term	\$	New sidewalks and curb ramps, high visibility crosswalks, dedicated school bus parking, enhanced connectivity between Spring Street Trail and Shearn Street via Henderson Street, and a dedicated "School Street" in front of Crockett Elementary
Crockett Street at Crockett Elementary	Short-term	\$	New sidewalks and curb ramps, raised intersections at Taylor Street and Henderson Street to create a "gateway" for the school zone, raised crosswalk at Hemphill Street, well-defined and longer school pick-up/drop-off zone, striped 10' lane line from the curb to allow parking
Silver Street	Medium-term	\$\$	New sidewalks and ramps, new traffic circle (or all-way stop) at Crockett Street, daylighting at Dart Street intersection, designated on-street neighborhood bike facility with signage, pavement markings, and road humps
Taylor/Sawyer Street	Medium-term	\$\$\$	New sidewalks and curb ramps, access management at Shearn Street, prohibited U-turns and right-turn-on-red at Spring Street, and wayfinding signage along the corridor
Crockett Street	Medium-term	\$\$	New sidewalks and ramps, traffic circle or all-way stop at Silver Street, marked crosswalks at all intersections, painted bulb-outs at all intersections, striped 10' lane line from the curb to showcase parking, raised intersection at Holly Street, and updated signals at Houston Avenue
Edwards Street	Medium-term	\$\$\$	New sidewalks and curb ramps, new traffic signal at Houston Avenue, and crosswalks at major intersections
Houston Avenue	Long-term	\$\$\$\$	Entire corridor reconstruction: 10' sidewalks, back of curb bike facility, safe crossings at Summer Street, Spring Street, and Bingham Street, updated signal at Crockett Street, new signal at Edwards Street, and modernized railroad pedestrian tunnels
Winter Street	Long-term	\$\$	New paved permeable path to replace the existing poor quality asphalt with signs and features to allow shared space between cars, bikes, and pedestrians

*Cost Estimate refers to a very high-level estimate of the scale and cost of the improvements for each corridor. Further feasibility analysis will need to be performed with detailed cost estimates to provide a more accurate design, engineering, and construction level of effort. Assumptions:

- \$ assumes \$500,000 to \$1,000,000
- \$\$ assumes \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000
- \$\$\$ assumes \$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000
- \$\$\$\$ assumes greater than \$5,000,000

Sidewalk Prioritization Plan

The Sidewalk Prioritization Plan is a comprehensive sidewalk program to support an interconnected sidewalk network along each corridor. Every sidewalk block parcel in the study area was assessed to understand the current conditions of each sidewalk segment along each corridor. The assessment found that over half of all sidewalks in the study area, around 54%, were deemed inaccessible (see Appendix A for the detailed sidewalk assessment and accessibility definitions). Sidewalk recommendations include the following locations bulleted below. More details can be found in Chapter 3.

Sidewalk Priority Locations

- Along Priority Corridors
- Adjacent to Crockett Elementary School
- Adjacent to Spring Street Trail and parks
- Adjacent to community destinations
- Adjacent to Houston METRO bus stops
- Along truck routes (Weber Street and White Street)

Sidewalk prioritization locations along key corridors and key neighborhood destinations are shown in the map, with cost estimates provided on the following page.

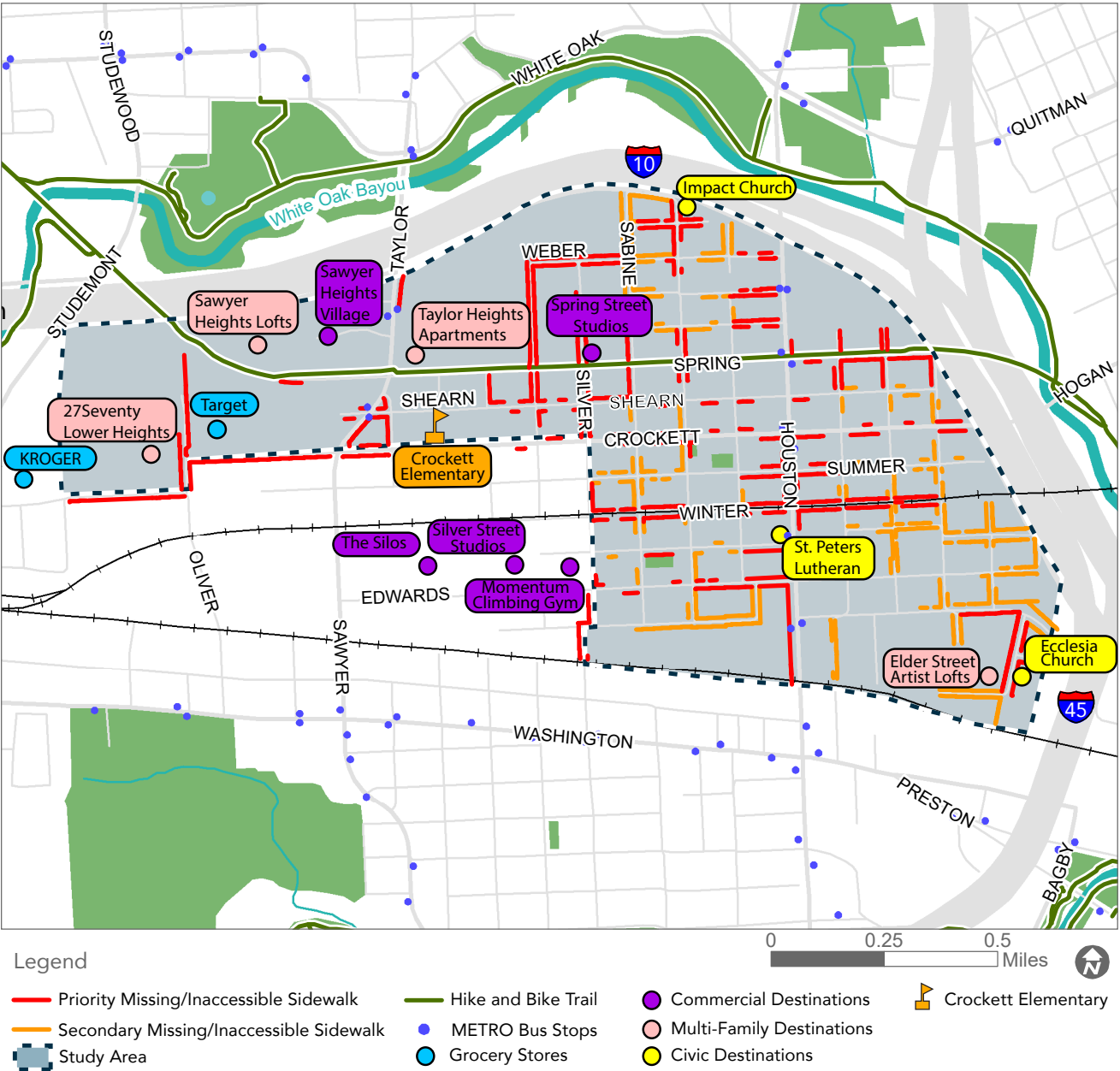


Figure 0.2. Sidewalk Prioritization Locations and Nearby Destinations



Sidewalk Prioritization Cost Estimates

The sidewalk recommendations can be implemented comprehensively as a program to support safe, interconnected sidewalk access to/from key destinations in the neighborhood. The sidewalk recommendations are included in the Key Corridor Recommendations.

Drainage will need to be considered with any sidewalk improvements in this neighborhood, as much of the drainage infrastructure is open ditch that has not seen improvements in decades.

Below are a few examples of the current or missing sidewalks to illustrate a variety of needs along the Study Area corridors.

Corridor Name	Sidewalks + Curb Ramps Cost Estimate	Percent of Corridor that is Inaccessible
Winter Street	\$755,000	Sidewalks: 77% Ramps: 80%
Edwards Street	\$478,000	Sidewalks: 18% Ramps: 78%
Crockett Street	\$834,000	Sidewalks: 27% Ramps: 63%
Shearn Street	\$499,000	Sidewalks: 21% Ramps: 75%
Taylor/Sawyer Street	\$225,000	Sidewalks: 39% Ramps: 82%
Spring Street	\$324,000	Sidewalks: 16% Ramps: 76%
Silver Street	\$581,000	Sidewalks: 25% Ramps: 81%
Houston Avenue	\$2,022,000	Sidewalks: 7% Ramps: 68%
All other residential corridors	\$6,628,000	Sidewalks: 54% Ramps: 90%



Partnerships and Funding

The Study Area is not located within a TIRZ or management district, and therefore project implementation will not necessarily have a clear project lead to take on funding, design, and construction of the projects. As TIRZ 5 and TIRZ 13 are directly adjacent to the Study Area and this effort is the Phase II Mobility Plan building upon the Old Sixth Ward/TIRZ 13 Mobility Plan completed in 2021, there are opportunities to leverage both TIRZ 13 and TIRZ 5. Coordinated project implementation can support the goals of these two TIRZs while supporting safety and mobility for people in the First Ward.

Each project recommendation provides benefits to the local and regional communities. Chapter 4 presents project recommendations with identified potential partners as well as funding opportunities supporting the project benefits.



Strategic Partnerships

Strategic partnerships can support the implementation of the Mobility Plan recommendations and coordination of additional complementary projects, such as neighborhood park improvements, transit improvements, and trail connectivity improvements. Although there is not one definitive project implementation champion in this study area, there are ways to coordinate and leverage resources for improvements with strategic agency partners such as those listed in the table below.



Organization	Project Partnership Opportunity
Houston Parks Board	Brock Park and Summer Street Park: crosswalks, wayfinding, pedestrian-scale lighting
METRO	Crockett Street Route 39 Extension; Curb2Curb Service
TxDOT	White Oak Bayou Trail Connection: Taylor Street and Sabine Street
First Ward Civic Club	Neighborhood colorful crosswalks; Houston Avenue median landscaping
First Ward Arts District	Neighborhood colorful crosswalks; Houston Avenue underpass art

