



Transportation Planning and Environmental  
Justice  
September 8, 2020

**Air Alliance Houston believes everyone has a right to breathe clean air and where you live, work, learn, and play should not determine your health.**

# The Houston Region is saturated with industrial pollution and chemical safety risks.

- ❑ 5-6 million lbs. of “illegal” air pollution released each year (on average)
- ❑ Unknown adoption/implementation of best available control technology among “bad actors”
- ❑ 97% of violations not enforced in Texas
- ❑ 800,000 children live or go to school within chemical danger zones
- ❑ There is one chemical accident in Houston every six weeks with no systematic toxic alert notification system in place
- ❑ Fossil-fuel dominant economy and industry is expanding
- ❑ Inadequate land use policies that allow the siting of hazardous facilities near vulnerable groups
- ❑ More toxic pollution is released annually in the Houston Metropolitan area than the top five Metropolitan economies combined



Smoke rises from a fire burning at the Intercontinental Terminals Company in Deer Park, east of Houston on March 18, 2019. 📷 Jaimie Meldrum/Handout via REUTERS

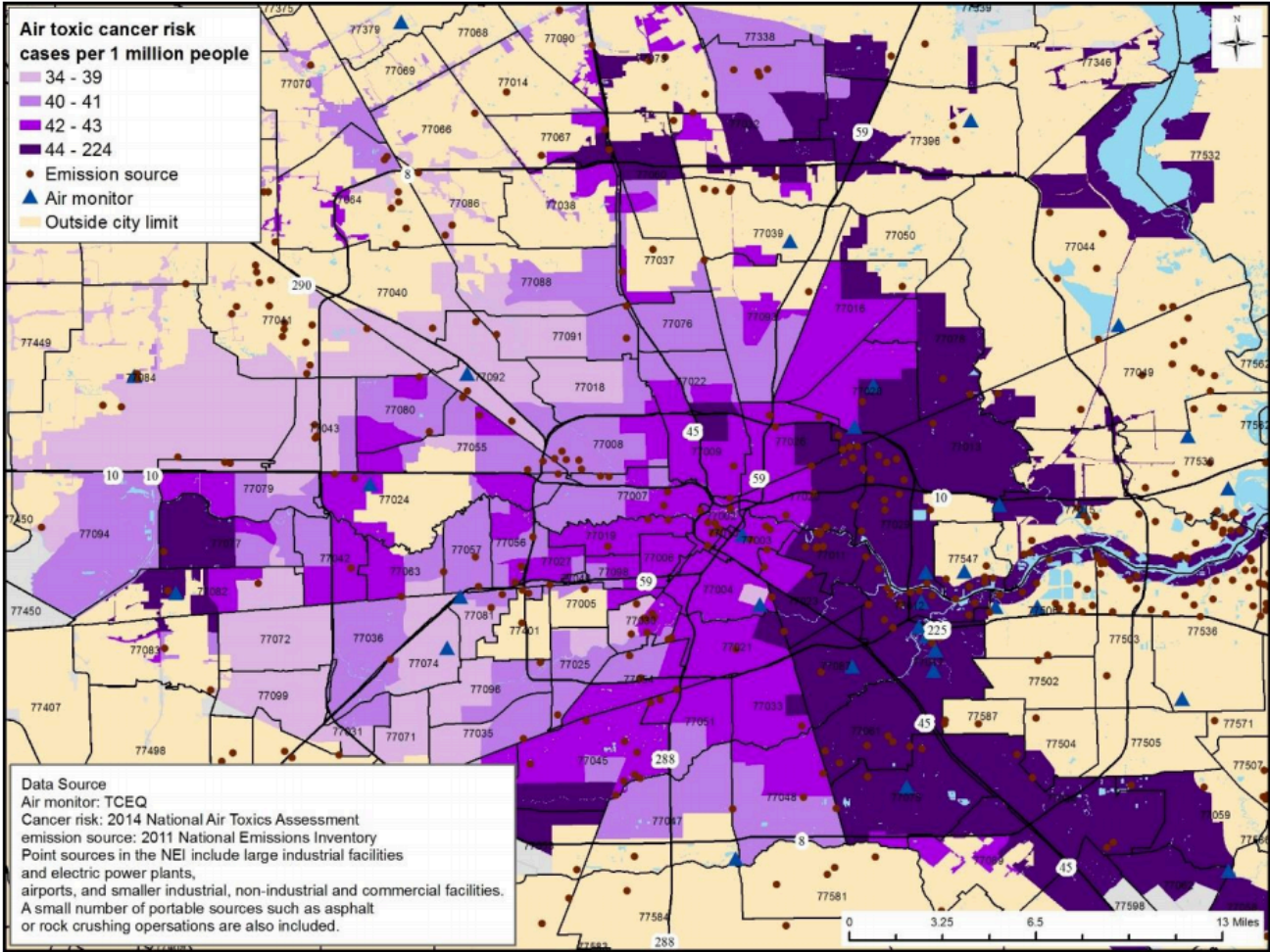
# The Houston Region continues to embrace irresponsible development and transportation planning practices that prioritizes cars.

- ❑ Harris County has the highest vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in Texas and the population is growing
- ❑ Majority of emissions are already from transportation sources (automobiles)
- ❑ Public transit (and other modes of transportation) is limited throughout the region
- ❑ Allocation of transportation funding is heavily skewed toward highway infrastructure
- ❑ Minimal adoption of electric vehicles among governmental and organizational fleets
- ❑ **80,000** Houston-area children attend schools in traffic-related air pollution (TRAP) zones



# Communities of color and low-income neighborhoods continue to bear the brunt of the public health and safety risks posed by an unchecked industrial complex.

**Figure 13: Air Toxic Cancer Risk from Air Pollution, Houston TX 2014**  
Measured in cancer risk cases per 1 million people



Data Source: US Environmental Protection Agency and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Map by the Houston Health Department.

The Houston Region continues to perpetuate short sighted “planning” decisions that favor developers while cementing our reliance on cars and accelerating climate change.

## Widening I-45 will be a disaster for Houston [Opinion]

By Jeff Speck | Sep. 6, 2019 | Updated: Sep. 9, 2019 11:43 a.m.



Cars travel across the Pierce Elevated south of downtown Houston. The area could significantly change if current plans for redevelopment of Interstate 45 proceed.

Photo: Mark Mulligan, Houston Chronicle / Staff photographer

**Displaces Businesses**

**Air Quality Will Be Worse**

**Makes Flooding Worse**

**Waste of Taxpayer \$**

**Destroys Parks**

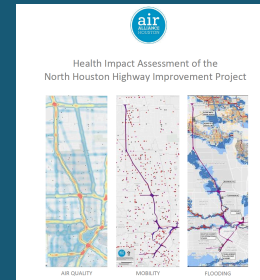
**Erases Culture**

# Building health from the ground up.

Coalition



Research and Education



Media Advocacy



Mobilizing



# The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.



Air Alliance Houston  
Avenue CDC  
Bayou City Waterkeeper  
Bayou Preservation  
Bike Houston  
Buffalo Bayou Partnership  
Citizens' Transportation  
Coalition (CTC)  
Downtown District  
Eastwood Civic Association  
Freedman's Town Preservation  
Committee  
Friends of Woodland Park  
Galveston Bay Keeper  
Germantown Historic District  
Greater East End  
Greater Heights Super Neighborhood  
15  
Greater Northside Management  
District  
Harris County Commissioner Rodney  
Ellis  
Heritage Society

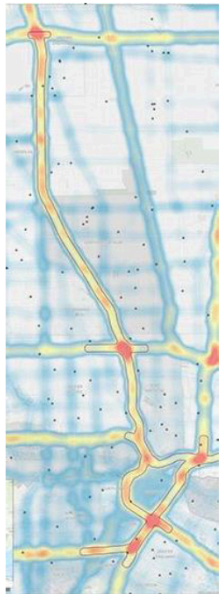
Hermann Park Conservancy  
Housing for Houston  
**Houston Parks Board**  
Kinder Foundation  
**LINK Houston**  
Lower Brazos River Watch  
Montie Beach Civic Club  
Montrose District  
Museum Park Super  
Neighborhood 66  
Saint Arnold Brewing  
Company  
Scenic Houston  
Trees for Houston  
Memorial Park Super  
Neighborhood 22  
White Oak Bayou Association  
Winlow Place Civic Club  
Woodland Heights Civic  
Association  
**...and you!**



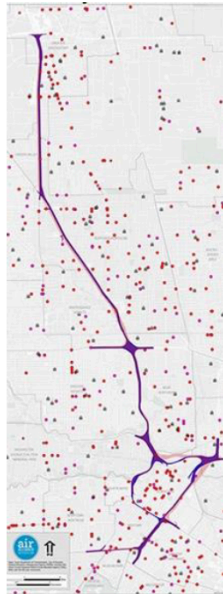
# Evidence matters...but it's not enough.



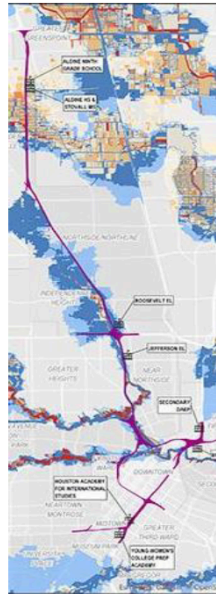
## Health Impact Assessment of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project



AIR QUALITY

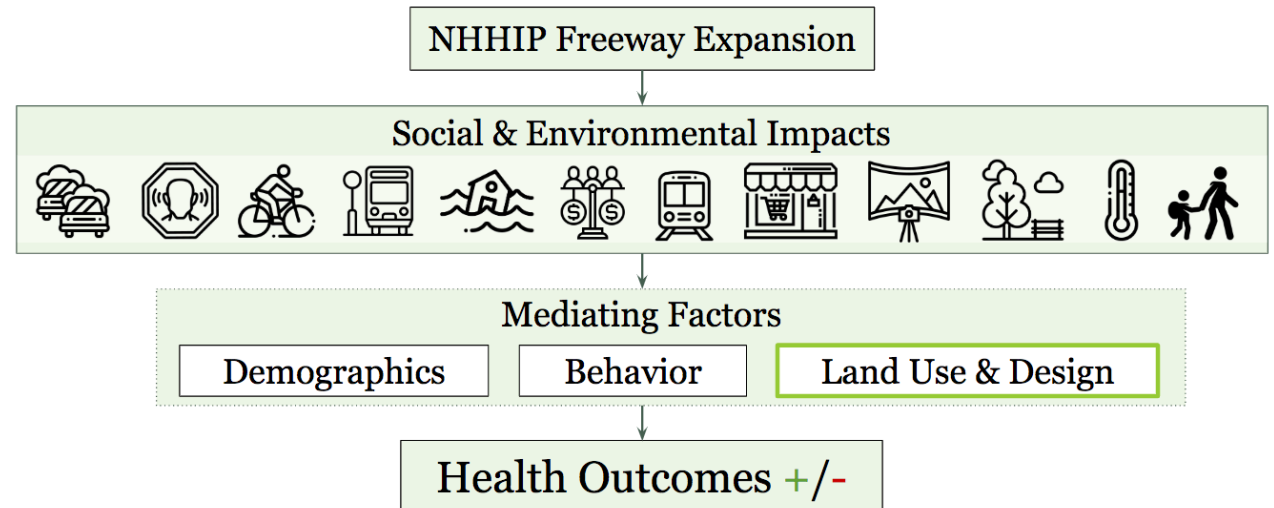


MOBILITY



FLOODING

## NHHIP Health Impact Assessment

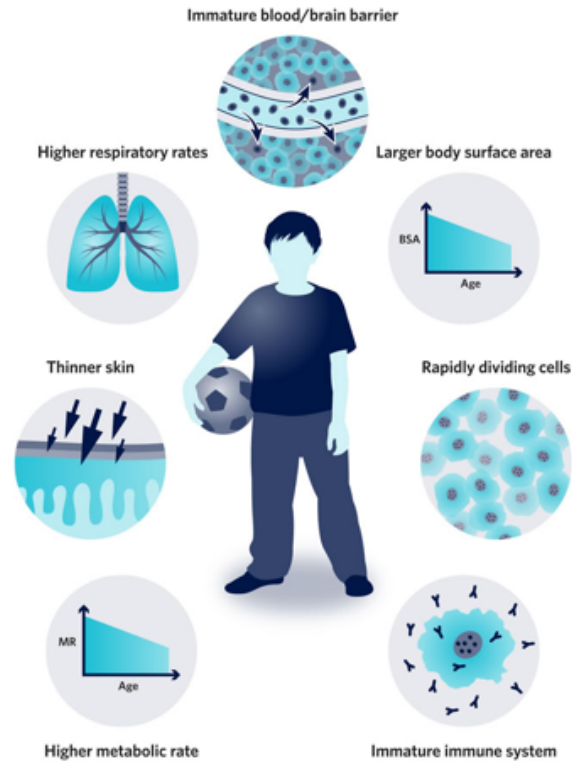


# Children at risk.

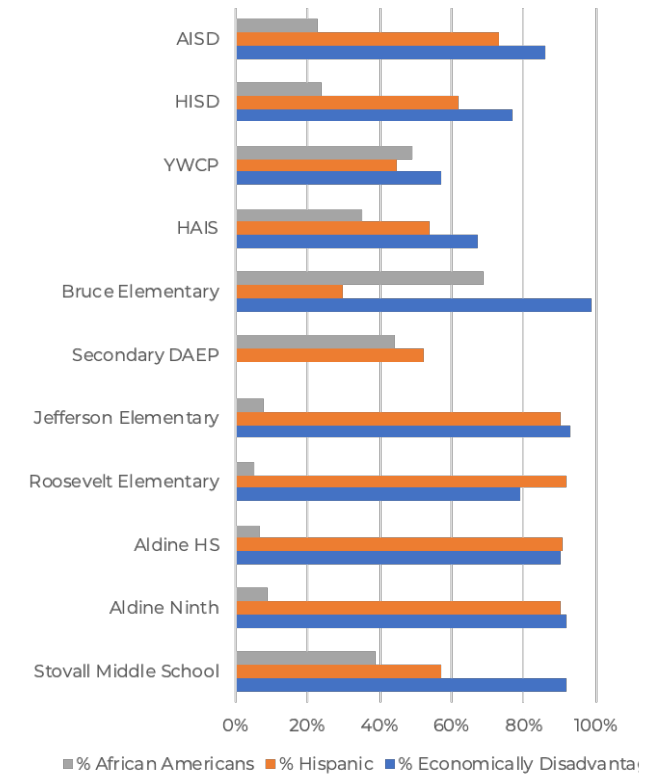
## Proximity to highway



## Physiology of children



## Community characteristics

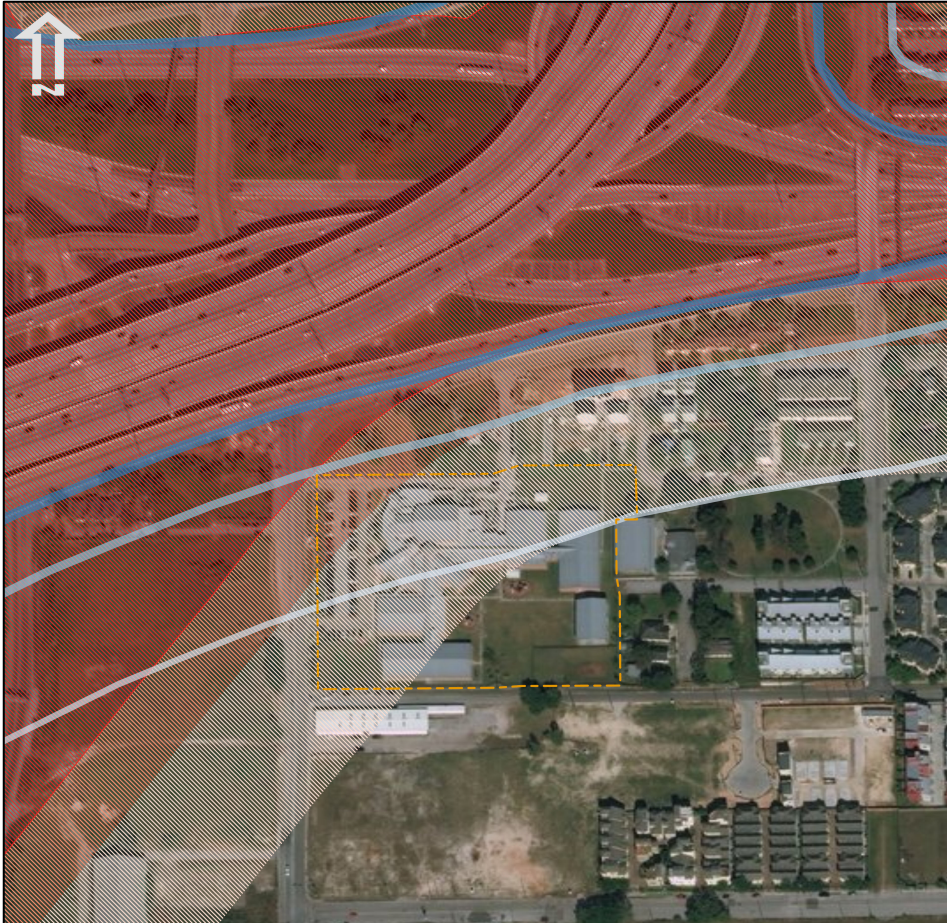


# Traffic-related air pollution & public health

Proximity to busy roadways is associated with many health issues.

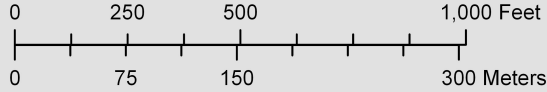
Research has consistently found that living closer to and going to school near heavy traffic is associated with:

- childhood asthma
- reduced lung function
- impaired cardiovascular health and mortality
- the development of autism



**Legend**

- Campus Boundary
- Current Freeway Extent
- Current 50m Buffer
- Current 150m Buffer
- Expansion Path
- Expansion 50m Buffer
- Expansion 150m Buffer



# Bruce Elementary

HISD Pre K - 5th Grade

**Current VMT Within 150m of Campus**

40,797

**Asthma Rate**

No Data Available

**Campus Demographics 2016-2017**

Total Enrollment: 563  
 Total Minority: 99.3%  
 African-American: 68.7%  
 Hispanic: 29.1%  
 Economic Disadvantage: 94.7%  
 Recent Immigrant: 3.7%

**Community Connection**

Community Connection Here

Note: Although this campus currently falls just outside the 50m buffer of the existing freeway, it would fall well within the 50m buffer of the projected expansion extent.

You have a voice, use it (and let the media help you).



## Will the I-45 expansion make our air worse? [Opinion]

And will it impact low-income communities the hardest?

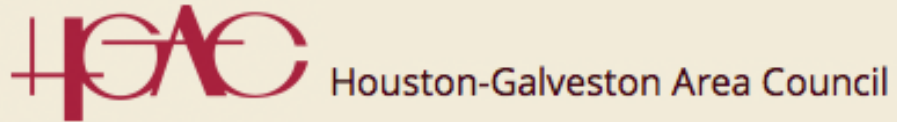
Bakeyah Nelson | April 10, 2018



Though TxDOT's draft environmental impact statement suggests that air quality will improve as the freeways are expanded, that conclusion is drawn from some problematic assumptions.

Photo: Karen Warren, Staff / Houston Chronicle

The world is before you and you need not take it or leave it as it was when you came in. – James A. Baldwin



September 7, 2019

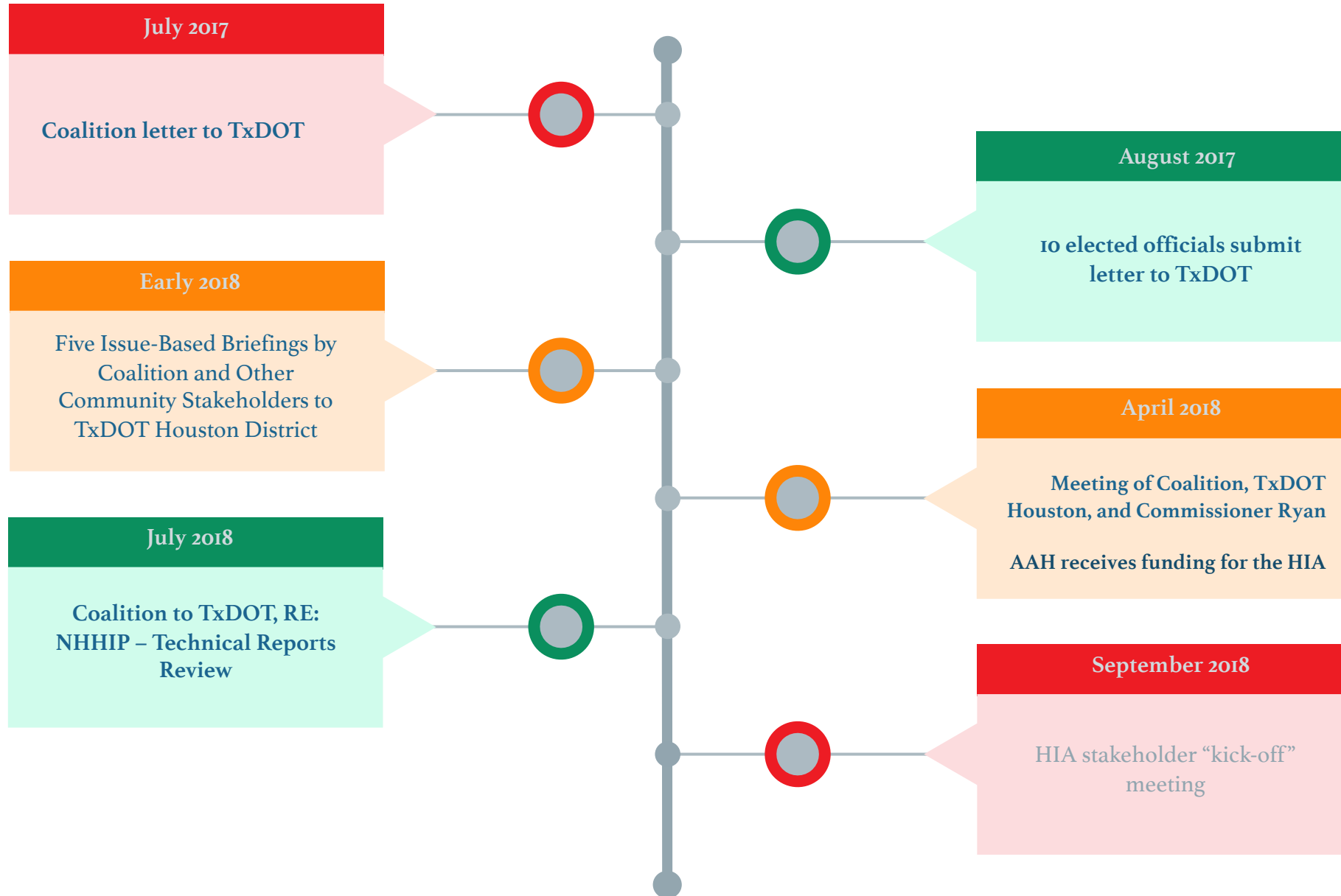
## Candidate Forum

We held a forum for candidates running for Houston Mayor, Houston City Council, and Tx148 to present their positions on NHHIP.



# AAH & Make I-45 Better Coalition Summary of Activities

**Note: this timeline does NOT capture ALL of the activities of AAH & the Make I-45 Coalition on this issue.**



# AAH & Make I-45 Better Coalition Summary of Activities

**Note:**  
this  
timeline  
does  
**NOT**  
capture  
**ALL** of  
the  
activities  
of AAH &  
the Make  
I-45  
Coalition  
on this  
issue.

**Spring 2018 - Spring 2019**

AAH conducts HIA in partnership with and significant help from LINK Houston, Texas Housers, and LSLA

**June - July 2019**

HIA Report press conference at City Hall  
City of Houston launches I-45 stakeholder workgroup meetings  
Op-ed released in the Houston Chronicle by local engineer  
All groups launch the "Delay the Vote" campaign

**August 2019**

Harris County Commissioners Court unanimously passes the "NHHIP Resolution"

**Spring 2018 – Spring 2019**

Ongoing and regular meetings with elected officials, TxDOT, and other decision-makers

Stop I-45 Coalition is formed

**July 2019**

H-GAC TPC approves \$100 million TxDOT funding request for Segment 2

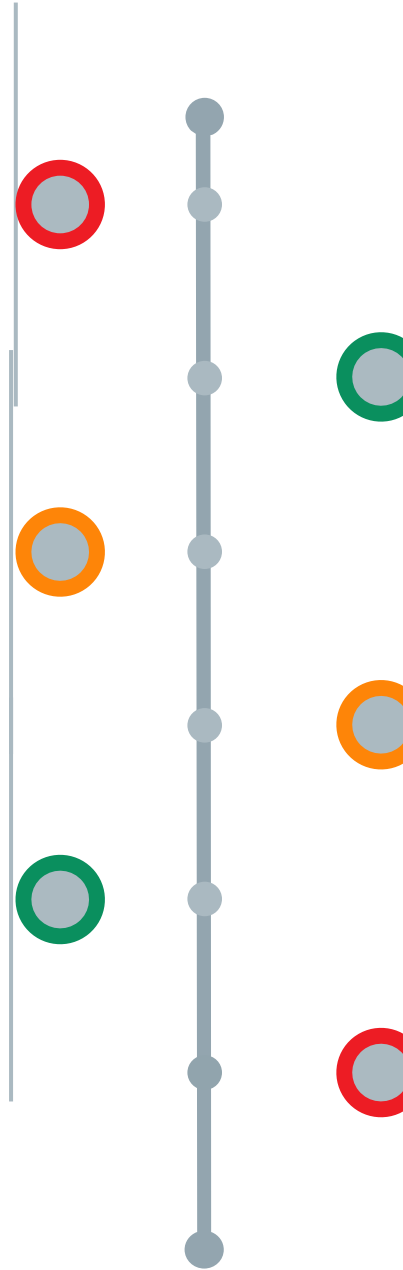
H-GAC TPC approves \$50 million for community mitigations

Mayor Turner and other elected officials submit letter to H-GAC

**August – December 2019**

City of Houston launches community engagement meetings

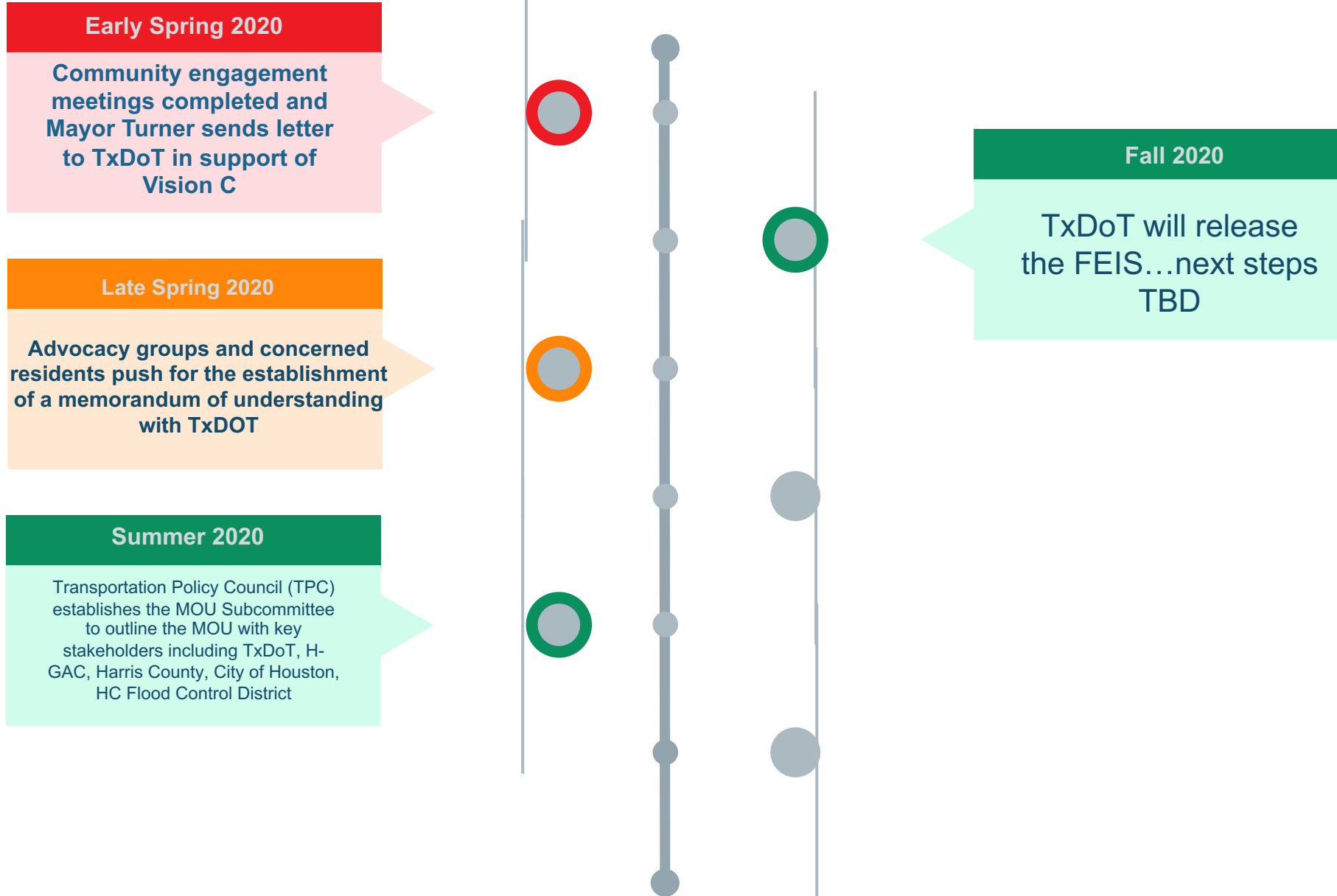
APA peer review of I-45 design and recommendations for improvement





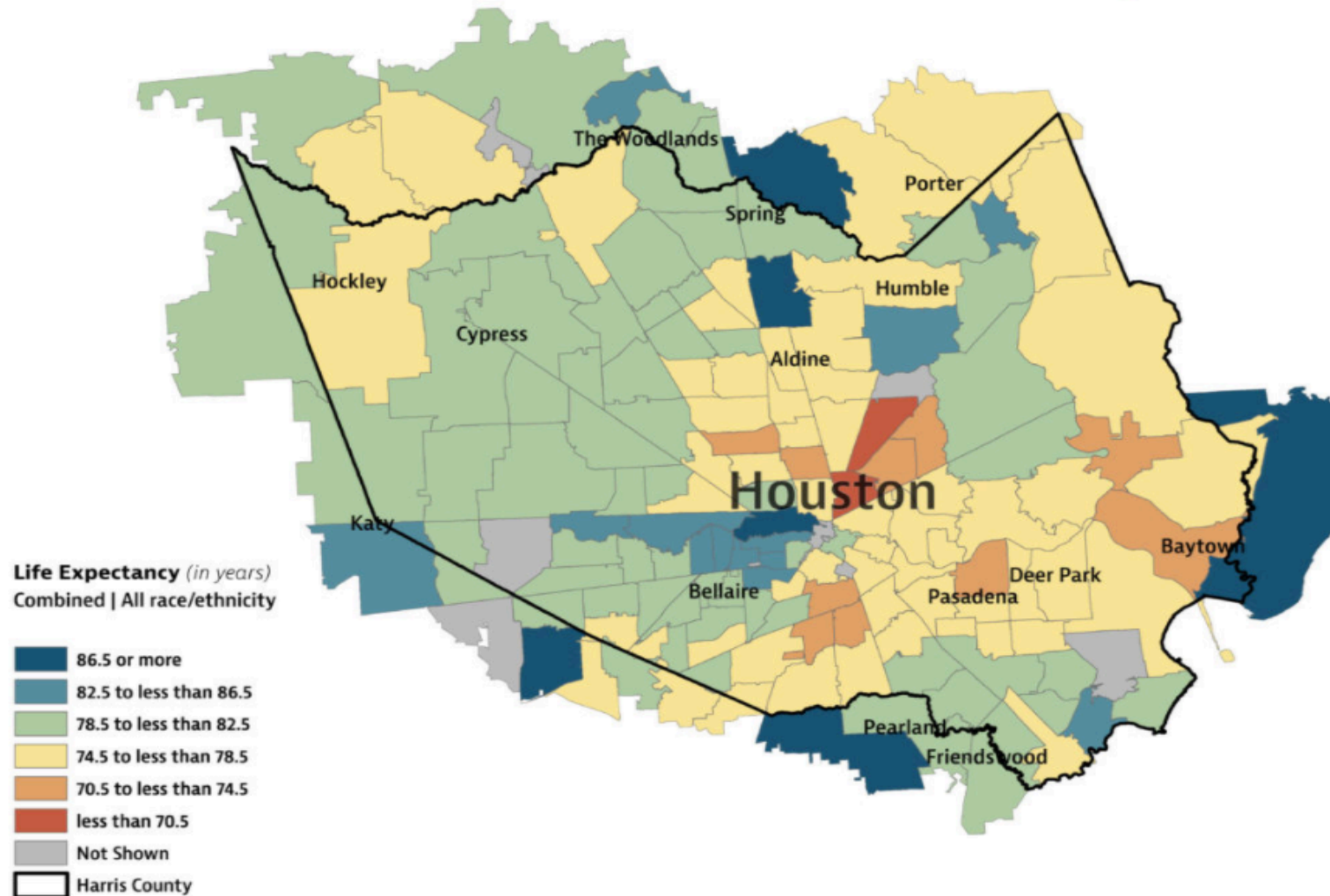
# AAH & Make I-45 Better Coalition Summary of Activities

**Note:**  
this  
timeline  
does  
NOT  
capture  
ALL of  
the  
activities  
of AAH &  
the Make  
I-45  
Coalition  
on this  
issue.



# These decisions impact how WELL we live... ...and how LONG we live.

texashealthmaps.com/lfex



According to these data, life expectancy ranges from 65.7 to 89.1 years - an inequity of nearly twenty three and a half years between neighborhoods in Houston.

Courtesy of UT Southwestern Medical Center

# Questions?

Bakeyah Nelson  
[bnelson@airalliancehouston.org](mailto:bnelson@airalliancehouston.org)