



July 13, 2022

Jeanette De Los Santos
Public Affairs Representative
Metro Transit Authority of Harris County
1900 Main Street, 11th Floor
Houston, Texas 77002

RE: Eastwood Civic Association's conditions of support for METRORapid University Corridor

Ms. De Los Santos,

I write to you as President of the Eastwood Civic Association, which represents over 2,400 homes in 19 subdivisions, including the historic communities of Eastwood, Broadmoor and Jackson Court. Many of these subdivisions are in close proximity to Segment 4 of the MetroRapid University Corridor that is proposed to travel Lockwood Drive from the Eastwood Transit Center to Fifth Ward/Denver Harbor Transit Center.

We see the value that the planned MetroRapid University Corridor would provide to improve transit connectivity within our community, and we are grateful for the information Metro staff presented to us about this project. We look forward to collaborating on the detailed design of this project. As you move forward with preliminary design, we wish to share our conditions of support for this project:

1. **No overpass.** We recognize, that a BRT line cannot compete with train blockages at the Galveston Subdivision rail line operated by Union Pacific, and must find a way to bypass the train. However, the size and scale of an overpass would be devastating to the connectivity and character of the neighborhood. We respectfully request that METRO present alternative design options for grade-separation at the Union Pacific Rail Line between Harrisburg and Rusk. We are optimistic that an underpass — similar in size and scale to the one located on Polk at Milby — could be a reasonable alternative for the neighborhood. However, we would like more details on size and design before providing our support. We are also open to hearing alternative designs that more broadly address the issues the freight line poses to our neighborhood.



2. **Protect existing esplanade.** As you travel through Greater Eastwood on Lockwood Drive large old growth trees on a wide esplanade greet you, welcoming you to this place that we call home. It is a critical feature to the neighborhood's character and natural environment, and it must be maintained and enhanced by this project.
3. **Prioritize a road diet to accommodate BRT lanes.** A road diet that reduces Lockwood general traffic lanes by one in each direction can provide the necessary BRT lanes, while protecting and maintaining the old growth trees in the existing esplanade. Lockwood is a wide road, and rarely experiences traffic back-ups due to volume, we believe there is plenty of general lane capacity to accommodate this diet now and in the future.
4. **Complete project within existing Right of Way.** With the size of Lockwood, we believe this project can be completed within the existing City of Houston right of way. We urge Metro to complete this project without the acquisition of any additional land from property owners, especially through eminent domain.
5. **Addition of multi-use path.** As a part of the rebuild of Lockwood for this project, we urge Metro to consider the inclusion of two 10' wide multi-use paths for people who walk, bike or roll. The existing sidewalks along Lockwood are in poor condition and they do not offer an accessible experience for all. This will improve last-mile connection and access through the neighborhood to Metro's existing and new transit services.
6. **Maintain regular pedestrian access.** In reviewing other areas where Metro operates their Rapid Bus or Train systems, we've noticed areas where pedestrian crossing is severely limited. We urge Metro to protect pedestrian access across Lockwood at least every 500'.
7. **Softscape.** It is important that this project matches and enhances the existing character of the neighborhood. To do this we would encourage softscaping where existing City right of way allows (i.e. boulevard, micro-parks possible at Rusk and Walker) and that any structures (like underpasses and transit stops) are decorated with unique, visual components (like public art). Together this will help ensure this project fits with, and serves to improve, the natural characteristics of Eastwood as a historic, tree-filled, vibrant, residential neighborhood.

EASTWOOD CIVIC ASSOCIATION

To support Metro in considering these conditions for support, we've taken some time to create a street design rendering that we feel meets these conditions. Attached you will find renderings of the portion of Segment 4 that runs through our Civic Association boundaries, starting from the Eastwood Transit Center and culminating at Harrisburg.

We hope these designs and this letter serves as an opportunity to continue conversation about this project, and make sure it improves and enhances the wonderful neighborhoods within Greater Eastwood.

Kind Regards,



Danielle Laperriere
President, Eastwood Civic Association