



WATERSHED REPORTS for the BAYOU PRESERVATION BOARD

March 2017

WHITE OAK BAYOU

Representative: Bob Lee / Tom Gall

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Planning and Policy Activities

- *City of Houston Makes Announcement on Plans for Additional Detention.* On March 7, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner's office issued a press release regarding plans for construction of 10 connected detention basins on the site of the former Inwood Forest Golf Course, a 223-acre tract in the vicinity of Antoine Drive between Victory Drive and West Gulf Bank Road, purchased by city in 2011. According to the press release:

"With recent Council approval of an interlocal agreement, the City and Harris County Flood Control District are now free to invest about \$20 million to design and develop the remaining basins, with the first phase slated to begin construction in 2018. 'After the design phase and masterplan study, we will have a better understanding of the basin layouts, depths, and potential green space available for the community,' said Paresh Lad, Acting Deputy Assistant Director for the Department of Public Works and Engineering's Infrastructure Planning. Harris County Flood Control District will oversee the construction and maintenance of the project."

A synopsis of the project is on the Harris County Flood Control District website:

<https://www.hcfcd.org/projects-studies/white-oak-bayou/inwood-forest-stormwater-detention-project/>

- *Ongoing Rice University Houston Action Research Team (HART) Program:* A student research study, funded through Rice University Center for Civic Leadership, is in progress to assess whether there is statistically-significant evidence that water quality data improves or is better overall in an unlined vs concrete-lined channel. The analysis will compare data from lined and unlined segments of White Oak Bayou and other waterways in Harris County. A presentation of the results to White Oak Bayou Association, a partner in the study, has been tentatively scheduled for May 2.
- *Ongoing HCFCD Channel Restoration Study:* Harris County Flood Control District, with approximately \$275,000 in funding from the Memorial Heights Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ 5), is currently conducting a study of potential channel restoration and flood reduction alternatives, including removal of portions of the concrete channel liner. HCFCD's consultant, Freese and Nichols, Inc., is expected to complete later this spring. More information is available on the HCFCD website at: <https://www.hcfcd.org/projects-studies/white-oak-bayou/lower-white-oak-bayou-channel-restoration-study/>.

On-the-Ground Projects

- *White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail:*

The WOB Greenway trail connector around U of H Downtown directly to the Buffalo Bayou Trail on the north side of the Buffalo Bayou is still scheduled for completion in the summer of 2017.

On the north end of the WOB Greenway the trail from the new bridge at Alabonson Rd (opened last year) to the city limits just short of the HCFCD detention basins located at Hollister Street and W. Little York Road should be open in April.

There is no new word on the missing link segment on the north side of the WOB, connecting the dead end trail under Studewood Street across to the existing Heights Hike and Bike Trail, is under the control of the City of Houston PWE.

- *HCFCD Maintenance Projects:* HCFCD has multiple active maintenance projects ongoing along the WOB at this time. They appear to be clearing out accumulated silt from side channels in several areas as well as performing concrete inlet and bayou inlet repairs, in particular from 610 North to downtown. A major project, to re-build the bottom of the concrete channel on the north side of the bayou under and downstream of the WOB Trail Bridge off of Moy Street (noted earlier), is scheduled to be underway later this year. This project should not impact Greenway users but if you have plans to kayak that concrete section of the WOB into downtown, you need to check on that project first.

Users of the White Oak Bayou Greenway system in this area should be aware that the trail is designed to be utilized as a maintenance access road and to look for equipment and haul trucks on a regular basis during this time.

Meeting the Rep Goals and Objectives

Interface / Networking / Know Your Watershed: See whiteoakbayou.org for White Oak Bayou Association news and information about recent and upcoming activities and events.