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**DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BEGINS MAJOR
RENOVATION OF BAGBY STREET CORRIDOR**

**Updates include wider pedestrian walkways, bike lanes,
beautification and lighting**

Construction begins January 11

HOUSTON, TX – After two years of design, stakeholder outreach and permitting, the Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) will begin construction of the Bagby Street Improvement Project on January 11. Bagby—the first street encountered when entering Downtown from the west and one of few two-way streets in the central district—is a key gateway that connects the Theater District and multiple civic institutions such as City Hall, Central Library and Sam Houston Park. In total, Bagby Street connects nine parks and cultural attractions, requiring careful consideration and attention to how the street, buildings and park spaces all interact.

“Bagby Street is a gateway to Houston City Hall and should be an attractive, mobility-friendly route into Downtown. The Improvement Project will greatly enhance quality of life by providing more accessible walkways and safer bike lanes,” Mayor Sylvester Turner said. “I’m excited that the Downtown Redevelopment Authority is starting construction this week and will do it in a way that minimizes disruption for the public. Your patience is appreciated while we work to make noticeable and lasting street improvements”

Several studies, including the Theater District Master Plan and Plan Downtown, have identified Bagby as a key pedestrian and vehicular corridor. The street has also been highlighted in the City of Houston Bike Plan as a future bikeway location, to serve as a north-south corridor west of Main Street in Downtown. The corridor provides connections to Buffalo Bayou in several locations, linking Downtown to the broader greenways network.

Due to the multiple plan recommendations, the DRA has prioritized the Bagby Street Improvement Project as it will greatly improve and expand mobility and infrastructure throughout western Downtown. Currently between four and six lanes wide, the project entails reducing Bagby Street to between three and four vehicular lanes to allow for wider pedestrian walkways, a bicycle lane, beautification elements, signature lighting and 79 new trees. The corridor’s storm sewer system will also be updated to meet current requirements, including additional inlets to reduce ponding and considerably improve drainage.

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Downtown Redevelopment Authority begins major renovation of Bagby Street corridor

“Mayor Turner has tasked us with enhancing and bringing new energy to the west side of Downtown,” said Bob Eury, DRA president. “We see great potential in transforming Bagby Street into a safe and engaging place for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles while linking the diverse civic, cultural and entertainment offerings along the corridor with adjacent neighborhoods such as the historic Fourth Ward.”

The corridor’s \$28.8 million rebuild began with Phase One, a traffic impact analysis and preliminary engineering design, which was awarded to Traffic Engineers, Inc. (TEI), Lockwood, Andrews & Newman, Inc., SWA Group and C.N. Joehl Urban Forest Inc. in July 2017. The final report was completed in April 2018.

Phase Two commenced in March 2018 with a request for qualifications for an Engineering and Design Consultant team; the DRA chose Jones|Carter to lead the project. After an approximately 16-month design period, construction will begin this month and is expected to be complete in December 2021.

The project will be completed in phases. Initial construction will focus on Bagby from Franklin to Walker Streets, primarily on the west side of Bagby, and will necessitate lane closures, but not a full street closure. Work will include pavement demolition, utility updates, tunnel waterproofing investigation and the replacement of trees located on the west side of City Hall and Tranquility Park.

The street’s redesign is the first major project in a series of proposed transformative projects that will change the look and feel of the west side of Downtown. Once complete, the thoughtfully designed Bagby Street Corridor will provide a common thread and platform to tie together all the projects.

Coordinated with the Bagby Street Improvements is a separate project to reconstruct the sidewalks surrounding City Hall. Led and funded by the City of Houston General Services Department, the sidewalk project will begin in July with a December 2020 completion. Contingent on supplemental funding, the project may also include improved paving and landscaping surrounding Hermann Square.

The DRA will communicate monthly with stakeholders and the community regarding the status of the project including lane and street closures and related parking restrictions. This information can also be found in the Downtown District’s weekly Street Closures email. To read and/or subscribe, visit <http://www.downtownhouston.org/development/street-closures/>

ABOUT DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) facilitates positive development of the area within the Tax Increment Zone #3 (TIRZ #3) boundaries. Tax increment dollars collected within the boundaries of the Zone are reinvested back into the Zone through the Board of Directors. It accomplishes this by providing financial incentives through public/private sector partnerships designed to make Downtown Houston a place where Houstonians and visitors want to live, work and play. For more information, visit downtowntirz.com.