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## **Controversy brewing over proposed project on major freeway**

**TxDOT wants to expand 30 miles of the North Freeway from I-10 to Highway 242.**

**By Laura Whitley**

### **ABC13 Eyewitness News**

**(7/23/05 - HOUSTON) — Just when it looked like some of the major road construction projects around the city were nearing an end, there are now plans for yet another major renovation.**

**The Texas Department of Transportation is now considering plans for a long stretch of I-45 North from I-10 into Montgomery County. But that has some people upset. The project is still in the early planning stages. Construction likely won't begin for another five years, with completion some 10 to 15 years after that. But it certainly isn't too soon for controversy.**

**Over the past eight years, Daniel Corrigan's labor of love is his Heights home built in 1933.**

**"You have the big city, but it's a small neighborhood in a small area," he said. "The Heights is a very special place."**

**But an imposing neighbor just a block away threatens Corrigan's way of life. TxDOT wants to expand 30 miles of the North Freeway .**

**"It's worrisome," said Corrigan. "All of the sudden you have to worry about, are they gonna take it away."**

**"There's different solutions in different sections along this 30 mile corridor," said Gary Trietsch with TxDOT. "So I don't know if we can stack it, go overhang it, take additional right of way."**

**Still, TxDOT admits in tight sections of the highway, buying right of way might be the only solution. The only problem is that there are homes – dozens of them – right across the street.**

**After studying six plans, the state agency recommends one that would bring I-45 to 12 lanes from I-10 to fm FM 1960 and 10 lanes from FM 1960 up to state Highway 242. At a transportation council meeting Friday, several people lined up to speak out against the plan.**

**"I for one am highly offended by being treated like I'm too dumb to know what's best for me and my community," said homeowner Peggy Lindow.**

**It's a battle for homeowners like Corrigan to protect everything he's worked for. It's a battle he doesn't plan to lose.**

**Even though people who live inside the Loop don't like the plan, those who live in north Houston, Harris County and Montgomery County seem to support it as they find out about it.**

**TxDOT says the North Freeway expansion project will not begin until the Katy Freeway expansion is totally finished. That isn't expected to be until March 2009, at least for now. The Katy Freeway expansion project involves the middle 20 mile section from the intersection of I-10 and Loop 610 out to the city of Katy. Construction started in 2003 and is the source of many headaches for drivers as different sections are shut down, especially at the interchange.**

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