



Houston's walkable, shopable, edible, livable neighborhood.

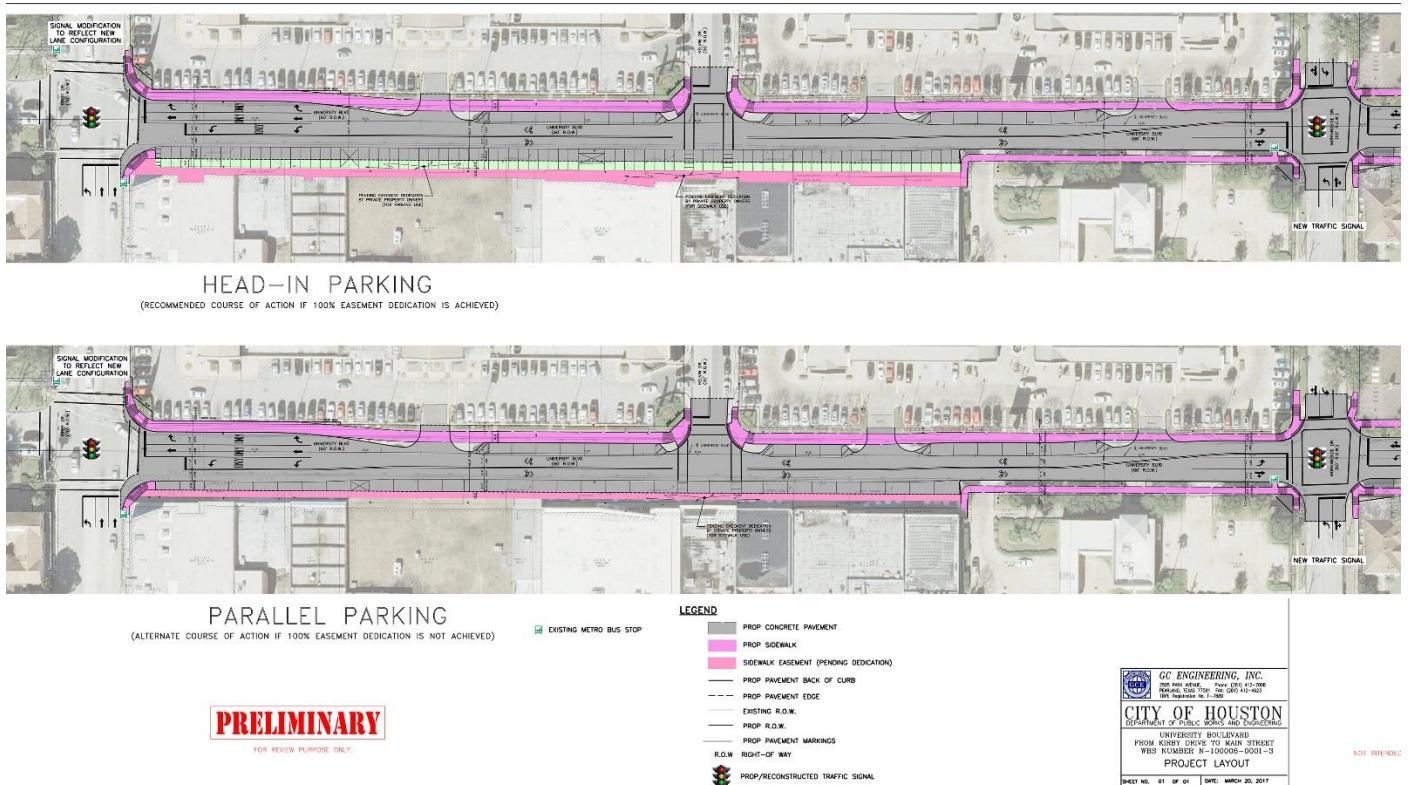
## Rice Village Alliance University Blvd. Reconstruction Update July 2017

As part of its Capital Improvement Plan, the city of Houston will reconstruct University Blvd from Kirby Drive to Main Street. Preliminary design drawings for the project may be found at <https://www.rebuildhouston.org/community-engagement>.

The project includes reconstruction of the roadway, replacement of the storm sewers, and improvement of sidewalks in the segment from Kirby Drive to Greenbriar. In the Greenbriar to Main Street segment, current plans call for minor curb repairs, some restriping of the street (to allow for the addition of on-street bike lanes), and improvement of sidewalks on the south side of the street, but a full street reconstruction is no longer contemplated.

Project design is presently ongoing, under the direction of the city's office of Public Works and Engineering (PWE), who have already held numerous stakeholder meetings, and solicited extensive public comment. In response to concerns expressed by the RVA, PWE has promised not to begin reconstruction of University until a previous planned reconstruction project (of Greenbriar, which intersects with the University project) is completed. This pushes the estimated target dates for University Blvd. reconstruction to sometime in 2019-2020.

PWE has also been very responsive to concerns about construction interfering with the holiday shopping season for Village merchants, and has discussed contingency options that would preserve access to businesses (perhaps involving conversion of the affected road segments to one-way streets during construction); another possible option is to begin construction before the holiday shopping season, suspend construction for a time, then return to complete the construction after the holidays.



A major consideration for the project is the disposition of current head-in parking spaces on the south side of University between Kirby and Morningside (see images above). These parking spaces, as presently configured, are half in the city right-of-way and half on private property owned by several property owners on the south side of the street. One design option would involve converting head-in spaces to on-street parallel parking spaces and reclaiming the strip of private property that is currently used for head-in parking (shown in pale green above); this would reduce the number of on-street parking spaces, but would allow for an expanded and improved pedestrian realm (wider sidewalks, plantings, etc.) which the city would install at no expense to the property owners if this option is selected. Alternatively, the city is willing to preserve the existing head-in parking, but only if 100 percent of the property owners whose properties comprise the head-in parking area agree to provide easements to the City of Houston to allow for public parking on those portions of their respective properties.

### NEXT STEPS:

- Design of the project is progressing, based on stakeholder input that was already solicited and received.
- At a time TBD, but probably before 2019, the city will need a decision from affected University Blvd. property owners regarding the head-in versus parallel parking options on the south side of the street, between Kirby and Morningside.
- PWE will publicly present the final design (sometime before construction begins in 2019-2020).
- The comment period for this project closed in spring of 2017, however to communicate additional thoughts regarding the preliminary designs linked above, please write to: [pwecip@houstontx.gov](mailto:pwecip@houstontx.gov) or [info@ricevillagealliance.com](mailto:info@ricevillagealliance.com).

The Rice Village Alliance is the merchant association for the businesses of the Rice Village.

[RiceVillageAlliance.com](http://RiceVillageAlliance.com)