



CITY OF HOUSTON

News Release

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

For Immediate Release

March 30, 2007

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Houston Mayor Bill White Names Three to New Gulf Coast Freight Rail District Board

Mayor Bill White today announced the appointments of three City of Houston representatives on the new Gulf Coast Freight Rail District Board, which will help shape the future of freight rail projects and operations in the region. Named to the 11-member board are: Position 4 -- Lance Lubel; Position 5 -- Robert S. Muhammad; and Position 6 -- Jessica Castillo-Hulsey.

"Protecting our neighborhoods, in a way that helps us preserve jobs, and helping to keep trains from blocking our streets are among the important goals of the group and we're fortunate to have some good people willing to help us do that," said Mayor White. "Rail growth must account for its impact on the community. So, having some strong local and regional input into these issues will be invaluable as Houston and our economy continue to grow."

Lubel is an attorney with the Houston law firm Heard, Robins, Cloud & Lubel, LLP. Muhammad, chairman of the transportation committee of the Greater Southeast Management District, is founder and CEO of the Accepting Challenges to Improve Our Nation (ACTION) CDC. Castillo-Hulsey is a civic organizer who is founder and leader of the Eastwood Park Advisory Council. [Resumes attached.]

The Freight Rail District fills a gap where there has been limited expertise and focus outside of the rail industry. The District's mission is to better incorporate rail lines, both freight and commuter, into the region's transportation network. The District is tasked with sustaining regional and economic growth by guiding development of the rail network in a way that limits its impact on quality of life. In doing so, it will foster public-private partnerships with all levels of government and industry to develop projects and secure funding. All projects will require local government approval. A Freight Rail District for local governments in Fort Bend and Harris County was authorized by the 79th Texas Legislature.