

Subject: Proposal for authorization to correct navigation safety deficiencies in the Bayport Ship Channel and Houston Ship Channel

1. Non-Federal Interest. Port of Houston Authority of Harris County, Texas
2. Description of Request.
 - a. The Corps of Engineers determined that the alignment of the Houston Ship Channel in the vicinity of the Bayport Ship Channel (a major tributary channel), and the configuration of the Bayport channel entrance channel flare together create an unsafe operating condition for deep draft vessels.
 - b. This project requires urgent resolution, and should be considered for the most expeditious process should Corps discretionary operational procedures be unsuitable for use.
 - c. The Houston Ship Channel reach, in the vicinity of Bayport, sees over 16,000 deep draft vessel transits annually, with over 6,000 ship and barge moves into the tributary Bayport Ship Channel. Past accidents of concern have been catastrophic with loss of life. Accidents have the potential to shut down the Houston Ship Channel, which would have an immediate, adverse effect on the national economy.
 - d. The most recent six-year study effort that was to result in a discretionary O&M correction by the Corps has failed.
3. Project Purpose. Improve navigation safety to an acceptable level at the Houston Ship Channel in the vicinity of the Bayport Channel and to the entrance to the Bayport Channel ("flare")
4. Estimate of Cost. \$20 million-\$35 million total (federal and non-federal)
5. Description of Anticipated Benefits.
 - a. This project will relieve the serious and unacceptable navigation safety situation that exists with the current alignment of the Houston Ship Channel at Bayport, combined with the short radius of the Bayport Ship Channel flare. The Houston Ship Channel moves more than \$380 million of waterborne commerce daily. Shutdown of the channel as a result of the navigation safety deficiencies could totally interrupt this flow commerce, with huge impacts to the national economy.
 - b. The project will also enable economic efficiencies of the Bayport Ship Channel improvements made by the non-federal sponsor in accordance with Section 204(f), WRDA 1996. The significant economic benefits of that project are compromised by the safety deficiencies of the Houston Ship Channel alignment and Bayport Flare configuration.
6. Statement of Local Support. The Port of Houston Authority fully supports the proposed modification of the project(s). Additionally, this request has the highest level of support from the maritime industry.

7. NFS Statement of Financial Capability. The Port of Houston Authority is the non-federal sponsor of the Houston Ship Channel (part of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project) and its tributary channels, and has the financial capability for continued support of the waterways as described by the existing project agreements for each channel, and the Project Cooperation Agreement for the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project and Memorandum of Agreement.
8. Statement of Support. The Port of Houston Authority fully supports the resolution of this critical navigation safety situation as soon as possible, intends to participate as required by law, and understands the potential cost-sharing responsibilities of studies and the resulting project.
9. Specific Request.
 - a. Navigation safety modifications of the Houston Ship Channel near Bayport and the Bayport Ship Channel projects including the Bayport Flare are authorized to be constructed and at the authorized and maintained depth of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels.