



**For immediate release
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Army Corps Tours Houston Ship Channel *Witnesses First-Hand Vessel Activity of Nation's Busiest Waterway*

HOUSTON – Port Houston continues its focused effort to obtain federal authorization to widen and deepen the Houston Ship Channel. Port Commission Chairman Ric Campo joined Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Lt. Gen. Todd T. Semonite on a helicopter tour of the Houston Ship Channel, witnessing first-hand the busiest ship channel in the nation and the constant vessel activity it experiences every day.



Caption: Vessel activity along the Houston Ship Channel.

Campo emphasized that the opportunity for the Lt. General to witness this activity first-hand “unmistakably demonstrated the challenges” that current constraints could place on the future of the busiest waterway in the nation.

Chairman Campo shared his account of the Corps tour taken last month during his opening comments of the Port Commission of the Port of Houston Authority’s regular June meeting. Campo reiterated the importance of the visit by the Army Corps of Engineers team, supports Port Houston’s “focused effort” to achieve federal authorization to widen the Houston Ship Channel to accommodate better the larger vessels that will be calling the port.



Caption: Port Houston Commission Chairman Ric Campo presides over the Port of Houston Authority regular meeting, June 25. Wendy Montoya Cloonan (left foreground) attends her first Port Commission meeting as a Port Commissioner.

Actions taken by the Port Commission during its regular meeting further supported its mission to secure federal authorization for improving the channel. The Port Commission approved \$300,000 in additional funding for the Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project Feasibility Study. The improvement study formally began in October 2015, when the Army Corps of Engineers and Port Houston entered into a \$10 million agreement (cost-shared 50/50) to complete that work over the following four years. The amendment allows for the study to be completed, as it adds the “locally preferred plan,” a recommendation for fully widening the entire Galveston Bay reach, to allow future vessel generations to transit the channel freely.

“The deepening and widening project remains our #1 priority, and we will continue to press for the fastest path to authorization through completion,” added Executive Director Roger Guenther.

In his staff report, Guenther also highlighted year-to-date performance through May:

- Total tonnage for Houston’s public facilities increased seven percent for the year.
- Container volume continued its strong showing, topping last year by 12 percent.
- Exports of all resins showed growth of 38 percent, including a 68 percent increase in polyethylene resin exports.

The Port Commission also approved a contract totaling nearly \$19 million for the purchase of nine Konecranes diesel electric container yard cranes for Bayport Container Terminal. The purchase of these cranes supports Port Houston’s commitment to invest in growth and environmental stewardship and brings to a total of 90 container yard cranes at its two container terminals.

The next Port Commission regular meeting is scheduled Monday, July 29 at 9:00 a.m.

About the Houston Ship Channel:

In 2018, business along the Houston Ship Channel generated nearly \$802 billion in U.S. economic value, supported 3.2 million jobs, and provided \$38 billion in tax revenue. In the state of Texas, it generated \$339 billion in economic value, sustained 1.3 million jobs, and generated \$5.6 billion in state and local tax revenue. The Houston Ship Channel is a 52-mile federal waterway. It is home to the greater Port of Houston's more than 200 private and eight public terminals; it is considered the energy capital of the world. Its success is a partnership of Port Houston, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Houston Pilots Association, those private and public terminals, and vessels that transit it every day. The full economic impact report is available at www.porthouston.com.

About Port Houston:

For more than 100 years, Port Houston has owned and operated the eight public wharves and terminals of the greater Port of Houston - the nation's largest port for foreign waterborne tonnage, and an essential economic engine for the Houston region, the state of Texas, and the U.S. The greater Port of Houston, situated along the 52-mile long Houston Ship Channel, supports the creation of nearly 1.35 million jobs in Texas and 3.2 million jobs nationwide, and economic activity totaling \$339 billion in Texas – 20.6 percent of the state's total gross domestic product (GDP) – and nearly \$802 billion in economic impact across the nation. For more information, visit the website at www.porthouston.com.

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