

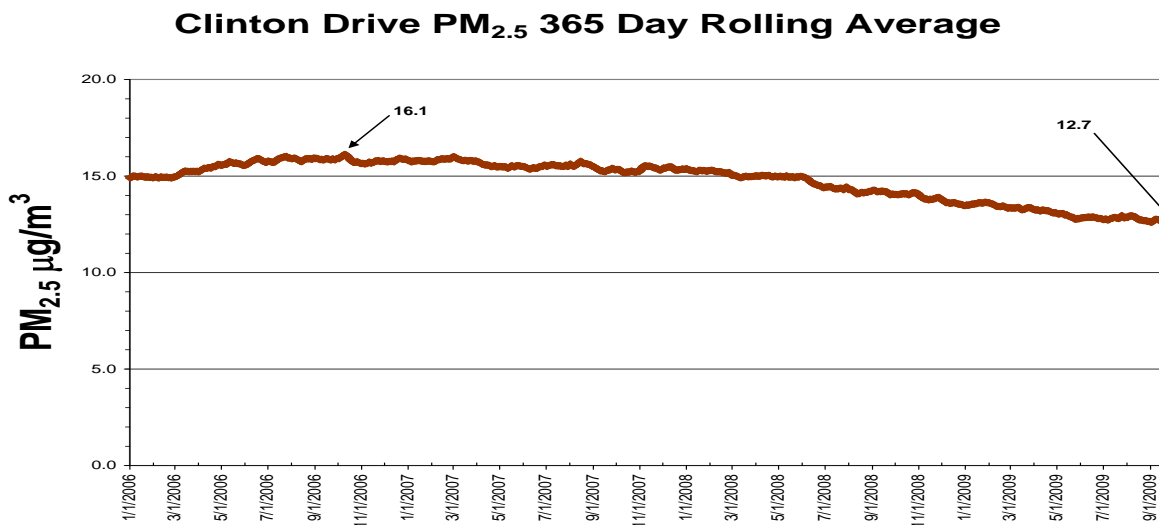
## Clinton Drive Project to Help Achieve Future PM 2.5 Standards

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a letter to the Governor of Texas in October 2009 requesting the Governor's recommendations regarding the Houston-Galveston-Brazoria area exceeding the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for fine particles (PM 2.5). The NAAQS annual standard is 15.0  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and is determined over a three year average. The NAAQS exceedence is based in years 2006 to 2008, and the monitor that recorded the exceedence is located at Clinton Drive.

In 2005, the PM 2.5 readings approached the NAAQS. This prompted a joint study with the Port of Houston Authority (PoHA) and the Texas Council on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The consensus was that the most likely cause of the PM 2.5 is from the dust on Clinton Drive and nearby unpaved roads and parking areas. The study resulted in several local strategies to reduce PM 2.5 emissions and to suppress the dust containing PM 2.5. Some of the strategies include:

- Paving parking lots;
- Relocating railroad loading areas;
- Spraying unpaved areas with emulsified asphalt;
- Use of cleaner rail switching engines; and
- Use of low sulfur diesel fuel.

There is a possibility of being in compliance with the current NAAQS for PM 2.5 once the 2009 data is reviewed. However, the EPA is investigating the NAAQS by lowering the acceptable level for PM 2.5. If the standard is strengthening, reaching the new NAAQS will become increasingly difficult.



In response to the EPA letter to the Governor, and in anticipation of the strengthening of the NAAQS for PM 2.5, a taskforce committee consisting of members from the TCEQ, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Harris County, the City of Houston, the PoHA, and the Houston-Galveston Area Council was organized. The taskforce committee established a scope for a project on Clinton Drive that prevents disturbing PM 2.5 dust, and improves traffic flow, safety, and drainage. The Transportation Planning Committee identified \$5,000,000 in stimulus funding in preparation of the Clinton Drive project.

It was observed that trucks traveling on Clinton Drive repeatedly go off the edge of the pavement during turning movements and when two trucks travel side by side. This frequently results in truck tires disturbing the PM 2.5 dust next to the road, and has caused overturning of trucks.



The City of Houston will be sponsoring the Clinton Drive project, and collaborate closely with TxDOT to assure a plan approval. The scope of the project contains the following aspects:

- Rehabilitation and Overlay of Clinton Drive from 610 (Loop) to Federal Road;
  - Concrete overlay at the intersection of Clinton Drive and Coast Guard Lane
  - Concrete overlay at the intersection of Clinton Drive and Mascott Street
- Addition of 2: 2ft Shoulders from 610 to Fidelity Street;
- Paving Mascott Street with concrete to improve drainage;
- Cleaning ditches from 610 to Fidelity Street;
- Removing and replacing existing culverts;
- Planting vegetation to help keep dust from reaching residential neighborhoods; and
- Planting tall grasses to prevent parking directly east of Mascott Street.

Because the project will be using stimulus funds, the Clinton Drive project needs to be “Let”, or have the contractor bidding process completed, by March 1, 2010. This deadline suggests that the project plans should be submitted to TxDOT for review by December 15, 2009.