



ONE *TO* ONE

NOVEMBER 2018 | ISSUE #2



Commissioner Rodney Ellis received the NAACP Houston Branch's Lifetime of Civil Rights Advocacy Award at the 100th Anniversary Gala on Oct. 26. Pictured (left to right) are Mr. Roger Harris, NAACP Houston Branch Centennial Dinner Co-Chair; Dr. James Douglas, NAACP Houston Branch President; the Rev. Jesse Jackson; Commissioner Ellis; Ms. Telisa Toliver, Senior Vice President of Business Development and Commercial at Chevron Pipe Line Co.; Mrs. Yolanda Smith, Executive Director of NAACP Houston Branch; and Mrs. Argentina Harris, NAACP Houston Branch Centennial Dinner Co-Chair.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR COMMISSIONER



Dear Friend,

IT'S BEEN A BUSY YEAR FOR PRECINCT ONE. We've been hard at work advocating for policies and implementing programs that advance our mission at Precinct One, which is to "become a national model for delivering responsive public services utilizing inclusive, innovative and collaborative approaches to improve the quality of life, advance equality of opportunity, and promote the fair treatment of all people in Harris County."

In this newsletter we have updates on the work we're doing to create more economic opportunity in our communities, secure flood control funding for underserved neighborhoods, reform our unfair justice system and much, much more. Everything we do at Precinct One is in service to you, your family and your community. Speaking on behalf of the Precinct One team, it's a privilege to serve. Thank you.

Sincerely,

COMMISSIONER RODNEY ELLIS



EMPOWERING AND EDUCATING OUR PRECINCT ONE YOUTH

*Nickelodeon and Houston
Rocket Chris Paul support
Precinct One's Fifth Ward
community.*

**FOR THE COMPLETE STORY,
SEE PAGE 6**

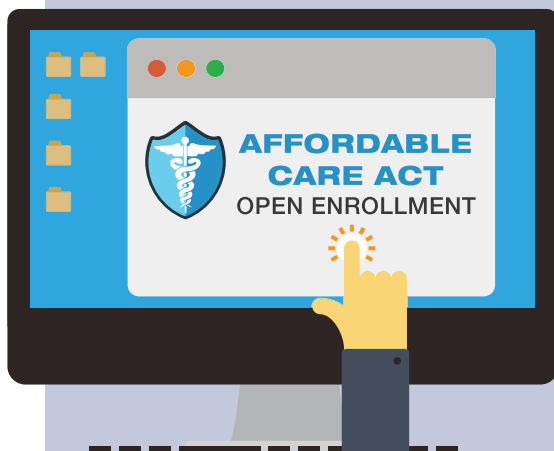
DO NOT DELAY: ENROLL IN THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT BY DECEMBER 15:

Enrollment for the Affordable Care Act (ACA)—also known as Obamacare—began November 1, and ends on December 15.

The landmark legislation has brought health care to millions of people, and under the ACA, millions of Americans may be able to obtain coverage for \$0 premium or qualify for helpful subsidies.

Your health is too important. Don't miss an opportunity to secure access to affordable, quality health care through the ACA marketplace.

If you or your loved ones are without health insurance, be sure to sign up during the enrollment period by visiting healthcare.gov or calling **1-800-318-2596**.



Commissioner Rodney Ellis and community leaders hold a news conference in August to announce a 20-billboard campaign designed to encourage voter registration and electoral participation.



Foundation for Teen Health contributed \$10,000 in support of Street Olympics at its annual Luncheon in October. Pictured are (left to right) Dr. Peggy Smith, Yvette Chargois, and Commissioner Rodney Ellis.

Equity Guided Flood Control

Over the past decades, climate change, inequitable investments in infrastructure and unchecked development helped create a perfect storm of flood vulnerability in Harris County. As we rise to the urgent challenge of preparing for future storms, equity must guide our flood control and infrastructure investments going forward—no community can be left behind or left out of the process. As Commissioner Ellis said, “Harvey is our final wake-up call.”

Harris County voters agree. In August, 85 percent of voters passed a historic \$2.5 billion bond program, which was supported by all members of Commissioners Court, for major flood control projects that will substantially improve flood control for Precinct One communities and better protect all of Harris County.

In pushing for a larger bond amount, Commissioner Ellis helped secure funding for projects in

underserved neighborhoods across Harris County that have been chronically underfunded because of unfair federal formulas. Now, improvements can be made in previously underfunded watersheds, including along Greens and Halls Bayous and Clear Creek, which constantly flood and flow through many historically underserved or vulnerable areas.

“From the start, equity was a priority,” said Commissioner Ellis. “While Harvey affected almost every part of Harris County, there are neighborhoods in our community right now that brace for possible

flooding every time it rains.

That’s not right. While we still have a lot of work to do, this bond program will allow us to make improvements in areas that need it.”

Fixes will not happen overnight, and many of these projects will take time to complete. The Harris County Flood Control District anticipates hosting more public hearings and Commissioner Ellis encourages all residents to take part and give feedback. You can view proposed projects in your area and keep up with other news about the bond program by visiting hcfcd.org.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

April 5, 2018

“We can’t only focus on the federal match because it will tilt more money away from vulnerable communities,” Ellis said. “Inequitable funding creates an intractable cycle of vulnerability that must be interrupted.”



Hundreds of Harris County residents attended Harris County Flood Control District’s open-house meeting leading up to the \$2.5 billion bond election in August. Attendees reviewed potential projects and provided feedback.

Advocating for Inclusive Economic Opportunities for Minorities and Women



The economic challenge in our region is not about growth or prosperity—it's about whether all people and communities are included in that growth and benefiting

from our region's vast prosperity. That's why Precinct One and Commissioner Ellis are advocating for local policies that promote equitable economic growth, strengthen working families, and open paths to opportunity for minorities and women instead of creating barriers. Working with advocates, including the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Commissioner Ellis has taken steps to ensure there are fair and equitable government contracting opportunities for minority and women business owners at Harris County.

Earlier this year, Commissioner Ellis successfully advocated for

Harris County to conduct a disparity study, funded by Precinct One, to identify contracting disparities and help establish a Minority- and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) program. Commissioner Ellis is also advocating for other local jurisdictions like METRO and the Port of Houston to conduct disparity studies to ensure minority and women business owners can compete on a level playing field in Harris County. Commissioner Ellis explains, "Our communities deserve the social and economic benefits that thriving MWBEs can uniquely provide, such as job creation in underserved communities."

Photo: The Rev. Jesse Jackson (seated in the middle) addresses the media regarding Commissioner Rodney Ellis' efforts to have Harris County agree to a disparity study, which will support the Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Program.

PRECINCT ONE HELPS "LEAD" THE WAY ON INNOVATIVE JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAM FOR YOUTH AT ATTUCKS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Commissioner Ellis envisions a Harris County where communities work together to develop strategies that prevent crime and uplift all communities. Precinct One is a proud partner of the groundbreaking Youth Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program at Attucks Middle School. The Youth LEAD program is a partnership between My Brother's Keeper, an

initiative started by the Obama administration; Precinct One; the City of Houston; Houston Independent School District and local law enforcement. The first of its kind nationwide, Youth LEAD provides alternatives to incarcerating and criminalizing our youth.

Precinct One committed funds for a social worker based at Attucks who will help connect

youth and their families to the resources they need to overcome obstacles they face and avoid entry into the juvenile justice system. Commissioner Ellis said, "I want our youth to know that even if they make a mistake, that doesn't put them on a path to failure. Instead, Youth LEAD is here to help our youth stay on the right track."

Community Safety and Equal Justice Serve a Common Goal

Criminal justice reform is this generation's civil rights movement. Too many have been lost to an unfair criminal justice system that fails to deliver justice for all people. "Harris County is a ground zero for the fight against mass incarceration and reforming its cash bail system is a key to victory," explains Commissioner Ellis.

Multiple federal court rulings have found that Harris County's cash bail system is unconstitutional and violates poor people's rights to due process and equal treatment. Under the current system, poor people charged with petty, non-violent

misdemeanors may languish in jail for weeks or months awaiting trial while a wealthy person charged with the same offense is able to walk free.

The County's bail system also undermines community safety. A single mother with traffic violations may find herself stuck behind bars away from her family and job because she is poor. At the same time, someone accused of a violent crime may be out in hours if they have the money to bail out. Tearing people away from their family and community makes no one safer.

The county spends millions of dollars to jail defendants who pose little or no threat to the public when

studies show that the risk of re-offending actually increases when pretrial defendants are kept behind bars. Filling our jails with people accused of non-violent misdemeanors comes at a great cost to our Constitution, our communities and our tax dollars.

Commissioner Ellis believes those dollars should be spent on constitutional bail reform and community-centered initiatives that work, declaring that, "Harris County can no longer defend a costly, two-tiered system of injustice that violates the Constitution, drains public resources and harms communities. It's time. **Justice cannot wait.**"



Commissioner Rodney Ellis (right), Congressman John Lewis (center), who is considered one of the Big Six leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee speak about criminal justice reform at a town hall meeting. Congressman Lewis has dedicated his life to progressive social movements and human rights.

Empowering and Educating Our Precinct One Youth

Precinct One provides families with programs that empower, educate and inspire throughout the year. “Our working families need safe places where their children can learn, grow and thrive,” said Commissioner Ellis. This Summer, Precinct One provided our youth with fun, recreation and education that started with the Harris County Street Olympics Summer Games and ended with the Nickelodeon Worldwide Day of Play at Finnigan Park.

Street Olympics kicked off the Summer Games at Mickey Leland Memorial Park in June with Commissioner Ellis and partners. Throughout the summer, youth competed in “street games” to earn a competition spot at the Summer



A youth is thumbs-up after being “slimed” at the Worldwide Day of Play.



Houston Rocket Chris Paul (left) poses with Commissioner Rodney Ellis after receiving a Precinct One resolution during Nickelodeon's Worldwide Day of Play at Finnigan Park.

Games Final Event at NRG Arena, where 1,500 youth competed for medals in August. The Summer Games also featured 3-on-3 Basketball Championship Tournament and Splashdown, a friendly swim meet hosted by the Harris County Aquatics Program.

Youth also attended summer camps at Lincoln Community Center and Finnigan/YET, where they enjoyed a range of educational and recreational activities. The Discovery Camps at Deussen and Challenger Seven Memorial parks also provided daylong educational experience for Precinct One youth to learn about nature and the environment.

In late August, Commissioner Ellis and Precinct One partnered with Nickelodeon to host a Worldwide Day of Play at Finnigan Park in Fifth Ward,

featuring Houston Rockets superstar Chris Paul. Paul presented a \$25,000 check from him and Nickelodeon to Commissioner Ellis to enhance youth services in the precinct. Hundreds of children and parents enjoyed fun activities with beloved TV cartoon characters and cheered on a youth basketball tournament held on the recently improved outdoor court. Paul even offered the aspiring basketball players some pointers—it was an unforgettable day for many!

Now that school is in session, our centers at Lincoln Park and Finnigan Park/Youth Education Town are offering after-school programs and other enriching activities for our youth that will help them succeed in school and at home.

Connecting Communities: Precinct One Transportation & Mobility

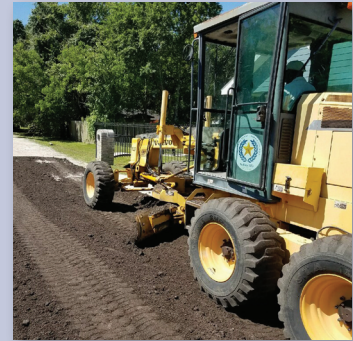
Every community deserves access to affordable transportation options and complete, connected streets. When more people can safely depend on walking, cycling or public transit for their daily transportation needs, those streets and sidewalks become paths to opportunity.

Toward that goal, Precinct One recently entered into an agreement with the City of Houston to pay \$30 million to improve seven streets in the University of Houston-Texas Southern University corridor. The project will create beautiful corridors that reflect and enhance the neighborhoods' character, while improving safety and accessibility for pedestrians,

bicyclists, motorists and public transit riders. The project also includes drainage improvements, which will help reduce street flooding during heavy-rain events.

Precinct One also committed funds for one year to make pedestrian- and bike-safety improvements on Houston streets in Precinct One neighborhoods that don't have safe options for walking and biking.

Several other projects are currently being studied and developed for neighborhoods across Precinct One— watch for letters and postcards about other improvements in your neighborhood!



PRECINCT ONE ROAD & BRIDGE CREW HAS BEEN HARD AT WORK!

WORKERS HAVE COMPLETED IMPROVEMENTS on Walters

Road between FM 1960 and Old Walters Road.

The 1.6- mile project included widening the two-lane road to a four-lane, concrete boulevard.

Two trails at **Gene Green**

Beltway 8 Park have received an asphalt overlay. One

12-foot wide trail, which is a quarter mile long, was completed in August. Another 1.5-mile trail will be widened from 8 to 10 feet.

A quarter-mile section of **Wheeler Avenue** between Scott and Cullen received an asphalt overlay, plus sidewalk and curb repair.



SAFER STREETS TOOLKIT



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ZONES



BUS STOP ART



TEMPORARY BUS BULB



EXTRUDED CURB



TEMPORARY INTERSECTION TREATMENT



MINI TRAFFIC CIRCLES



HIGH-VISIBILITY CROSSWALKS



EDGE TREATMENTS



EDGE TREATMENTS



TEMPORARY BARRICADE AT INTERSECTION



BUFFERED BIKE LANES



MO-BLOCK CROSSWALKS



PAINTED CROSSWALKS



FLEXIBLE POITS



TEMPORARY SEATING AT INTERSECTION





Rodney Ellis, Commissioner

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Houston, TX 77002

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Like us on Facebook: **facebook.com/CommissionerPrecinctOne**

Visit our website: hcp1.net

PRECINCT ONE SITES & PHONE NUMBERS

REGIONAL OFFICES

El Rio Service Center 713-991-6881
Downtown Office 713-274-1000
El Camino Office Annex 713-741-1096
Leland Office "Annex 31" 713-697-1104
Neartown Office "Annex 1" 832-927-2880
Hardy Service Center 281-820-5151

COMMUNITY CENTERS

Christia Adair Community Center
713-738-8484
Tom Bass Community Center 713-733-3717
Challenger Seven Learning Center
832-927-1175
Deussen Seniors Center 832-927-2100
EFL Community Center 832-927-2190
Finnigan Community Center 713-678-7385
Hardy Seniors Center 281-260-6772
Julia C. Hester House 713-274-1394
Barbara Jordan Community Center
281-449-3240
Cavalcade "Annex 36" 713-675-0004
Lincoln Park Community Center
281-445-1617
Finnigan Park YET 713-676-0519

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Aquatics Program 713-748-7333
Discovery Camp Program 832-927-1175
Northeast Adolescent Program
713-673-1655
Seniors Program 713-733-3717
Street Olympics Summer Games
713-741-0851