

The Proposed UP – NS Railroad Merger

What It Means for Our Community

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\$85 Billion merger | **~50%** of U.S. freight | Would trigger **BNSF + CSX** secondary merger

What's Happening?

Union Pacific wants to buy Norfolk Southern for \$85 billion — the largest railroad merger in U.S. history. This would create a coast-to-coast railroad controlling nearly 50% of all freight rail in America.

\$85B

Deal Value

Largest merger
in U.S. history

~50%

Freight Controlled

Down from 30+
railroads in 1980s

5 → 4

Railroads Remaining

Would trigger
BNSF + CSX merger

18–24+

Months to Decide

STB review period
if application accepted

KEY DATES

Dec 2025

7,000-page application filed

Jan 16, 2026

STB rejected as incomplete

Apr 30, 2026

UP plans to refile

Jun 15, 2026

Deadline to file participation notice

Houston's Blocked Crossing Crisis

22,795

Blocked crossing reports
2021–2025

98.4%

Caused by
Union Pacific

9 of 10

Top national crossings
in Houston's East End

Most Blocked Streets (2025 FRA Data)

Eastwood St (UP)

937

#1 in the U.S.

Leeland St (UP)

337

#2 nationally

Cullen Blvd (UP)

314

#3 nationally

Milby St (UP)

273

#5 nationally

Oakhurst St (UP)

268

#7 nationally

Sampson St (UP)

252

#9 nationally

York St (UP)

235

Top 10

McKinney St (UP)

234

Top 10

Our Neighborhood: Already Overburdened

Our communities sit at the convergence of heavy industry, petrochemical facilities, the Ship Channel, and multiple freight rail lines — all primarily operated by Union Pacific.

Cancer Cluster



Recognized environmental health area with elevated cancer rates tied to diesel emissions and industrial activity

Diesel Emissions



Idling trains + 209% more freight trucks projected at Settegast Yard = dramatically worse air quality

Emergency Response



East End avg. response time: 12 min.
National avg: 5 min. Blocked crossings cost lives.

The merger projects a 209% increase in freight trucks at Settegast Yard — from 246 to 762 trucks per day. \$0 in mainline capacity investment for Houston.

What UP Claims vs. What the Filings Show

UP CLAIMS

Average train length is 7,500 ft

Houston will see fewer trains

Reduces highway congestion

\$2.1 billion in capital investment

THE REALITY

UP's own SEC filings show 9,490–9,801 ft in 2025 — 30% longer than stated to the Texas Legislature

+36.7% more trains on the East End's Lafayette Sub by Year 5 post-merger

+209% freight trucks at Settegast Yard (246 → 762 per day)

\$0 for Houston mainline capacity — only yard parking stalls and two added tracks

Lives at Stake



In November 2021, paramedics crawled through a stopped train to reach an infant. The baby did not survive.



Two homes burned down because firefighters couldn't reach them in time due to a blocked crossing.



A gun was reported at a local high school — police couldn't get through stopped trains to respond.



Children crawl under stopped trains to get to school. Teachers report students arrive late and shaken.

National avg. emergency response: 5 min | East End avg: 12 min | 2,975 first responder blockages in Houston in 2024 alone

The East End Triangle

Three rail lines form a triangle that traps thousands of residents, along with schools, a fire station, health clinics, and community centers. The merger would add more trains to all three.

12,000+

Residents Trapped

10

Schools Affected

3

Rail Lines
Converging

1

Fire Station
Inside the Triangle

The Three Lines

East Belt (Union Pacific)

Main line, double-tracked. Crosses Telephone, Lawndale, Polk, and continues northeast.

West Belt (Union Pacific / BNSF)

Main line, double-tracked. Runs from the UH area toward downtown Houston.

Galveston Sub (Union Pacific)

Single track, runs parallel to Harrisburg. Not a main line but heavily trafficked and the source of many blockage complaints.

What We're Demanding

1

Grade Separations

Overpasses and underpasses at critical crossings so trains never block roads again.

2

Quiet Zones

UP must fund quiet zones — no more passing costs to the city or residents.

3

Air Quality Monitoring

Mandatory monitoring stations in affected neighborhoods.

4

Community Benefits Agreement

A binding agreement with enforceable mitigation commitments.

5

Pedestrian Safety

Safe underpasses so children never have to crawl under trains to reach school.

6

UP Pays Local Match

UP must pay the 25% local match for all federal infrastructure grants in our community.

Take Action

1 **Report Every Blocked Crossing**
fra.dot.gov/blockedcrossings — Every report strengthens our case. Takes 2 minutes.

2 **File a Comment with the STB**
Visit notanotherhouston.org for step-by-step instructions. Your voice matters legally.

3 **Attend Community Meetings**
You are welcome at Super Neighborhood meetings. Watch [@notanotherhouston](https://twitter.com/notanotherhouston) for upcoming events.

4 **Contact Your Elected Officials**
Tell them to oppose this merger without significant mitigation for our community.

5 **Spread the Word**
Share this presentation. Follow [@notanotherhouston](https://www.instagram.com/notanotherhouston) on Instagram.

Our Neighborhood. Our Fight. Our Future.

Get involved:

- notanotherhouston.org
- [@notanotherhouston](#) on Instagram
- Report blocked crossings: fra.dot.gov/blockedcrossings
- STB Docket FD 36873