



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Township and community partners to fund Mitchell highway designation**

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS (July 24, 2019) – Community leadership in The Woodlands have come together to recognize the founder of The Woodlands, George P. Mitchell, with special signage along Interstate Highway 45. This signage will be seen by millions of travelers to and through The Woodlands for years to come. Joining with the Township in honoring the late founder of The Woodlands are Visit The Woodlands, The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce and The Howard Hughes Corporation.

“This is an awesome opportunity to honor our founder and to share his legacy with everyone who drives through our area on the highway,” said Township Chairman of the Board Gordy Bunch. “Thank you to Visit The Woodlands, The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce and The Howard Hughes Corporation for partnering with us in this project to honor Mr. Mitchell.”

At their July 18, 2019, board meeting, The Woodlands Township Board of Directors approved the funding and authorized President/General Manager Don Norrell to execute a cost reimbursement agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in an estimated amount of \$24,000, and provide that supporting contributions offset the project costs.

“This gives our community a chance to leave a long-term thank-you card to the Mitchell family for what was accomplished here. We all owe Mr. Mitchell a huge debt of gratitude,” said Township Director Bruce Rieser, who is also chair of Visit The Woodlands.

Texas House Bill 2571 (H.B. 2571), passed in the 2019 Texas Legislative Session, designated a portion of Interstate 45 in Montgomery County from the Harris-Montgomery County line to State Highway 242 as the George P. Mitchell Memorial Highway. The bill was authored by Representative Steve Toth, co-authored by Representative Will Metcalf and sponsored by Senator Brandon Creighton. The bill was signed by Governor Greg Abbott and went into effect on June 10, 2019.

The bill requires TxDOT, subject to a grant or donation of funds, to design and construct markers indicating the designation as the George P. Mitchell Memorial Highway and any other appropriate information and to erect a marker at each end of the highway and at appropriate intermediate sites along the highway.

“We are thrilled to participate in this project to honor Mr. Mitchell and join other organizations to recognize his vision in building a place that we love. We are so fortunate to live in a community like The Woodlands with the economic vitality, employment opportunities, and amenities we can all enjoy. Simply put, without George Mitchell, we would not be here,” said J.J. Hollie, president and CEO of The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce.



“George Mitchell was a pioneer and visionary with the creation of The Woodlands,” said Paul Layne, President - Central Region for The Howard Hughes Corporation. “It’s an honor to be a part of this project designating I-45 through The Woodlands as the George P. Mitchell Memorial Highway.”

“This is something that we can all feel really good about,” said State Representative Steve Toth at the Township’s board meeting. “We’re blessed to live in one of the nicest planned communities in the United States.”

Previously, on May 16, 2019, the Township Board of Directors passed Resolution 007-19 supporting H.B. 2571 and the special designation in memory of the late Mr. Mitchell. The Township resolution supported the concept but did not appropriate funds for the cost of the signage. Per the Texas Transportation Code, TxDOT may not design, construct or erect a marker (for a highway designation) unless a grant of donation of funds is made to TxDOT to cover the cost. An estimated cost for two signs meeting state transportation standards is \$23,199.95.

The full resolution is attached.

For more information about The Woodlands Township, please visit [www.thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov](http://www.thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov), or call 281-210-3800.

**PHOTO:**



The Woodlands Township Board of Directors shared a scaled-down version of the sign that will designate the portion of I-45 as George P. Mitchell Memorial Highway. Pictured left to right, are Township Treasurer John Anthony Brown, Township Director Bruce Rieser, Township Chairman Gordy Bunch, State Representative Steve Toth and Township Director Carol Stromatt.



**RESOLUTION NO. 007-19**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP IN SUPPORT OF TEXAS HOUSE BILL 2571 TO DESIGNATE A PORTION OF INTERSTATE 45 IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY AS THE GEORGE P. MITCHELL MEMORIAL HIGHWAY**

**WHEREAS**, The Woodlands was founded by George P. Mitchell on October 19, 1974 on the sustainability principles of balancing economic development, community health and conservation, and

**WHEREAS**, it was George P. Mitchell's vision that The Woodlands would grow to become a thriving community where thousands would live, work, play and learn; and

**WHEREAS**, today, The Woodlands is an award-winning master planned community that is home to over 115,000 residents, 2,000 businesses, includes over 200 miles of hike and bike trails, numerous opportunities for shopping, dining, entertainment and recreation, highly recognized education institutions, a world-class performing arts center and many other amenities enjoyed by residents and visitors alike; and

**WHEREAS**, Interstate 45 is a major transportation corridor that serves as a gateway to The Woodlands enhancing mobility and commerce; and

**WHEREAS**, House Bill 2571 was introduced in the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the State of Texas on February 27, 2019, to designate a portion of Interstate 45 between the Harris-Montgomery county line and State Highway 242 as the George P. Mitchell Memorial Highway; and

**WHEREAS**, this notable legislation was authored by State Representative Steve Toth, co-authored by State Representative Will Metcalf and sponsored by State Senator Brandon Creighton;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP THAT:**

The Woodlands Township Board of Directors supports House Bill 2571 recognizing the tremendous legacy of George P. Mitchell by designating a portion of Interstate 45 in Montgomery County as the George P. Mitchell Memorial Highway.

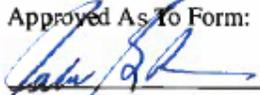
**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 16<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2019.

ATTEST:

  
Ann Snyder  
Secretary, Board of Directors

  
Gordy Bunch  
Chairman, Board of Directors

Approved As To Form:

  
Roberta B. Cross  
Township Attorney