Traffic, unlike economy, moving at sluggish pace

By Doug Reilly

Houston’s hour times are worsening the area’s notorious bumper-to-bumper traffic, new state congestion figures indicate, as the area reaps the benefits of population and job growth that’s putting an added strain on local freeways. “With the economic boom comes the bad stuff, and that is congestion growth,” said David Schnark, a researcher for the Texas A&M Trans-

Not all idling (Good News)

@onearc: Here’s a machine-gunning the U.S. 99 Loop 610 interchange. Find out when @HoustonChronicle.com/ultimateguide.

portation Institute. Two adjusting stretch-

es of U.S. 59 downtown and west Houston feed the worst regionally on an annual list of the 100-

most congested freeways in the state, compiled by the Texas Department of Transportation and Texas A&M Transportation Institute officials.

Schnark, a co-author of the report, said changes in methodology tied to some spikes in average congestion along certain routes. Areas with major freeway interchanges show average congestion estimates increase, giving planners a fuller view of the gridlock affecting most areas of the state.

The additional traffic is having a pronounced effect in certain areas, Schnark said. “These ar-

are losing on really long

really heavy congestion on long hours of the day.”

Stuck on U.S. 59

Houston’s two worst freeways are among U.S. 59. The stretch from Interstate 10 to Texas 288 ranks second-worst in the state, with an aver-

age of 74,000 hours of delay annually, per mile. The freeway from Loop 610 to Loop 10 West ranks Gridlock continues on 4.

Most congested roads of Houston’s 17 most congested freeway segments, listed below, is the only four also are included among the state’s most congested list.

1. U.S. 99
2. U.S. 59
3. Loop 610
4. Eastex Freeway
5. Loop 10
6. Loop 610/Loop 10
7. Loop 59
8. Loop 10
9. Loop 10
10. Loop 610
11. Loop 59
12. Loop 59
13. Loop 610
14. Loop 610
15. Loop 59
16. Loop 10
17. Loop 610

New figures compiled by the Texas Department of Transportation show many of Houston’s freeways to be among the most congested in Texas.

Texaschildrenhospital.org

Tiny hearts in right hands

Texas Children’s Hospital surgeon-in-chief known for taking heartfelt causes

By Todd Ackerman

In a city known for heart treatment, Dr. Charles Fraser said that his table of Texas Children’s Hospital donors weren’t grasp-

ing one key difference between pediatrics and adult cardiovascular surgery. So Fraser did something he’d never done before. He pulled out a couple suddenly props: a 5-pound sack of flour and an average-sized strawberry. “Here you go,” Fraser told the group at the Texas Children’s annual “What’s Up Doc?” fund-

raising dinner. “The bag of flour is the size of a stru-

chocolate, the size of most of their hearts.” Fraser has been operations on strawberry-

shaped hearts at Texas Children’s since the pediat-

ric hospital recruited him in 1995, then one of the specialty’s rising stars. In what’s consid-

ered the most difficult, stressful job in medi-

cine, Fraser must use the white space to read the red.

Fixing broken hearts

Dr. Charles Fraser carefully watches a sousaphone of a patient’s heart after repairing a hole in the organ during surgery at Texas Children’s Hospital.

Photo gallery: under Texaschildrenhospital.org

Nik Da Silvado/Texas Children’s

Skyscraper to change from work to home

Historic Old Texaco tower being converted into Upscale apartments by developer

By Nancy Sarnoff

One of downtown’s most historic buildings is being retooled and turned into a luxury apartment complex, a $15 million re-

development project that could help reshape downtown’s image as a place to live, not just work.

A Dallas developer is planning to convert the historic Texaco building Thursday and expects to start con-

struction within a month on its conversion to a 59-

unit, 150,000-square-foot, luxury building.

“Infrastructure changes have enhanced the area, and the hotel, a real estate for-

mer with CBRE, who was involved in the sale of the building.

Hansler represented the previous owner, Simonly-Clark, which once had plans to redevelop the property into a Marriott hotel. Before that, another owner wanted to turn it into a hotel.

Major Annie Parker and Friday that she is glad to see the building being repurposed.

Eye for Eye: Friends of Children

DOWNTOWN

An Edition Of | DOWNTOWN | Sunday, September 8, 2013 | ULTIMATE

LEAD: Cover story

YOUR KEYS TO QUICKER, EASIER SHOPPING.

Local Sales & Coupons & find the best deals in

The

OFFER: Sunday, September 8, 2013

Find

it here. Get

Savings & find the best deals.

To view this offer online, visit finditstore.com/downtown.
Surgeon's efforts boost survival rates

Dr. Charles D. Fraser, Jr., Texas Children's Hospital's surgeon-in-chief, uses a square to demonstrate what is wrong with a 23-month-old's heart. The child was born with a hole in the heart.

---

It’s hard to imagine that a 23-month-old could be born with a hole in his heart. But it happens.

Fraser, who was born and raised in Houston, is known as the “heart doctor.” He is widely respected for his expertise in congenital heart disease and has been named one of the “most influential pediatric cardiologists in the United States.”

Fraser has been at the forefront of medical breakthroughs and has contributed to many advancements in the field of congenital heart disease. He is recognized for his work in developing new surgical techniques and for his dedication to improving clinical outcomes for children with heart defects.

Fraser's efforts have boosted survival rates for children born with congenital heart defects, making it possible for even the most complex cases to be treated successfully. His contributions have made it possible for children to lead healthy, normal lives.

Through his dedication to research and innovation, Fraser has helped to advance the field of congenital heart disease and has made a significant impact on the lives of children around the world.

---

Nick de la Torre / Chronicle